Indian Development : Options and Choices

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

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Apple-cart Politics

IN a recent interview to BBC, the Prime Minister, answering the question how she sees India without Indira, has confidently said that "somebody else will come up but there will not be any chaos or disturbance".

Does the reality warrant such confidence? Philosophically one can of course make the point that this great nation will not go under, whatever comes its way. But judging by the present-day scenario, it is difficult to visualise an orderly succession on the morrow of Indira Gandhi's departure. Those who glibly point to the change of government following the Congress defeat at the 1977 Lok Sabha election, and fondly hope for its repetition, are living in a state of senility; for, it is almost an impossibility for the Opposition parties today to knock together all the disparate elements to pull off a Janata *redivivus* even if all the three cantankerous characters miscalled its leaders disappeared from the scene. This is borne out by the pathetic exercise that has been going on for the last several months to bring about Opposition [illegible], an exercise which has [illegible] ingredients of a comic opera.

This burlesque aside, the two Communist establishments, both flaunting their respective wardrobes of Left-and-Democratic-Unity, have resumed their civil war of polemics as they are confronted with a deadlock over the question whether such unity should include the BJP in the crusade against Indira authoritarianism; while there is no sign of the CPM relenting from its Big-Brother sectarianism when dealing with friendly elements, whether it is the CPI or the Congress-S.

By standards of conventional party politics there is therefore not even the ghost of a chance of the Opposition making a bid for return to power by normal democratic means: to that extent, the possibility of an orderly succession replacing the present

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Congress-I raj is remote indeed.

What will be the position of the Congress-I without Indira Gandhi? The senior members of the Congress-I fight shy of facing the question, while the junior or middle-level leaders are in a state of intellectual vacuum. Any objective assessment of this ruling party however makes it abundantly clear that it has not a single leader who can remotely expect to be acceptable to the country at large: a number of them can hold their own in their respective States, but none can be considered as even a poor successor to Indira Gandhi, nor could any of them be promoted by a caucus to keep the party together. Unlike her father, Indira Gandhi has no Lal Bahadur Shastri to succeed her, nor a Syndicate to bolster up such a Shastri.

The entire style of functioning within the Congress-I has generated not an awareness of the need for urgency on the question of succession, but an avalanche of sycophancy which has no precedent in our national politics. The sickening performance of the Congress-I Chief Ministers at the recent session of the National Development Council — where substantial portions of their speeches, all written out, offered homage to Indira Gandhi as their saviour — should by the perception of any intelligent leader be taken as a disturbing phenomenon. Fulsome adulation is no substitute for tested loyalty.

Besides, it is not really a question of loyalty to the leader but the responsibility towards the party, to ensure that succession does not disrupt the political process. When Lal Bahadur Shastri died in 1966, Kamaraj on behalf of the Syndicate rallied the Chief Ministers to thwart Morarji's bid for Prime Ministership, and made way for Indira Gandhi's accession to power. But the galaxy of Chief Ministers that adorn her court today, how many of them, if any, would be able to retain their own posts once she is not there, not to speak of helping to choose a new Prime Minister? And all of them — not certainly excluding the pick of the bunch, Babasaheb Bhosale — are her nominees. The manner in which some of the Congress-I Ministries are being allowed to function can by no means bring political stability, nor does it redound to the credit of the party leadership (which in effect means Indira Gandhi personally). To permit such rickety outfits as Karunakaran's coalition in Kerala or Gogoi's team in Assam to continue in office when they could command no sure majority is to invite the erosion of the parliamentary system itself. The fact that these two Ministries had ultimately to quit has brought no laurels for the Congress-I.

Trouble besets Indira Gandhi from other quarters, at least one of which was unthinkable a year ago. The suspension from the party of a Congress-I MLA in UP, Akbar Ahmed, is a significant pointer to the shape of things likely to come. This MLA, who was known to be a close associate of Sanjay Gandhi, planned a convention of Sanjayites, who have been left out in the cold. Though Dumpy (as this MLA is fondly called in his own circle) has been dumped, what is intriguing is the claim that he has been making about Sanjay's widow, Maneka Gandhi's involvement with the new move. Coming as this does soon after the sale of the journal that Maneka had been editing, to two prominent RSS members—both happening without the knowledge and consent of Indira Gandhi—a new dimension to the Prime Minister's worries can be discerned. Although nobody really knows the exact strength of the Sanjay *bhakts* among the Congress-I MPs, the Capital gossips put it as between 70 and 90 in Lok Sabha. This sizeable section of the Congress-I establishing links with the RSS is indeed an ominous development. The irony of it all was that Indira Gandhi's alienation from a good section of the enlightened including the Left took place largely because of the role that she permitted Sanjay Gandhi to play, and today the near-and-dear associates of the same Sanjay seem to be building bridges with her implacable adversaries.

All this adds up to a clearly perceptible drift in the Indira camp. Twenty-six months since her triumphant return to power commanding an unchallengeable majority in Lok Sabha, have seen not the consolidation of that victory but rather *its* erosion, and the pace of that erosion has been getting faster in the recent months.

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Though Indira Gandhi has quite a few trusted Ministers, they do not form a team; certainly they cannot form a regency if anything happens to her. The rapport with once-friendly elements in the Opposition has not been forged while new alignments — unscrupulous as much as unpredictable — threaten to confront her, not only cutting into the parliamentary strength of the party she leads but adding to that of the diabolic elements among her political opponents.

It is time for Indira Gandhi to pause and ponder about the state of the nation over whose destiny she presides and the fragility of the establishment that she has so far set up. Not certainly for her to make the complacent claim — not even in a BBC interview — that everything will be lovely in the garden that she will be leaving behind.

N.C.

March 17

29

COMMENTARY

TUs in a Tangle

The controversy over the Central Government's latest announcement on March 15 on four DA instalments; for Government employees, merger of part of DA with basic pay and computation of house-rent and city compensatory allowances on that basis, and deposit of DA arrears till February as well as additional HRA and CCA falling due from February 1, 1982, to March 31, 1983, in the employees' PF accounts, appears to be artificial, or at any rate unrealistic.

First of all, it seems unfair to describe what has been done as either "impounding" of arrears or "wage freeze." The four new instalments of DA will be paid in cash with effect from this month, only the arrears from August to February being deposited in the PF accounts of the employees. HRA and CCA will be based on the merged basic pay only from February 1, 1982, and the additional amount involved will go into the PF accounts till March next year, being drawable by the employees thereafter and being also payable in cash from then on. Thus the arrears will be in the PF accounts only for a clearly specified period of one year and will be available in lump sum at the end of that period if the employees should desire to withdraw it. It is difficult to see what is so objectionable about this arrangement, considering that immediate relief is also available, with the four new DA instalments being payable in cash from now on.

It is clear from the minutes of the meeting of the Standing Committee of the National Council of the Joint Consultative Machinery held on February 15, 1982, that there was an understanding on the following, with only one member present expressing opposition to "impounding" of arrears of DA and of additional HRA and CCA and another's letter to the same effect being produced. Nine representatives were present on the Staff Side. According to the minutes, "all members of the Staff Side present at the meeting, except Shri S.K. Vyas, signified their agreement to the proposals made by the Official Side for merger of DA with pay at average index level 320 and to the mode of payment of consequential HRA and CCA as also additional DA." The only difference between the March 15 announcement and the February 15 understanding is that the fourth instalment of DA was hanging fire at the Standing Committee meeting but has now been released along with the other three already acknowledged as due.

Comparing the minutes with the Finance Minister's statement it has to be admitted that the Minister's account of the understanding is faithful and that the Government has scored a point by announcing release of the fourth instalment of DA also. It is difficult to dispute the Government's contention that its "proposals are acceptable to the large majority of employees", even if the statement that "delay in the issue of orders would cause undue hardship to the serving employees and the pensioners" can be seen as an attempt to increase the difficulties that the various trade unions of Government employees are obviously facing.

A point that needs to be noted is that failure of the unions to agree among themselves led to a loss to the employees in the past year; merger of part of DA with basic pay was offered by the Government in January 1981, but both sides had maintained silence on the question thereafter. The fear of most members of the Staff Side of the Standing Committee that further delay in reaching a settlement would only lead to further loss to the employees and to their own consequent isolation was quite obvious, and quite justified in the circumstances. It is significant that while the Staff Side's consent was readily conveyed *orally* to the Cabinet Secretary, the written concurrence sought by the latter was not forthcoming. If these are the facts, who can blame the Government for going ahead on the basis of the understanding recorded in the minutes of the Standing Committee meeting? And to say that the majority of the employees are opposed to the settlement seems dishonest.

The Government has also announced other decisions. The upper limit of death-cum-retirement gratuity has been raised from Rs 30,000 to Rs 36,000 — a logical corollary to the merger of part of DA in basic pay. The DA payable to "senior officers entrusted with high levels of responsibility" (up to Joint Secretary level) has been raised substantially "as a one-time measure". This category includes judges, UPSC members and others also. There can be reservations about increasing emoluments at higher levels, but that leads us to a series of other issues vis-a-vis the administration and the political leadership.

The important thing to note in these developments is the pathetic plight to which the trade unions have reduced themselves in relation to Government employees and their organisations. For a year they did nothing to get the Government to implement its offer of merger of DA with basic pay. Those who are shouting loudest against the latest announcement made no effort even to mobilise the employees on the basis of concrete demands of their own. At the Standing Committee meeting the two dissenters did little more than object to "impounding" of arrears, certainly an odd expression, given the context. Even at the earlier informal meeting of the JCM on January 28 the Cabinet Secretary had presented the Government's formula and no one had opposed it; it was taken to have been agreed to by both sides. But subsequently two top CITU leaders issued a statement to the effect that the formula was being "imposed" on all the employees and insinuating that "some" leaders of the JCM were virtually in collusion with the Government. This is precisely where the crisis started developing in recent weeks. And S.K. Vyas's stand on February 15 was the sequal.

But the gentlemen who raise such ghosts should in fairness explain what they themselves did by way of initiative when the merger offer first came from the Government well over a year ago. It was open to them to have brought about a consensus and forced the Government to accept the employees' terms. There has not even been an effort to mobilise the Government employees on either trade union issues or issues of public concern, so much so that now, on the DA merger and related matters, they are in no position to give a call to the employees not to accept the additional amount that will be paid next month. By adopting a a pseudo-radical and totally unrealistic posture such leaders are only isolating themselves from the Government employees, and from working people generally.

Ironically, this is the price the trade union movement pays for engaging in internal competition in economism. Organised workers have come to expect from the movement not a massive struggle to change the socio-economic structure but only agitations to increase their own individual pay packets. There has been no attempt to relate the trade union movement to the common and pressing demands of the working people as a whole, most of them unorganised, poverty-stricken, denied even statutory minimum wage, at the mercy of landlords, moneylenders and employers. Theoretical support for the demands of these unorganised workers has not led to their mobilisation by the trade unions except perhaps in stray pockets. This suits the ruling elites who have been making systematic attempts to divide urban and rural workers more and more, whether under Janata rule or under Congress-I rule.

It is the Government's failure to keep the prices of essential commodities at reasonable levels that is reflected in the steadily increasing commitment of public funds to meet partially from time to time the erosion in real wages of its own employees. Add the continuous flow of concessions and financial assistance to big industry and big farmers, and the calculated deflection of public funds to the better-off sections, ignoring the pressing needs of the majority, becomes evident. And the worst part of the situation is that the trade union movement under its present leadership is playing the game of the ruling class according to the latter's rules.

Will our labour leaders learn the lessons? Will Government employees and other organised sections realise that they cannot preserve themselves in isolation? And will the "representative" Government understand that by pampering vested interests and silencing organised workers with crumbs it cannot build a strong nation?

March 17 *C.N. Chitta Ranjan*

Kerala Capers

WHATEVER his motive, the hitherto unknown Lonappan Nambadan has rendered signal service to Kerala by walking out of the Congress(I)-led United Democratic Front, forcing the resignation of the untenable Karunakaran Ministry, dissolution of the State Assembly, and imposition of President's rule — all in the space of two days — and making the ordering of fresh elections inevitable.

The State Governor, Jothi Venkatachellum, who now, after some pointless hesitation, has recommended the steps taken, should indeed have done it at the end of December last. It was quite clear even then that neither the UDF nor the LDF was in a position to provide a stable or viable Government. Karunakaran was allowed to form a Ministry even before he was in a position to demonstrate majority support in the Legislature or his ability to run the Government without pathetic dependence on the Speaker's casting vote. It was clearly the Congress-I Front's effort to be in *direct* control of the administration at the time of elections, and the Governor compromised her constitutional responsibility of being unamenable to partisan pressures. Now the inevitable has been forced upon her — and upon the Centre.

When the Karunakaran Ministry was formed, towards the end of December last year, many had wondered if it would last longer than the first Karunakaran Ministry (March-April 1977)which was in office for thirty days; the second Ministry headed by the Congress(I) leader lasted eighty days, but this was because of the unprecedented utilisation of the Speaker's casting vote just to keep the Government going in an evenly balanced Assembly. Now the Governor has reported that no stable alternative Ministry could be formed; she should ask her conscience whether the same was not the state of affairs when she blithely permitted the UDF to form the Government in the first place; indeed, she should ask herself if the position then was not worse than this time since the Opposition LDF does boast the addition of one member to its ranks now.

Karunakaran's boast about an unidentified potential defector up his sleeve is patently so much hot air. His pious declaration that he was submitting his resignatian only because he did not want to cling to office with the help of a defector is so utterly hypocritical as not to warrant serious comment. His whole UDF set-up would have been impossible but for the high-power horse-trading in December with blessings and active support from Delhi. It hardly lies in the mouth of Karunakaran to talk about defectors. He should at least remember what his supreme leader told the Opposition in another context — that they should not adopt a holier-than-thou attitude.

However, it is good that at last the right decision has been taken. The LDF complaint that the formality of asking it to try to form a Government was not observed by the Governor, need not be taken seriously. The LDF leaders know quite well that they can fare no better than the UDF in the prevailing circumstances and they have in fact been demanding fresh elections. And if it would be immoral to allow the UDF to be in office during elections, considering its showing in the Assembly, it would be equally immoral to allow Tweedledee to take the place of Tweedledum. The people of the State are no doubt happy at the developments, even if it means President's rule for the seventh time. The electorate has another chance to give the State a viable Government. Since its inception in 1956 Kerala has had twelve Ministries, six of them in the last five years. The State, with its numerous problems, is sorely in need of a change from the constant state of uncertainty that has dogged it over the years.

It is hoped that the elections will be held without undue delay and that President's rule will mean careful avoidance of misuse of either the administrative machinery or the decision-making processes to influence the outcome of the vote. Again, it will be hoped by all democratic forces within and outside the State that at the coming poll principled and programme-based groupings will confront one another, so that the kaleidoscopic character that has marked recent coalitions there will be eliminated and the voters will be able to exercise their franchise in the confidence that whichever side is given a majority in the Assembly it will not lead to a *kichri* government, to use Indira Gandhi's description of the Janata regime at the Centre in the past.

There is urgent need for rethinking on the part of all parties and groups in the State. The coming exercise towards reorganising and strengthening the LDF and the UDF should be purposeful; all parties concerned approaching it with the interests of the State at heart, not driven by partisan interests or prejudices. The Communists on the one side, especially the Marxists, and the Congress (I) and its current allies like the Antony group on the other, should think in terms of fresh and meaningful initiatives that can lead to credible formations capable of providing a viable and progressive administration to the long-suffering State of Kerala. The lessons of the bitter experiences of recent years must be closely studied and digested. The dangers inherent in the recent emergence of communal and fascist elements in the South must be borne in mind. If the political forces in the state, especially the leading Left and democratic parties and groups, fail to see the need to offer clear-cut alternatives to the voters, the consequences can be disastrous for Kerala and the country.

Everyone is watching with interest how soon the electoral process will be set in motion and how the various parties and groups will work out the alternatives that will be available to the electorate in Kerala. The State and its people deserve a better deal than they have had till now, except for a spell of about seven years under Achutha Menon.

C.N.C

March 18.

Of Wars and Pacts

Major-General D.K. PALIT

THE recent Rao-Shahi talks (the subsequent contretemps notwithstanding) as well as a spate of articles by Indian visitors to Pakistan bearing witness to the fund of goodwill for our country that exists there, have raised great expectations in the sub-continent. After three major conflicts and more than thirty years of mutual suspicions a new era must surely be dawing, one in which we can leave all that behind and enter a period of detente, goodwill and lasting peace.

In this near-euphoric climate even to question the wisdom or the value of a no-war pact seems to border on hawkishness. Bad enough that the first approach was handled in such a gauche manner; now that the negotiations have got going let us not batch it by casting aspersions on each other's motives at the outset. That, at least, is the general mood in India at this time.

It is unfortunate that much of the discussion appearing in the press on these pact negotiations appears to presume that there are two opposing issues — to have or not to have a no-war pact with Pakistan. Furthermore, the general opinion seems to be that the people of India (and, indeed, of Pakistan also) are eagerly waiting for the pact to be signed whereas for some obscure reason it is the Government that is reluctant to enter into a no-war understanding. "The no-war pact which had raised the hope of millions of people in the sub-continent", a recent article in a prominent daily asserted, "had been torpedoed (by our Government)."

Wars and pacts, however, cannot be considered in simple, uncomplicated terms. For decades past a non-aggression (or no-war) agreement between India and Pakistan has been suggested and spurned. The fact is that a proposal to prevent wars between nations, though always welcome, cannot suddenly be wished into success. If any permanent and meaningful accord is to come out of the series of talks now under way many aspects of interrelationship must be examined in all their implications.

General Zia was not far wrong, only exaggerating, when on an occasion not so long ago he said that no-war pacts were not worth the paper they were written on. Looking back on recent history one sees that most (if not all) no-war pacts have eventually been disregarded and have ended in wars. The German-Russian Pact of 1939, the subsequent Russo-Japanese Pact and others have all ended up in the dust bin: they were merely stalling measures, postponements of planned conflict.

Just as there is a difference between a Cease-Fire and a Peace Treaty after a period of hostilities, there is a difference between a No-war Pact and a Treaty of Friendship during a period of peace. In each case, the former is essentially a tactical hold-off between adversaries; the latter is a more permanent political commitment, usually with built-in safeguards. Furthermore, a Treaty of Friendship is a cementing of relations between existing friends who perceive no *casus belli* between themselves: a no-war pact is entered between nations who acknowledge mutual or unilateral threat perceptions. If a no-war pact is to rid itself of its negative character and develop into a more lasting agreement, mutual threat perceptions must first be toned down; and then further confidence-building measures worked into the pact. This was the message Indira Gandhi was a signalling when she offered a Friendship Treaty to Pakistan last month.

The caution that India must excercise in conducting the present series of talks would be to ensure that Pakistan is not merely seeking a tactical hold-off, because such an arrangement would be entirely one-sided. India would gain little by a tactical hold-off at this juncture, whereas Pakistan would, both politically and militarily. For instance, the successful signing of a no-war agreement between our two countries would be a significant propaganda victory for the Pakistani President, an achievement that would go far toward reassuring those individuals in the US Congress — and they form a significant coterie — who oppose the present large-scale arms aid programme to Pakistan. It would also establish for General Zia a more favourable image at home than he has so far succeeded in creating. And militarily, it would gain much-needed time for him to complete his modernisation programme before renewing the Indo-Pak confrontation. As far as India is concerned, it stands to gain no advantage by a "temporary" pact: on the contrary, the signing of such a "stalling" agreement might well lull us into a false sense of security.

For India it is not a simple choice of having or not having a pact. India's interest in entering into negotiations must lie in the eventual conversion of a no-war pact into a more permanent treaty of friendship. The aim of such a treaty would be to whittle away mutual threat perceptions on Kashmir and other issues and to allay suspicions in political and economic areas. This must be done by gradually introducing mutual confidence-building measures into the pact, measures that would in time create a climate in which a settlement of issues by force of arms becomes an unlikely alternative.

This is not possible so long as Pakistan enters into a security agreement with the United States, whose anti-Soviet obsession makes its international policies basically hostile to India's. If Pakistan and India are to establish friendly ties, it must be done on a basis of non-involvement in the cold war — that is, on a basis of non-alignment.

Although Pakistan today claims to be non-aligned, the US Congressional Bill under which Pakistan will receive arms aid recommits it to the old anti-

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China : Perspective for 1982

K.N. RAMACHANDRAN

THE year 1981 was not an impressive year for China. It achieved general overall progress and this is evident from the tone of the New Year's Day editorial of the *Peples's Daily* (January 1, 1982). It observed that the previous year was better than 1980 and 1982 will see "brighter prospect than last year."

In purely economic terms, China registered a modest growth of 3 per cent and this is less than what was anticipated in early 1981. The official media have admitted that in the industrial sector, production remained in a "passive state" for much of the year. In several critical sectors, the progress was normal or modest and conformed to the revised targets. Electricity generation registered a growth rate of 25 per cent and exceeded the planned target of 305,000 million KWh. It is not good enough, but it enabled the state to "basically" meet the needs of economic growth. There was the anticipated fall in heavy industrial production and oil production appears to have stabilised at 100 million tons. Coal production reached the revised target of 588 million tons. The original target was more than 600 million tons. iron (35.6 mn tons) steel (34.0 mn tons) and rolled steel (26.6 mn tons) production was more than what had been planned for but less than the production of 1980. Light industry, particularly those that produce consumer durables, showed considerable progress and it enabled the leadership to go forward with the business of satisfying the needs of the Chinese populace to a modest degree.

As regards agriculture, according to provisional official figures the production went up by 5.7 million tons despite floods in five provinces. This is certainly better than the performance in 1980 when production fell by more than 15 million tons. Thus, the agricultural sector has shown some recovery in relation to the performance in 1980.

Seen in this context, the tasks outlined by the leadership for 1982 are modest ones — suggesting the continuance of the policy of readjusting and restructuring the economy. In general terms, overall framework of "10 principles" elaborated at the Fourth Session of the National People's Congress (NPC) in December last, remains the bedrock of development. It may be noted that some of these principles tally with the report of the World Bank on China released in June last. What is likely to be new in the current year is the further amplification of the policies and other ongoing experiments in the light of the experience gained in the previous year. The changes in the production responsibility systems in the various sectors induced with a view to enhancing incentives for realising higher production may be, for instance, made more flexible and atractive than before. The evidence to this effect has been provided by the changes that are being contemplated in the commune system. Some critical experiments in this regard were introduced in Anhui province last year. According to a report, China is testing a plan to scrap the people's farm commune system and reorganise it into "Xiang" village system of the fifties with a view to improving agricultural productivity. In fact, Anhui is the province where Vice-premier Wan Li introduced the system of individual farmers undertaking their own farming on a modest scale. Thus, even if there is no immediate abolition of the commune system, there is likelihood of changes being introduced progressively on a nationwide scale with a view to decentralising agricultural production activity further.

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The tasks for the PLA in 1982 are also modest because of the cut in the budget for the conventional sector of the PLA. The reorganisation of PLA gained momentum in 1981 with demobilisation and retiring of aging cadres, and streamlining of training and administration. There were even reports suggesting that Vice-Chairman Deng would seek to reorganise main-force units. A campaign to ensure discipline and clear confusions among military personnel was also undertaken in earnest. In fact, China's military chief Yang Dezhi warned recently that if the PLA does not modernise quickly, it will become useless. It was also clear that a section of the PLA opposed, either tacitly or otherwise, some of Deng's reforms and forged solidarity with the conservatives in the leadership.

Seen in this context, the general tasks for PLA in 1982 are: (a) to uphold party principles — that is, accept whatever has been decided upon since the Third Plenum of the CCP held in December 1978; (b) Improve weaponry and speed up defence modernisation with the growth of national economy — that is updating of equipment and step-by-step growth; (c) strengthen relations among army, government and people, strengthen army's internal unity and strengthen militia (This means that cohesiveness within the army has not reached optimum levels, and that there is a lot to be desired in the interactions of the army with other sectors); (d) improve training and administration and strive to raise the capability of various arms of services to conduct coordinated military operations; and (e) Make a down-to-earth effort to prepare against wars of aggression.

In political terms, the current tasks were aptly summed up in an article in the theoretical journal *Red Flag* (December 16, 1981) entitled "Several Current Problems." These are related to the twin tasks of promoting national economy and a spiritual civilisation. It added that everything else should be "subordinated" to the realisation of these objectives. However, it was emphasised that the momentum required for this would be in terms of "the practical speed which can be attained by means of hard efforts." In this scheme, 5 per cent annual growth rate for industry is considered practical. However, the article exhorted the party to continue to conduct investigation, study, inspection and supervision. The *Red Flag* has also underlined the fact that there is a crisis of confidence in certain sections of the party, particularly among the younger generation. Hence it has pleaded for the restitution of revolutionary vigour. All these suggest that continuing the policy of party reorganisation will remain the cardinal tasks for the year.

This includes, holding of the Twelfth Party Congress, constitutional changes on the basis of 1954 Constitution, changes which would also incorporate experiences acquired since then, and the sorting out of issues arising as a result of the gerentocracy in the higher echelons of the leadership. In fact, Vice-Chairman Deng Xiaoping referred to all these — and other issues — in a talk with the visiting *Tanjug* delegation from Yugoslavia recently. He said that although the situation in the country was good, China had many problems. He added, "In order to achieve the objectives of four modernisations, we need stability and unity in the country. We must oppose some negative tendencies including bourgeois liberalism. Tendencies of anarchism and extreme egotism exist among our young people as a result of the 10 years of the chaos of Cultural Revolution. A long-term struggle against bureaucratism is necessary. We have a huge administration which is inadequately employed and therefore unproductive. However, reform of the superstructure is very complex and difficult and it is not easy to carry it out although we are determined to do soon."

DISCUSSION

Indian Development: Option and Choices

A STUDENT OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

The perspective of Indian development is fast becoming a matter of crucial concern for the polity of the nation. *Mainstream* has therefore felt the need for serious discussion on the state of our political economy and the options before the country. This contribution from a distinguished observer of the economic scene is meant to initiate such a discussion. The author has purposely chosen to be anonymous so that the discussion may not be hampered by any subjective bias. Readers of *Mainstream* are invited to participate in this discussion. —*Editor*

I

It is now more than thirty years since India started its experiment with economic planning.

The Indian economy is far more advanced today than it was in the early fifties. There has been a substantial agricultural growth and industrial development. Infrastructure has expanded both in quality and quantity. Industrial structure has diversified, with many units sufficiently strong and efficient to withstand the pressure of international competition. Many areas have absorbed, and some areas have developed sophisticated technology. Large sectors of agriculture have responded to increased application of inputs, water, fertiliser, pesticides as well as farming implements such as tractors and harvestors. Marketable surplus from agriculture has grown to sustain an increasingly larger population in industry and services.

But all these do not mean that India has succeeded in achieving what it sought to achieve through economic planning. There has been set-backs, and the policies pursued have not always been consistent with the requirements of the planning model that we adopted. We have remained desperately poor. The accelerating rate of growth that was envisaged through increasing investment resulting from expanding output of the machine-building sector has not materialised. The rate of investment has fluctuated, and unemployment has grown. The benefits of growth have not been evenly distributed. Even if the poor did not get poorer, the rich definitely have got richer.

It is not propose here to attempt any detailed exercise to explain these setbacks, but to discuss the Indian development and which way it is expected to evolve in the coming years in terms of general scenarios, drawn in broad outlines to give an overall picture. The purpose is to intiate discussions on two questions: What went wrong in our reaching where we are today; and where do we go from here.

To understand what went wrong in our process of development, I submit, we must appreciate the importance of politics in determining the course of economic development. Politics is ultimately concerned with wielding State power. But in its day-to-day operations, it is related to the interplay of pressure-groups, who are guided by their perceived interests, and who come in conflict or form coalition with each other, with respect to specific issues and within an institutional framework. In the long run, the nature of institutional framework, and the way these groups form themselves into classes, may be related to the growth of productive forces and production relations. But after Gramsci, no Marxist will deny some autonomy in their behaviour determined as much by tradition, ethos, and social values as thair basic economic interests and position in relation to productive forces.

It follows from this, that at a particular point of history a ruling group need not invariably and consistently represent a specific class or a permanent interest alliance. The group becomes the ruling group, in an institutional framework of elections and democratic government, by its ability to form the right kind of coalition of pressure groups which can give it the necessary support to capture and weild State power. That coalition may change depending upon the relative strength of the pressure groups at a particular time with respect to particular issues. To prevent a large increase in public investment, it becomes a combine of big bourgeoisie and big landlords. To enact land reforms, it becomes a coalition of small peasants and small and occasionally big bourgeoisie. It may, however, be not strong enough to overcome the strength of the landlords and enforce the reforms. To gain the support of large masses of workers, small entrepreneurs and the rural poor, the ruling coalition may introduce licensing regulations, MRTP Acts and bank nationalisation. It is futile to brand the ruling group as always representing particular interests, say of big bourgeoisie or big landlords, because then one would not be able to predict the behaviour of the group in particular instances.

The strength of the pressure groups which determines what policies are adopted; how effectively they are implemented and how long they are followed depends, of course, largely on their economic power. But it also depends upon their organisation, and ability to intervene in the political process and influence the behaviour of the ruling group. Since the ruling group rules through coalitions, it is always possible for even a minority group to influence its behaviour, if it adopts the right tactics. For as important and large a group as the working class or the parties representing it the scope for intervention is also very wide. But it has to understand the compulsion and interests of the ruling group and the overall objective limitations of the stage of development of productive forces. It may not bring about socialism overnight, if the growth of productive forces has not reached the appropriate stage. But it can definitely guide the developments, at least prevent its deviation, along the path of socialism.

Let it be emphasised that if the Left in India appreciated this logic of politics, instead of engaging in the sterile and perennial debate about the class character of the Congress Party, they would have been able to make much greater impact on our development. The Congress Party has always been, practically from its inception a coalition of interests. After Independence it was led by ruling groups, first around Jawaharlal Nehru, then around Indira Gandhi. Contenders for the leadership were many, but Nehru and Indira Gandhi became leaders because of their 'charisma' and ability to articulate the aspirations of Indian masses to get their support and votes. The coalition of groups they formed succeeded in retaining state power.

When Nehru launched the Five-Year Plans, particularly the Second Five-Year Plan, he was opposed by the vested interests, powerful sections of business class and landlords. So it was also when he adopted the Industrial Policy Resolution or when he goaded the State Governments to introduce land reform legislations. He was then successful in forging an alliance of all patriotic people, which included even some sections of business and landed interests, and middle classes and professionals, small and medium farmers and workers in general. But when it came to the implementation of the policies, he had to compromise again and again. In a partially planned economy, market forces continuously pressed for diversion of resources away from the Plan priorities. The vested interests that dominated the market forces proved too powerful for the Government edicts to be effective. A high rate of investment, which was a logical corollary of physical expansion of machine-building capacity, could not be sustained. Fiscal machinery proved too inadequate to mobilise requisite resources: land reforms were frustrated through leasing in and leading out of land and subterfuge transfers. Finances through the banking system kept feeding a small group of big business. No doubt, there was development of the economy. But it kept deviating from the "non-capitalist" socialistic path that Nehru's leadership sought to achieve for our economy.

The reason for this is mainly that the alliance which supported Nehru's introduction of the policies were not strong enough to withstand the pressures of the opponent vested interests, during the implementation of these policies. So the ruling group around Nehru, in order to remain the ruling group, had to compromise and form different coalitions with varying interests, at different times on specific issues.

The lack of strength of these alliances must be attributed to a great extent to the failure of the Left forces to organise them. If the groups forming that progressive alliance could acquire sufficient strength and leverage, with the Left playing an effective role in consolidating them, Nehru's leadership would have been strengthened and the policies of Plan development could have been more effectively implemented. The Left actually derived a lot of its own strength from the leadership provided by Nehru, but because of its inability to correctly gauge the balance of forces, the Left did not muster its strength to mobilise sufficient support for Nehru, when he faced the challenges of the vested interests.

The one area where Nehru's policy did not deflect from the principles propounded by him in the early 1950s, was foreign policy, with its anti-imperialist, non-aligned and nationalist stance. This was not so much due to the pressures of the Left forces as it was the reflection of a national consensus. In spite of the economic strength of the interest groups which were behind the Swatantra Party or the Jana Sangh, with all their anti-Soviet, pro-US affinities, they could not disrupt the national coalition of the groups bound by the anti-imperialist tradition of the Indian people. Nehru articulated their aspirations, and successfully translated them into his foreign policy. The Left benefited from this. But when after 1962 the vested interests turned all their pressures on to Nehru, the Left failed to rally sufficient strength behind him, Nehru had to compromise and sacrifice Menon. That he did not sacrifice non-alignment speaks of the strength of the forces of nationalism and anti-imperialism. It was no testimony to the strength of the Left alone.

If this perspective of Indian development is appreciated, it would be easier to understand the realities of the Indian situation today. Indira Gandhi has inherited the mantle of Nehru's leadership. But the world today has become much more complicated; the diverse interest groups in India have gained varying degrees of strength; and the compromises she has had to make have often been more glaring and severe than Nehru had to make in the fifties and early sixties. But the compulsions were the same — a necessity to form coalition of different interest groups so that the ruling group she was leading could continue to rule.

It is, however, possible to argue that Indira Gandhi in a sense went much further ahead compared to Nehru in championing the causes which could be identified with the pressure groups constituting the Left. Her position on the industrial policy and licensing; the role of the monopoly houses; bank nationalisation; foreign exchange regulations; controlling the operations of the multinationals; growth of indigenous technology; tremendous expansion of the public sector; emphasis on the schemes that benefit the rural poor, the

Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and bonded labour; reorientation of the banking sector and incentives to the small entrepreneurs and the self-employed — all these are the ingredients of a policy framework which could be associated only with the alliance of the Left forces. Add to this her position on international affairs, the Indo-Soviet Treaty, the Bangladesh War, Diego Garcia, Vietnam and Afghanistan which have made her a symbol of anti-imperialism. To the people of the developing nations, Indira Gandhi's position today is much more unassailable than Nehru's position ever was. It will be a mistake for the Left to ignore this fact, whatever may be the factors that have contributed to this image of Indira Gandhi.

What is the basis of Indira Gandhi's leadership? The Congress(I) Party that she leads is not really a party in the sense of a political party of textbook theory. It is a group around her which derives its sustenance from her leadership rather than the other way round. This is possible because Indira Gandhi leads the large masses who support the Congress today and who had supported the Congress traditionally throughout our history. Whether one likes it or not, she has come to symbolise the spirit of the Congress Party, and it is that which has given her the 'charisma', the appeal to the masses.

One must try to analyse the importance of this phenomenon, if one is to understand the nature of India's politics today. Whatever may be her personality, her likes and dislikes or predilections, Indira Gandhi has become a historical force. The essence of that force is her appeal with the masses which is derived from her becoming the symbol of the tradition of India's development over the last fifty years, based on nationalism, anti-imperialism and self-reliance. Very few people in India will now believe that she can be dictated to by any imperialist power, that she can compromise our sovereignty, that she can give up the interests of India, that she can allow petty, regional, communal caste and sectional considerations to weaken the fabric of the Indian nation, that she will allow India to become dependent on any forces outside the country. To this image, which she has inherited from the traditions of the Congress, she has added her own contribution of *garibi hatao*. Anybody who has seen the faces of the millions that crowd around her, wherever she goes, would realise how strong is the appeal of the image, how the downtrodden, the poor and the weak, fondly believe that somehow it is she and she alone who can deliver the goods.

It is not necessary for our purpose to debate about the veracity of these beliefs. It is the perception of the people which matters, in giving this mass support which is the basis of Indira Gandhi's strength and which has, time and again, brought her back to power through the democratic electoral process. Since, as a political being, she is legitimately interested in retaining power, it would follow that she cannot afford to sacrifice the basis of this 'charisma' or image. She may have to compromise here and there, pacify some interest groups who have become overly powerful in a particular context, and shuffle and reshuffle the people around her to maintain the coalition of forces that would allow her to exercise state power after she has secured it through the electoral process. But it is hardly possible that she would alienate herself from her base, which is her popularity with the masses.

What is her position, vis-a-vis the institutions of democracy in politics and the monopolistic forces in economics? If the analysis presented above about the nature of her base is correct, the answer to this question will be unequivocal. She has to rely on democratic institutions because that is the only way the support of the weak and non-privileged masses can bring her back to power. The only time she lost her power was when, for whatever reason, the masses got alienated from her, and her opponents used that opportunity to strike at her. It should now be clear to her that only through the democratic institutions she can counter-balance the very powerful interest groups who, in spite of their being in the minority, wield strong leverages. In the same manner, she has to be against the dominance of monopolistic forces in the economy, because that dominance would militate against her base with the masses.

To appreciate this last point, let us look at the potential of the Indian economy today. It would be difficult to deny that our economy now has reached a stage from which it is quite capable of launching on a path of rapid growth. Our industrial structure is sufficiently diversified, strong and efficient to sustain a mutually supporting growth of a number of industries simultaneously. We are capable of absorbing high technology and generating profits and investment. Our agriculture has shown a buoyancy even in the years of bad weather reducing the fluctuations in output and producing a reasonable amount of marketable surplus. There is a substantial capacity in our infrastructure which can be mobilised with better management to support a growing industry. The volume of household savings has increased very significantly over the planning years, which can now finance quite a high rate of investment. It may require some appropriate policy inputs, but an accelerated pace of growth is very much within our reach.

Will demand necessarily turn out to be a constraint on this development? If the process of growth becomes very lopsided, with increasing immiserisation of large sections of population, this might be a possibility. But otherwise the constraint of demand may operate only in specific sectors. It does not have to be a general overall constraint for our industrial development. Even if the bulk of our population live in abject poverty, there would be at least 200 million people, who are relatively well-off with a rate of consumption reasonably above the bare necessity of subsistence. That size of population can provide a very large market and can, in principle, sustain any modern industry. The hypothesis of general demand constraint, therefore can hardly be tenable. It can influence the nature of growth and the kind of industries that would develop. But it may not arrest the overall growth of industry.

(*Continued on page 32*)

Growth Possibilities in OECD Economies

An Alternative View

VIJAY LAXMAN KELKAR

In recent discussions there have been a number of projections indicating the growth prospects of the OECD economies, that is, advanced industrialised countries. For instance, the World Bank in its latest World and Development Report (1981) has projected that the growth rate of the advanced industrialised countries would be around 2.8 per cent per annum in the coming decade. UNCTAD's projections, given in its Trade and Development Report (1981), are even more pessimistic. The TDR has argued that in the next decade or so, the rate of growth in the developed market economy countries would be only 2.5 per cont per annum. (Classification of countries of UNCTAD and World Bank is not strictly comparable and there are marginal differences). It should be noted, as seen from Table I, that these growth rates are much lower compared to the post-War experience of advanced industrialised countries. For instance, between 1950 and 1970, average growth rates recorded by these countries has been around 5 per cent per annum.

Projections of the OECD's own "inter-futures project" also indicate that for the coming decades the growth rates are likely to be much smaller compared to the experience of the years 1950-1970. Their projections are essentially based on the assumption that the underlying long-term growth rate in overall productivity is going to be around only 1.8 per cent per annum. All these projections suggest that the growth rates experienced by the OECD economies during the post-War years, that is 1950-1970, are unlikely to be repeated. These kinds of conclusions have profound implications for the development prospects of the developing countries as shown in the Trade and Development Report of UNCTAD. In this papen it is suggested that it is possible to envisage much larger growtn possibilities for the OECD economies and consequently for the world economy.

What is the basis for such a perspective? In our view the basis lies in the new and basic technological innovations that are now available which can remove one of the key obstacles against expansion, namely. the retardatian in productivity growth. First we discuss the trends in overall and sectoral productivity increases in the OECD economies for the post-War years and identify the key features of these trends. Then we focus attention on the impossible impact of micro-electronics and new energy technologies on the acceleration of growth rates. In this latter part we also discuss the nature of new policy packages that would be required in the OECD economies. Obviously, growth rates of the OECD economies are very important in considering the problem faced by these countries themselves, that is, questions related to employment, energy transition, etc., but, importantly, these are also intimately linked to the political issues, that is, it can create a more favourable international environment both for international economic co-operation towards the restructuring of international economic relations and for world peace.

Table I

INDICATORS OF AVERAGE PERFORMANCE OF
16 ADVANCED CAPITALIST COUNTRIES

	1870-1950	1950-70	1970-79	1973-79
Annual average growth of GDP	2.3	4.9	3.2	2.4
Average annual rise in consumer price	0.1	3.8	8.7	9.5

Source: A. Maddison, "Western Economic Performance in the 1970s: A perspective and Assessment", Banca Nazionale del Lavoro, *Quarterly Review*, September 1980.

Experience of the twentieth century has shown that stagnation in the capitalist economies tend to get resolved through "militarisation" or wars and it is abundantly clear that both of these processes will have disastrous consequences for the developing countries and the developed countries. Hence, if the economies of the advanced industrialised countries show greater dynamism the risk of wars and international tension could then be minimised and the consequent process of "demilitarisation" can only have positive impact on the development prospects of the developing countries in terms of (i) giving them a much greater degree of freedom in pursuing needed internal reforms, and (ii) in having far more supportive measures from the advanced industrialised countries and the socialist countries.

WHILE projecting future possibilities it is clear that the movements in the growth rate of productivity seem to be central. Historically, gains in per capita productivity through capital accumulation, augmentation of human capital and technological progress or innovations have been the main spring of modern economic growth. Equally, all recent works such as those of Kendrick, Maddison, etc., on growth experience of the advanced industrialised countries show that a tremendous growth in pro-

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ductivity has been the driving force behind OECD expansion of the post-War years.[1] (See Table II). Hence, it is necessary to study the developments in growth rates in productivity during the last 30 years so that one can identify the sources of growth for the future.

When we talk about productivity, we are focusing our attention here on labour productivity, that is, output per unit of labour input. Admittedly, this is not an entirely adequate concept in understanding or identifying fully the technological progress. For that purpose it is the concept of "total factor productivity" which is more appropriate, as this concept captures the contribution of all other inputs, for example capital. It should be noted that technological progress means more than growth in total factor productivity as it could also imply the introduction of new products. However, the measurement of the total factor productivity is much more difficult and date are not available for all the sectors nor for all the economies of the OECD countries.[2] Hence, we have to restrict ourselves to a "partial measure,', that is, discussions of trends in labour productivity.

Most observers seem to agree that there are two distinctive phases in the post-War expansion of the OECD countries: roughly speaking, the first phase lasts till the end of the decade of the sixties, in which the developed countries experienced a rapid rate of growth in capital accumulation, employment, per capita productivity and gross national product; and the second phase begins in the decade of the seventies, showing a substantial decline in all those variables accompanied by much accelerated rates of inflation. For instance, per capita productivity for major industrialised countries increased at the rate of 4.4 per cent per annum between 1950-1970 compared to only 1.8 per cent per annum during the period 1913-1950.[3] Calculations for the recent period have shown that this growth rate has suffered a decline during the decade of the seventies and this has been true for almost all OECD countries. For instance, in the United States, the rate of growth output per man-hour declined from 3.44 per cent for the years 1947 to 1966, to only 1.15 per cent per annum during the period 1973-1978.[4]

Table II

PHASES OF PRODUCTIVITY GROWTH (GDP) PER MAN-HOUR 1870-1977

(Annual average compound growth rate)

	1870-1913	*1913-50*	*1950-70*	*1970-77*
Australia	0.9	1.4	2.6	3.0
Austria	2.1	0.8	6.9	4.7
Belgium	1.2	1.5	4.0	5.8
Canada	2.0	2.3	2.9	2.2
Denmark	1.9	1.7	4.1	3.2
Finland	1.8	1.9	5.4	4.3
France	1.8	1.7	4.8	5.1
Germany	1.9	1.2	6.2	4.7
Italy	1.2	1.8	5.4	5.0
Japan	1.8	1.4	7.9	5.7
Netherlands	1.2	1.5	4.1	4.6
Norway	1.6	2.5	4.7	3.8
Sweden	2.4	2.9	4.1	2.0
Switzerland	1.5	1.9	3.5	2.8
United Kingdom	1.1	1.5	2.8	2.4
United States	2.1	2.5	2.5	2.0
Arithmetic average	1.7	1.8	4.4	3.8

Source: *A. Maddison, op. cit., Table 1.*

Table III

COMPARATIVE LEVELS OF PRODUCTIVITY IN 1870, 1950 AND 1977

(US GDP per Man-Hour = 100)

	1870	*1950*	*1977*
Australia	182	70	78
Austria	53	29	66
Belgium	110	53	94
Canada	89	78	88
Denmark	65	44	66
Finland	44	32	66
France	62	41	79
Germany	63	35	84
Italy	59	31	68
Japan	24	14	52
Netherlands	107	51	84
Norway	59	49	86
Sweden	45	57	79
Switzerland	80	51	65
United Kingdom	122	55	61
United States	100	100	100
Arithmetic Average of countries (excluding USA)	78	46	74

Source: *A. Maddison, op. cit., Table 2.*

Table IV

TRENDS IN LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY IN DIFFERENT SECTORS FOR SELECTED COUNTRIES

Country	*Period*	*Industry*	*Private Services*	*Non-market Services*
France	1954-1970	5.1	3.2	1.2
F.R.G	1953-1973	4.5	3.4	.4
Italy	1954-1971	5.4	4.2	.2
Sweden	1953-1973	5.1	1.0	—0.4
United Kingdom	1953-1973	3.7	1.2	na

Source: *Economic Commission for Europe, ECE-AC/R/3/1977*

In Japan the productivity which grew at a rate of 7.9 per cent per annum for the period 1950-1970 declined to 5.7 per cent per annum during the years 1970-1979. In other words, there seems to be little doubt that the decade of the seventies has been a turning point in terms of growth in productivity in the OECD economies. It is important to understand the reasons for this shift. Most of the studies which have looked into these issues suggest that there have been various factors which have led to this change. Conventional analysis argues that the basic reasons lie in the growing constraints vis-a-vis the supply factors, especially in terms of the growing difficulties in supply of raw materials and energy, growing government regulation that hamper technological progress and capital formation, etc. There is no doubt that the rate of capital accumulation, especially in the form of plant and equipment, declined quite substantially in the second phase compared to the earlier years. For instance, in Japan this ratio of gross private fixed investment in the form of plant and equipment to GDP which had reached 21 per cent by 1970 declined to 16.3 per cent by 1978. There was a similar trend in other major economies such as in the USA where this ratio declined to 7 per cent by 1979.[5]

Thoughtful observers have also argued that until 1970 the rapid expansion of productivity reflected the "catching up" process where the economies of Western Europe and Japan essentially caught up with the levels of productivity that were obtained by the "best practice" technology in the United States (See Table III). This process of "technological diffusion" was achieved through, among other things, (i) increased trade liberalisation, (ii) creation of the Common Market, and importantly through (iii) maintenance of buoyant aggregate demand, etc. It is not clear whether it was trade liberalisation *per se* or much greater international flows of technology transfers which has been the main factor in accelerating technology diffusion. Perhaps it is the second factor, namely, greater flows in technology, which have been more important. However, this "catching up" process gave progressively lower returns as the technology frontier of the US economy which was the leading force in technological progress could not maintain its own underlying trend growth rate in productivity. In fact, if anything, the rate of growth of technological progress as reflected in the total factor productivity showed a considerable decline in the United States.[6] For instance, the United States' total factor productivity which reached a rate of 2.73 per cent per annum during the period 1959-1969, declined to 1.31 per cent per annum during the decade 1969-1978.[7]

It is sometimes argued that the declining trends in labour productivity need not indicate any decline in the total factor productivity, especially when there is a cyclical downturn in the aggregate demand. Needless to say, in the short run when employment may be "fixed" a decline in labour productivity is only "definitional". This is true only in the short run but what we are describing here is movement in labour productivity over the years and decades. It shall also be noted that sophisticated analysts such as Kendrick, Nadiri, etc., have taken into account the "demand" variable explicitly in estimating the productivity slowdown.[8] Although there is general agreement among these scholars about the qualitative aspect of this change, that is, direction, there is still considerable debate regarding the degree and source of slowdown in the productivity of the United States. There are various explanations including those put forward by some Marxist scholars who argue that one major reason for productivity slowdown lies in the intensity of the class conflict and in increased militancy on the part of the working class, especially against corporate bureaucratic controls which have been the major reason for this qualitative change.[9] On this issue there is a growing tendency to ascribe this change to the phenomena of cyclical downturn in a "long-wave" *a la* Kondratieff cycle. Kondratieff, a distinguished Soviet economist, was one of the first to point out the existence of such long cycles. This analysis was further refined and enriched by the contribution of J. Schumpeter who gave a central place to technological innovations and to the role of entrepreneurs in his scheme of analysis. Needless to say, these views have been challenged and as a recent critical review has pointed out the statistical foundations of existence of "long cycles" is quite weak.[10] Until recently, such a line of enquiry remained dormant but now there has been a revival of interest in this kind of analysis.[11] J. Forrester has shown possibilities of such cycles by his simulation of the advanced capitalist economies.[12] In his model such cycles are essentially due to interaction between demand for the capital goods sector and for the consumer goods sector. Marxist scholar E. Mandel gives a central role to the movement in the "rates of profit" in explaining such cyclical growth. In his model, technological innovations have a "triggering" effect on rates of profit and thus stimulate capital accumulation.[13] Another variation of the "long-wave" analysis of capitalistic growth has been put by Mensch who argues that the current stagnation is due to "technological stalemate" in the sense of lack of basic innovation.[14]

Although it may not be possible to fully subscribe to a "long-wave" type of analytical framework for the development of capitalism, in our view there seems to be little doubt that "technological innovations" play an important role in the accelerating trend rates and in defining the turning points in the capitalistic economy.[15] Of course, in addition to this important role played by technological innovation there are other important factors. However, the usual analysis does not adequately emphasize an extremely important explanation, and this lies in the structural shift of the OCED economies in terms of production and employment patterns where there has been a marked movement towards rapid growth of employment in the tertiary or services sector and in the fact that the services sector has shown a considerably lower growth rate in labour productivity, as well as perhaps in terms of total factor productivity (see Tables IV, V and VI). In other words, the differential nature of productivity gains amongst various sectors of the OECD economies has been the major cause of slowdown in these countries. This also had other macro economic effects. In fact, as we will show later, this has been one of the important causal factors in accelerating inflation in the developed market economy countries.

In this context it is possible to speculate that this phenomenon could also have had an adverse impact on the developing countries' trade by adversely affecting their terms of trade. This could have occured by shifting the burden of the growing

Table V

STRUCTURE OF EMPLOYMENT 1870-1976
(Average of 16 country shares)

	*Agriculture**	*Industry†*	*Services‡*
1870	48.8	27.5	23.7
1950	24.7	36.6	38.7
1970	10.9	39.0	50.1
1976	8.3	36.1	55.6

*Includes forestry and fisheries, †Includes construction; ‡Includes military.

inefficient "non-tradable" sector or services sector on the trade goods sector, that is, imports and exports of developing countries, by increasing their import prices and by reducing the f.o.b. realisation and thus adversely affecting their terms of trade. Of course, at this stage we put this forth only as a hypothesis on an *a priori* basis.

It is suggested that an increase in the supply price of the output of the services sector or "non-tradable" sectors, for example, finance, distribution, etc., can have an impact similar to the increases in "transport" costs or "freight" costs of exports and imports. In such a situation it is easy to see who would bear the incidence of such increases. It is known that in international trade the burden of freight rates or costs is shifted to the exporters depending on the supply elasticity and this share is higher if export supply is relatively more inclastic.[16] As A. Yeats has argued that given the structure of exports of developing countries, that is commodities with inelastic supply, the burden of transport costs will be shifted on to the exporters, thus depressing their f.o.b. realisation. The inverse is true in the case of their major imports from the developed countries, for example capital goods where c.i.f. prices of these imports would go up. The consequences of this process would obviously be an adverse movement in the terms of trade of developing countries.

The post-War years have seen remarkable shifts in patterns of employment in the OECD economies as seen in Table V. For instance, in 1950, the share of employment in the agricultural sector in total employment was around 24.7 per cent; in the industrial sector it reached 36.6 per cent and in the services sector 33.7 per cent. By 1970, the employment share of the agricultural sector went down to only 10.9 per cent while gains were made by both the industrial sector and the services sector in terms of shares in total employment. These shares accounted for 39 per cent and 50 per cent respectively of total employment. During the decade of the seventies, the employment share of both the agricultural and industrial sectors declined, while the share of the services sector in total employment showed a continuous growth and by 1976 their shares were 8.3 per cent, 36 per cent and 55.6 per cent respectively. Conceptually, the services sector consists of various sub-sectors which can be aggregated into two major sub-sectors—(i) market services would include the wholesale trade, retail finance, insurance, etc., and the non-market services would typically include these services predominantly coming from the public sector — such as education, health, municipal services, etc. In terms of employment, both these sub-sectors have experienced considerable growth. As far as Western Europe is concerned, there is evidence to show that this growth in employment may be much larger in the non-market services.[17]

The above data reflect the average percentage for 16 industrialised countries. For the advanced amongst them the shift towards the services sector has been even more dramatic. For instance, in North America employment in the services sector accounts for about 66 per cent, that is, two-thirds of the total labour force. These shifts in the employment pattern accompanied the shifts in the structure of production and consumption in the OECD economies. For instance, in 1979 the services sector accounted for almost 60 per cent of the gross domestic product of the OECD countries. These shifts have been due to various reasons and now this has generally come to be considered as a distinctive feature of the "post-industrial" society.[18] Although this paper will not go into these issues, that is, the issues related to the demand for services, it is clear that the rapid increase in employment in

Table VI

GROWTH OF OUTPUT PER PERSON AND EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR 1960-76

(Annual average compound growth rates)

	Output Per Persan Employed 1960-76				*Rate of Growth of Employment 1960-76*			
	Agriculture	*Industry*	*Services*	*GDP*	*Agriculture*	*Industry*	*Services*	*Total*
Austria	6.0	5.2	2.9	5.1	−3.8	0.5	1.7	0.0
Denmark	3.7	3.6	1.6	2.8	−3.0	0.5	2.2	0.8
Finland	5.6	4.1	1.9	4.3	−4.2	1.2	3.1	0.4
France	4.7	5.0	2.8	4.4	−3.3	0.7	1.8	0.5
Germany	5.8	5.4	2.9	4.7	−3.8	0.8	2.0	0.7
Italy	5.6	4.3	1.8	3.2	−3.4	2.3	2.6	0.7
Japan	6.2	8.3	4.0	7.2	−3.7	3.3	3.8	1.5
Netherland	4.8	5.3	2.0	3.4	−1.8	0.4	2.2	1.2
Norway	4.3	3.7	2.3	3.4	−3.5	0.9	2.6	0.9
Sweden	4.6	3.9	1.6	2.8	−3.8	0.2	2.3	0.7
UK	4.0	2.6	1.3	2.3	−2.1	−0.3	1.0	0.3
USA	5.1	2.8	1.4	1.8	−3.3	0.9	2.4	1.5
Arithmetic average	5.0	4.5	2.2	3.9	−3.3	1.0	2.3	0.8

Table VII

INDEX AND ANNUAL PER CENT CHANGE OF PRODUCTIVITY AND RELATED MEASURES 1960 TO 1978

Item	*1960*	*1970*	*1974*	*1976*
Indexes (1967=100)				
Output private business	73.1	107.3	121.4	140.7
Non-farm business	72.2	107.4	121.8	141.5
Manufacturing	67.7	102.6	114.9	134.5
Hours, private business	92.9	103.0	110.3	118.1
Non-farm business	89.3	104.2	112.3	121.1
Manufacturing	85.8	98.1	102.0	105.1
Output per paid hour, private business	78.7	104.2	110.1	119.2
Non-farm business	80.9	103.0	108.5	116.5
Manufacturing	78.9	104.5	112.6	128.0
Compensation per hour, private business	71.9	123.1	164.9	231.2
Non-farm business	74.2	121.7	162.8	227.3
Manufacturing	77.1	121.8	161.1	229.5
Unit labour cost, private business	91.3	118.2	149.8	194.0
Non-farm business	91.7	118.1	150.0	194.5
Manufacturing	97.7	116.5	143.1	179.4

Source: US Bureau of Labour Statistics, Monthly Labour Review.

the services sector has been due to its low productivity and to a relatively slower productivity gain in face of an expanding demand. In other words, increasing amounts of labour inputs are required for sustaining growth of output in the services sector and there is ample evidence to show these developments. For instance, according to a study of sectoral growth rates the output per person during the period 1950-1976 increased at a rate of 5 per cent per annum in the agricultural sector; 4.5 per cent per annum in the industrial sector and only 2.2 per cent per annum in the services sector (see Table VI), while in terms of increase in employment the services sector showed a growth rate of 2.3 per cent per annum compared to only 0.8 per cent per annum for the total employment growth rate.

Table VIII

INDEXES OF OUTPUT PER EMPLOYEE-YEAR FOR THE MEASURED PORTION OF THE FEDERAL CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT: 1968 TO 1979

Functional Groupings	*1968*	*1970*	*1974*	*1978*
TOTAL	101.1	104.0	108.7	117.4
Education and training	100.0	91.1	91.3	111.6
Finance and accounting	102.6	106.9	109.0	130.1
Information services	102.7	104.2	102.8	105.3
Medical services	101.9	101.4	98.3	98.9
Postal service	98.3	99.4	105.9	115.6

Source: *US Bureau of Labour Statistics, Handbook of Labour Statistics, Annual.*

Table IV gives the rate of growth in labour productivity by different sectors in some Western European countries. This also shows that labour productivity in the services sector grew at a much slower pace compared with the manufacturing sector and this difference is quite substantial.

The recent experience of the United States, as seen in Tables VII and VIII, is no different. For instance, in the US the index for manufacturing output per man-hour increased between 1970-1978 from 104.5 to 130, while the output per man-hour for total non-farm business including manufacturing and the private market services increased from 103 in 1970 to only 115.5 in 1979. These two time-series clearly show that the output per man-hour in the services sector was much lower than that of the manufacturing sector. As far as the non-market services are concerned, according to US statistics, productivity per employee for federal civilian government employment increased from 104 in 1970 to only 117 in 1979, once again showing much slower gains in the productivity of the services sector compared with the goods-producing sectors.□

(To be Continued)

NOTES

1. (i) A. Maddison, "Long-term dynamics of productivity growth", *Bancá Nazionale del Lavoro, Quarterly Review*, March 1979. (ii) J. Kendrick, *Productivity in the United States: trends and cycles*, 1980.

2. For an excellent discussion of all these issues, see J Kendrick, *Understanding Productivity*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977.

3. Maddison, op, cit. Table I.

4. J. Mark, Testimony before the Joint Economic Committee, *Congress of the USA*, 1978.

5. See OECD, *Main Economic Indicators, 1969-1979*, Paris, June 1980.

6. Of course, it is possible that the locus of frontier technology may have been shifting from the US to Japan and to Western Europe: at least for the many important sectors. There is some evidence in this direction: for instance, see K. Yukizawa, "Relative Productivity of American and Japanese Industry and its Change, 1957-1972". *Kyoto Institute of Economic Research*, 1978 (mimeo).

7. M.N. Bailey, "Productivity slowdown and capital accumulation", *Amrican Economic Review*, May 1981.

8. Kendrick's calculations show that variation in demand will account for only 10-20 per cent of the total decline in productivity during the seventies. M.I. Nadiri, "Sectoral Productivity Slowdown", *American Economic Review*, May 1980, and J.W. Kendrick, *op. cit*.

9. For instance, see D. Gordon, "Capital-labour conflict and productivity slowdown", *American Economic Review*, May 1981.

10. For a critical review of this literature of the last 50-70 years, see K. Eklud, "Long waves in development of capitalism", *Kyklos*, vol. 33, 1980.

11. For instance, the *Futures Journal* has devoted an entire volume to the issue. See C. Freeman (Ed): 'Technical Innovations and Long Waves in World Economic Development, *Futures*, Vol. 13, August 1981.

12. J. Forrester, *Business Structure, Economic Cycles and National Policy*, Washington, 1976.

13. E. Mandel, *Late Capitalism*, 1975.

14. G. Mansch, *Stalemate in Technology: Innovations overcome the Depression*, 1979.

15. To be sure, the process of interaction between innovations, diffusion and effective demand is quite complex, see Josepe Steindl, "Ideas and concepts of long-run growth", *Banca Nazionale del Lavoro, Quarterly Review*, March 1981.

16. For an exhaustive discussion of the incidence and impact of transport costs on the foreign trade of the developing countries, see A Yeats, *Shipping and Development Policy*, 1981.

17. *UN Economic Bulletin for Europe:* Employment in General Government in Industrial Market Economies, Vol. 30, 1979.

18. For a recent discussion see B. Gustafson (ed). *Post-industrial society*, 1979.

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Paddy and Prosperity

M.S. SWAMINATHAN

ORGANISATION and diversification are the twin requirements for successful industrial development. These are also the same requirements which can make agriculture dynamic and profitable. I have chosen the theme "Paddy and Prosperity" for this lecture, because I would like to illustrate through this most important crop of India how organisation of production processes and diversification of post-harvest technology can help to make a staple crop also yield more jobs and income. However, before going into this specific example, I would like to briefly survey the agricultural scene as I see it.

Since Independence, our population has doubled itself from 340 million to over 680 million. During the same period, the production of foodgrains rose from about 50 million tonnes to about 134 million tonnes. Thus, foodgrain production has risen slightly above the rate of population growth. It is well known that progress in agriculture has been rather uneven with reference to regions as well as to crops. Punjab ranks first in productivity in wheat, rice and several other crops (Table 1). Some parts of the country have average yields which are only about 30 per cent of the average yield obtained in Punjab. This is partly due to differences in the area under irrigation but partly also this is due to the variations in management efficiency. Intra-State variations also exist. During 1966-67 to 1979-80, crop output increased in Punjab at the compound rate of 5.4 per cent per annum. The highest growth rates were achieved by Patiala (7.1 per cent) and Hoshiarpur (7 per cent) districts. Progress has also been different in different crops (Table 2), pulses registering the lowest growth rate in production. There are also differences between the progress made in the *kharif* and *rabi* seasons. The *kharif* season, when we receive nearly 80 per cent of the total rainfall in the country, has unfortunately been characterised by relatively much slower progress in production and productivity improvement as compared to the *rabi* season (Table 3).

Land is the most precious production factor in our country because of growing demographic pressures from both man and animal. Land is also a shrinking resource for agriculture because of competition for land from urban and rural expansion, road construction and industrial and other needs. Productivity advance and enhancement of production through higher intensity of cropping are the only two pathways available to us to meet our growing requirements of food, fibre, sugar and other crops. The introduction of high-yielding and relatively photo-insensitive varieties of rice and wheat made productivity improvement as well as multiple cropping possible. For example, if we had not made advances in productivity improvement in rice and wheat in the last 15 years, we will now need over 34 million hectares of additional land to produce the same quantities of wheat and rice which we now produce (Table 4).

While we can be happy about the progress made so far, we should take serious note of the fact that further improvements in production are becoming more and more difficult. For example, the Sixth Plan had fixed a target of 135 million tonnes of foodgrain production for 1980-81. We could, however, produce only about 130 million tonnes. The target for 1981 82 is 138.5 million tonnes and the achievement is likely to be about 134 million tonnes. The target fixed in the Plan for 1984-85 is about 154 million tonnes (Table 5). Will we be able to raise production by 20 million tonnes during the remaining three years of the Plan?

If we consider individual factors of production, we find considerable progress in the growth of irrigation facilities and fertiliser production and application (Tables 6 and 7). The Sixth Plan provides nearly as much allocation for the irrigation sector as was made in all the previous Plans put together. Our research and extension infrastructure has also grown. We have now good Agricultural Universities in all parts of the country and intensive extension systems. Pricing and marketing arrangements have also improved. Why then are we finding it difficult to realise the target of achieving the 5 per cent growth rate in agricultural production which we desire? (Table 8 and 9).

Weather continues to play an important role in determining our agricultural fortunes. In Punjab because of controlled irrigation, production can be stablised to a great extent provided energy management is done in an efficent manner. This can be seen from the data on fluctuations in rice production in the last few years in a few States (Table 10). In the areas covered under major irrigation projeets, this degree of stability is not visible. This is why the sixth plan lays stress on command area development and on-farm management of water. We should attend to the following aspects in the irrigation sector as speedily as possible:

(*a*) *Water management:* Scientific water management is possible only if the physical engineering features of an irrigation project and agricultural development are closely linked. In most of our irrigation projects, there exists a wide gap between the development and utilisation of the irrigation potential. This is unfortunate in view of the huge investments made in such projects. Our irrigation depart-

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ments have generally tended to concentrate on developing the irrigation potential. Commensurate attention to the development of the command area and to on-farm management of water is still not forthcoming in an adequate measure. An analysis of water management in 30 irrigation projects supported by the World Bank in different countries has shown that in only nine of the projects there was adequate attention to water management. The reasons for poor water-management vary from project to project but in general they are related to weak institutional performance, poor selection of water control equipment, inadequate farmer's participation and finanncial constraints. This emphasises the need for training and establishing a cadre of water technologists and managers, who could introduce a systems approach in irrigation.

(*b*) *Public policies*: Irrigation is a State subject under the Constitution and policies relating to water rates are evolved by the State Governments. According to the latest estimate, the loss from irrigation works amounted to Rs. 427 croers during 1979-80. At the current rate of loss, the total losses during the Sixth Plan period will amount to nearly Rs. 2,200 crores. Unless water is regarded as a valuable commodity, its wasteful use will persist. The question of introduction of changes in flow irrigation systems on a volumetric basis should be given serious consideration wherever this has not been done. Supply of water from tube-wells is being made on a volumetric basis in some States. Ideally, farmers' own co operatives should manage the water delivery system so that there is both equitable and economic use of water.

Another area which needs attention is legislative enactments in relation to irrigation. The Central Government had circulated a model irrigation bill and also a model Bill to regulate the exploitation of ground water. States which have not yet done so will have to review the existing legislation in the light of the suggestions contained in the model bills. A suitable machinery will also have to be developed for taking speedy and just decisions on inter-State water disputes.

(*c*) *Land and water use planning:* The Sixth Plan has suggested the setting up of Central and State Land Use Boards in order to assist farmers in taking to farming systems which are economically and scientifically sound. Such Land Use Boards can take advantage of modern techniques such as remote sensing while developing land use plans. The best fertiliser to the farmer is assured, and remunerative marketing. Therefore, the marketing and other post-harvest aspects of farming should receive adequate attention.

(*d*) *Farmers' participation:* Irrigation arrangements are made for the benefit of farmers. The users of water should hence have a total sense of participation in the conservation and management of the water resources. The existing administrative arrangements for water delivery are not tailored to generate this sense of involvement. Management of water should be a joint sector activity involving both Government and farmers. The existing structures of command area authorities need suitable modification to achieve this aim.

(*e*) *Inter-departmental coordination*: For efficient water use, it is obvious that the Irrigation, Agriculture and Electricity departments will have to function as members of a symphony orchestra. The existing linkages among these departments are rather weak and sometimes non-existent. Agricultural Universities and Research Institutes have also not been fully involved in water management. In fact, much before an irrigation project is due for completion, the Agricultural University should undertake anticipatory research on optimum water use pattern taking into consideration the soil and climatic factors. Unfortunately, because of the absence of such anticipatory research, we are not able to derive now full benefit from the water resources for several years after the creation of the resource.

(*f*) *Irrigating arid land*: The Rajasthan Canal is one of the largest man-made canals of the world in desert areas. It is designed to utilise 8 million acre feet of surplus Ravi Beas water for irrigating the arid zone of western Rajasthan. The project was started in 1958 and Stage I, which will help to irrigate 5.34 lakh ha. will be completed in 1983. Land use planning and cropping strategy in the entire Rajasthan canal area requires careful review.

(*g*) *Monitoring*: There is need for an integrated monitoring mechanism which will provide us with continuous information on the positive and negative impact of irrigation projects. The positive impact should be measured in terms of additional production per units of time and water. additional employment and income generated. There is no purpose in just giving figures on area under irrigation without an accompanying statement on the impact of water on productivity, intensity of cropping, diversification of labour use and agrarian prosperity. The analysis of the negative impact of irrigation should cover fields such as waterlogging, salinisation and erosion. The public health aspects should also receive equal attention, since there is growing evidence that irrigation projects could also lead to the spread of vector-borne diseases and sometimes cause nutritional disorders. Climatic impact studies of irrigation projects also deserve attention.

Efficiency of fertiliser use also varies widely. On a national average, we are assuming that the application of one kg of NPK fertiliser (in terms of nutrient) will yield 10 kg of grain. Experiments conducted in our Agricultural Universities, however, show that the response can be much higher, even up to 25 kg of grain per kg of NPK nutrient. Punjab on the whole has a higher fertiliser use efficiency than Uttar Pradesh:

With a higher intensity of cropping, soil health care becomes crucial to sustaining yield at a high level. Soil health care is a total concept involving not merely soil testing for nutrient status but also attention to the physical, microbiological and topographic aspects. Tillage practices will have to be tailored to soil and moisture characteristics. For example, in the United States, during periods of drought, farmers are advised to adopt as far as possible chemical tillage so that moisture is conserved. Punjab in particular will have to pay much greater attention to soil health care if production advance is to continue without detriment to the long-term production potential. Reclamation of alkaline and saline soils also needs urgent attention.

Different parts of our country are in different stages of agricultural evolution. We have, on the one hand, States like Arunachal Pradesh where shifting cultivation is still the primary method of soil fertility restoration. On the other hand, we have Punjab which now produces nearly one per cent of the world's foodgrain output and which can grow well whatever the crop the farmers find profitable — be it wheat or rice or potato or mushroom. Therefore, the precise agricultural strategy will have to be tailored to suit the socio-economic and agro-ecological features of each area. It is, however, clear that a "more of the same" approach may not take us far. Until now, our production strategies have invariably been spelt out only in quantitative terms such as the area to be covered under irrigation and high-yielding varieties, the quantities of fertiliser and pesticides to be applied, etc. A purely statistical and quantitative approach to overall programme design is no longer adequate. Extension approaches have so far been oriented to cater to the needs of individual farmers. The average size of an operational holding is, however, tending to become small and correspondingly there is an increase in the number of farming families. A small farm has good potential for intensive agriculture and is not a handicap from the point of view of adoption of high yield technology. On the other hand, a small farmer faces many problems arising from the cost, risk and return structure of farming. Agriculture happens to be the riskiest profession in the world. Therefore, only by understanding and solving the problems faced by small farmers can we realise the potential for high production of the small farm. Unfortunately this distinction often tends to get ignored. The qualitative and human aspects of agricultural programme design should hereafter receive greater attention.

I referred earlier to the crucial role of organisation and management as well as diversification from the point of view of elevating and stabilising production and enhancing income and employment. The organisational aspects of small farm cultivation require urgent attention. This is particularly needed in dry farming areas where effective watershed management will become possible only if the farmers living in a watershed work cooperatively in collecting and managing rain water. Similarly, plant protection and post-harvest technology can be much more effective through an area rather than an individual-farmer approach. Extension systems, therefore, should adopt a group as well as an individuals-farmers approach depending on the message or technique to be extended. Promotion of group effort will become easy only if all the members of the group find that they stand to benefit economically from joint endeavour. The demonstration of economic benefits flowing from group work in water harvesting and management, soil conservation, plant protection and post-harvest technology should be one of the important tasks of extension workers.

Data on the estimated population during the next 50 years are given in Table 11. The data show that not only will the population grow but the dependency ratio will become smaller. This indicates that to win the war against hunger, we will have not only to produce more food but also generate necessary purchasing power through greater opportunities for gainful employment.. This is where diversification of employment opportunities becomes important. In technology development, the aim should be the effective integration of emerging and frontier lines of technology with traditional skills and methods. For example, there are great opportunities for integrating developments in the field of micro-electronics, biotechnology, satellite imagery and communication and chemical engineering with the traditional methods of production and post-harvest technologies. In this manner, many traditional occumpations can be rejuvenated and made attractive and cost-competitive. Such an integrated approach will have the great merit of not displacing human labour with machines and not causing ecological harm. Since unemployment and under-employment are in many cases the major causes of under-nutrition in developing countries, technology development should be based on its potential impact on employment and particularly on the traditional occupations of rural women. Diversification of labour use and not displacement of labour should be the aim of technology development and transfer.

I shall illustrate this taking the rice plant as an example. Rice production in India was 53.2 million tonnes in 1980-81 after a drop in the previous year (1979-80: 42.2 million tonnes). The decline in production in that year was due to drought which adversely affected the rice crop in many States. The area, production and productivity for three consecutive previous years are given in the following table:

	1978-79	*1979-80*	*1980-81*
Area (million ha.)	40.5	39.0	39.8
Production (million tonnes)	53.9	42.2	53.2
Productivity (kg/ha.)	1328	1082	1338

Compared to 1978-79, the productivity increase was only marginal in 1980-81.

The zone-wise trend in area, production and productivity for the years 1979-80 and 1980 81, is as follows: The States in East Zone accounted for 35.6 per cent of total production in 1979-80 and 38.6 per cent in 1980-81. In terms of area, it had 42.8 and 45.1 per cent in the two years. Further, the Central Zone had the lowest productivity level in both years, followed by East Zone.

Rice statistics for 1980-81 are given in the following table:

The percentage irrigated area was the highest (80.5 per cent) for States in South Zone, followed by those in North Zone (77.2 per cent). It was low

	North Zone	*South Zone*	*East Zone*	*West Zone*	*Central Zone*
% of total rice area	5.1	19.2	45.1	5.5	25.1
% of total rice production	9.6	27.6	38.6	6.0	17.7
% of irrigated rice area	77.2	80.5	28.1	25.9	18.6
% of area under HYVs	90.8	80.7	27.2	65.2	39.7
Yield of rice (kg/ha.)	2517	1925	1145	1445	946
Area of rice (million ha.)	2.0	7.6	17.9	2.2	10.0
Production of rice (m.t.)	5.1	14.7	20.5	3.2	9.4

North Zone: Punjab, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh.
South Zone: Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamilnadu and Pondicherry.
East Zone: Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa (survey area), Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh.
West Zone: Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Goa, Daman and Diu.
Central Zone: Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

for States in Central (18.6), West (25.9) and East (28.1) Zones.

Interestingly, the high-yielding varieties coverage has a relation to area under irrigation. With the exception of Central Zone, the area coverage under HYVs was more in States with better irrigation facilities.

Despite the presence of zonal disparities, both in productivity and in production, scope exists for increased productivity and consequently production in all zones even with the available technical know-how.

It has been estimated by plant physiologists that the maximum yield potential of rice in the tropics may be as high as 15.9 tonnes per hectare for a single crop in the dry season and 9.5 tonnes per hectare in the wet season. At the International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines, a total yield of 25.6 tonnes per hectare was obtained in a four-crop-per-year experiment. Technologies of rice production for rain-fed areas as well as for waterlogged areas need greater perfection. Our rice scientists have produced some varieties like CR-1009 which do well in about 50 cm of standing water. The problem in such cases is the method of applying fertiliser. Urea briquettes or super granules are being tried. In rain-fed farming also, there are greater opportunities now for increasing yield. In areas where the yields are already high, the aim should be to safeguard the crop from the ravages of pests and from loss in soil fertility. For example, bacterial blight is showing signs of becoming important in Punjab. Varietal diversification as well as a more rapid replacement of varieties will be necessary. By undertaking an inter-disciplinary constraints analysis in each area, it will be possible to identify the precise constraints responsible for the gap between potential and actual yields. This should be one of the important tasks of the 'productivity year'. The next significant advance in rice production in the Punjab will come when our scientists are able to develop and release hybrid rice capable of yielding 20 per cent more than the best varieties available now. China has already large areas under hybrid rice, whose seeds will have to be supplied to farmers every year.

Rice straw is today mainly used as cattle-feed or is even burnt as in parts of Punjab. Modern post-harvest technology has made it possible to utilise rice straw as an excellent cattle-feed. Conservative projections indicate that demand for milk in India will increase to 30 40 m.mt. by 1984-85 and to 50 m.mt. by 1990. In comparison the production of crop residues will increase from 300.5 m.mt. to 330.2 m.mt., of green fodder from 691 m.mt. to 723.9 m.mt, and of concentrates from 20.5 m.mt. to 26.7 m.mt.

It is in this context that the straw and other agricultural by-producs assume greater importance. Straws, in general, form the main bulk of roughages for livestock. However, their intensive use is limited by the fact that they have high lignin, silica and oxalate contents. Besides, they have low mineral content and palatability and high dustiness. Nonetheless, these limitations can be overcome by appropriate treatment which will increase the total digestible nutrients content of straws from 35-40 per cent to 60-65 per cent. The estimated availability of straws and other dry roughages is shown in the following table:

Although exact figures are not available, it is estimated that with every ton of paddy produced, an equal amount of straw is also produced. This puts the quantity of production at 40 to 50 m.mt. every year. (This amounts to about one third of the total straw production). The high silica content (about 13 per cent) contributes more towards its low digestibility than the lignin content.

Nonetheless, there is high potentiality of using paddy straw as a staple food for livestock once it is properly treated. These treatments are directed towards increasing its palatability, digestibility and nutritive value mainly but breaking the ligno-cellulose bond and reducing the silica and oxalate

	1978-79	*1979-80*	*1980-81*	*1981-82*	*1982-83*	*1983-84*	*1984-85*
							(in million metric tonnes)
General straw	171.31	174.26	177.29	180.43	183.66	187.00	190.46
Other dry roughages	129.23	131.52	133.81	136.18	138.62	141.14	143.75

(*Source*: Report of the Committee on Livestock Feeds and Fodders, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, New Delhi. NCA Report 1973, p 686) contents. Some of the treatments in use are:

(a) *Soaking in water:* Soaking straw in water in the ratio of 1:1 has been reported to improve the palatability and dry matter . consumption. The main effect was due to reduction in dust content—improving the intake. In case of paddy straw, soaking also removes some of the soluble oxalate: hence it nutritive value.

(b) *Alkali treatment*: When treated with solution containing 1.25 per cent caustic soda in water in the ratio of 1:1 and dried, the oxalic acid and the silica content in the paddy straw is reported to be reduced. In addition, saponification of ester linkage between lignin and hemi-cellulose, allow greater diffusion of cellulolytic enzymes through substate leading to improved rates of digestion and voluntary intake. Various studies have confirmed that addition of 3 3 per cent caustic soda improves its palatability and digestibility of crude fibre. However, factors like availability, cost and handling problems limit its application.

(c) *Ammonia treatment:* Ammonia treatment has been found to be equally good in improving intake and digestibility of paddy straw. This is mainly because of added nitrogen content in the straw. However, a closed vessel treatment is essential to obtain maximum efficiency. Plastic covers used are costly and therefore the process is not common.

(d) *Ensiling with urea-molasses mixture*: Ensiling straw with urea improves the intake, digestibility and nitrogen content. The level of urea ranges between 1 - 2 per cent. Along with it molasses (8 to 10 per cent), mineral mixture (1—2 per cent) and salt (1 per cent) are also used.

(e) *Rice bran/deoiled rice bran*: Annually about 26 lakh tonnes of rice bran is produced in the country. A good quality rice bran contains about 10 to 12 per cent crude protein, 13.5 per cent oil, and 12 per cent crude fibre. High level of fat is the major factor in its limited use in cattle feed formulation as it goes rancid during prolonged period of storage.

Deoiled rice bran is the residue left after the oil has been extracted from the rice bran and thereby improving its keeping quality. It usually contains 13 to 15 per cent crude protein, 8 to 14 per cent crude fibre and 4 to 8 per cent silica. Being cheaper and easily available, it has become indispensable for feed manufacturers. Besides, this has also been the main factor for it to replace wheat bran (used for human food) in cattle feed formulations.

The total production capacity of the 21 cattle feed plants erected under Operation Flood and the IDA Project will be 2,600 mt. per day by the end of 1982. Putting the requirement of deoiled rice bran at approximately 30 per cent level, it is estimated that its requirement for these cattle feed plants would be about 910 mt. per day or 3,32,150 mt. annually by that time. These cattle feed plants, if operated at full capacity, may therefore take care of only 16.5 per cent of the total deoiled rice bran produced in the country which is estimated to be about 20 lakh tonnes annually.

Rice bran Oil: If all the oil present in the rice bran is extracted, about 3.5 lakh tonnes of it can be produced annually in the country. As against this, only one lakh tonnes of oil is produced currently. Out of this production, about 5,000 tonnes is of edible grade. The rest is used in the soap industry.

The main factor responsible for low production of the edible grade is its property to go rancid during prolonged period of storing. This is because of the presence of free fatty acids in it. However, this can be overcome by putting up oil extraction plants of higher capacity (more than 15 tonnes per day), as also by stabilising the bran with the help of steam of flue gas heated stabilisers. It will be advisable to have oil extraction plants near rice milling plants which will cut down a lot of expenditure and ease the entire process.

Deoiled bran: Deoiled bran can be stored for a longer period. In the process of deoiling, only the oil is removed and the protein and other nutrients are not affected. Thus there is a possibility of using the deoiled cake as cattle and poultry feed. Suitable fortification procedures will have to be developed.

Paddy husk: So far paddy husk has generally been burnt. The husk is known to be a good source of silicon. There is now interest in extracting solar grade silicon from rice husk, since this constitutes an important material for the production of photovoltaic cells.

Thus today not only paddy production can be increased but also value added products can be obtained from every part of the plant.

Such an exercise can be done for all plants, since modern technology would help in making better use of the remaining parts of the plant other than the one normally used, such as grain This approach is also valid for animals where skin, bone and blood have all value and use.

Our comparative strength lies in agriculture, since we have good arable land, abundant sunshine, vast irrigation resources and above all a hard-working and highly receptive farming community. By adopting a systems approach, we can make agriculture and animal husbandry and agriculture and aquaculture mutually supportive..

The battle against unemployment can be won only by paying greater atention to land and water based occupations and to rural development. The vast untapped production potential of eastern India and the scope for improving income and employment through the scientific utilisation of every part of the plant deserve particular attention.

Table I

Highest and Lowest Average Yields (1975-78)

	Lowest		*Highest*		
Crop	*state*	*Kg/ha*	*State*	*Kg/ha*	*Highest/ Lowest*
Rice	Orissa	896	Punjab	2887	3.2
Wheat	Karnataka	667	Punjab	2449	3.7
Pulses	Andhra	274	Punjab	879	3.2
Oil-seeds	Himachal	318	Tamilnadu	971	3.0
Sugarcane	MP	30,684	Tamilnadu	96,982	3.2

Table 2 : *Changes in Crop Output (in million tonnes)*

Crop	*Average Annual Production*		*Percentage Increase*
	1949-52	*1977-80*	
Rice	23.3	49.5	112.9
Wheat	6.6	32.9	396.1
Pulses	9.5	10.8	14.7
Oilseeds	4.9	8.8	76.8

Table 3 : *Compound growth rates of production of Kharif and Rabi foodgrains. (1967-68 to 1980-81)*

(in per cent)

	Production	*Productivity*	*Area*
Kharif foodgrains	1.66	1.54	0.12
Rabi foodgrains	3.26	2.38	0.86

Table 4 : *Impact of New Technology on Yield & Land Requirement*

Crop	*Year*	*Area (1000 ha)*	*Yield (m.t./ha)*	*Production (1000 ha)*	*Area saved (1000ha)*
Rice	1966-70	36,360	0.98	35,770	—
,,	1979	40,480	1.33	53,770	14,331
Wheat	1961-67	13,191	0.83	10,950	—
,,	1979	22,560	1.57	35,510	20,222

Table 5 : *Foodgrains production in the Sixth Plan (1980-85)*

(million tonnes)

Year	*Target*	*Production*
1980-81	135.0	129.9
1981-82	138.5	134.0*
1982-83	142.0	
1984-85	153.6	

* Provisional estimate of the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India.

Table 6 : *Fertilizer consumption*

('000 tonnes)

	N	*P*	*K*	*Total*
1950-51	55.0	8.8	6.0	69.8
1975-76	2149	467	278	2894
1978-79	3420	1106	591	5117
1981-82 (Anticipated)				6200
1982-83 (Targets)				7200
1984-85 (Targets)	6600	2340	1310	9650

Table 7 : *Irrigation Potential: Cumulative (mil. hectares)*

	Major and Medium Irrigation	*Minor Irrigation*	*Total*
Pre-Plan benefits	9.70	12.90	22.60
First Plan	12.20	14.06	26.26
Second Plan	14.30	14.79	29.09
Third Plan	16.60	17.01	33.61
Annual Plan (66-69)	18.10	19.00	57.10
Fourth Plan (69-74)	20.70	23.50	44.20
Fifth Plan (74-78)	24.82	27.30	52.12
Annual Plan (78-79)	25.86	28.60	54.46
Annual Plan (79-80)	20.60	30.00	56.60
Sixth Plan (1980-85)	5.70	8.00	13.70

Table 8 : *All-India compound rates of growth of agricultural production, area under crops, and yield during 1967-68 to 1980-81*

Crop/Group of Crops	*Production (per cent)*	*Area (per cent)*	*Yield (per cent)*
Rice	2.20	0.73	1.45
Jowar	2.06	−1.18	3.28
Bajra	−3.34	−1.16	0.79
Maize	−0.05	Negligible	−0.03
Ragi	3.43	0.69	2.76
Wheat	5.65	2.92	2.64
Barley	−2.76	−3.86	1.06
Cereals	2.69	0.36	1.80
Gram	−0.83	−0.49	−0.39
Tur	0.65	0.34	0.30
Pulses	−0.28	0.44	−0.56
Foodgrains	2.39	0.35	1.56
Groundnut	0.65	−0.26	0.88
Sesamum	0.36	−0.36	0.03
Rapeseed and Mustard	1.43	1.31	0.11
Oilseeds	1.04	0.27	0.76
Cotton	2.82	0.10	2.72
Jute	2.06	1.42	0.39
Mesta	4.29	1.80	2.40
Fibres	2.61	0.23	2.19
Tea	3.34	0.63	2.69
Coffee	5.93	4.11	1.69
Potato	7.75	2.32	3.26
Sugarcane	2.53	1.77	0.72
Tobacco	2.07	−0.23	2.31
Non-foodgrains	2.34	0.97	1.19
All Crops	2.37	0.52	1.45

Table 9 : *All-India compound rates of growth of agricultural production, area under crops and yield*

Group of crops	*1949-50 to 1980-81*	*1952-53 to 1980-81*	*1960-61 to 1980-81*	*1967-68 to 1980-81*
Foodgrains				
Production	2.58	2.44	2.41	2.39
Area	0.78	0.63	0.44	0.35
Yield	1.49	1.44	1.54	1.59
Non-foodgrains				
Production	2.62	2.55	2.05	2.34
Area	1.33	1.12	0.67	0.97
Yield	0.95	0.99	1.04	1.19
All Crops				
Production	2.59	2.47	2.29	2.37
Area	0.90	0.74	0.50	0.52
Yield	1.35	1.32	1.39	1.45

Table 10 : *Variability in rice production*

(Production in lakh tonnes)

State	*1977-78*	*1978-79*	*1979-80*	*1980-81*
Madhya Pradesh	44.4	35.6	18.3	40.0
Orissa	43.2	44.0	29.2	43.3
Punjab	24.9	30.9	30.4	32.2
Uttar Pradesh	52.0	52.6	25.5	54.4

Table 11 : *Estimated population : 1981-2031*

Year	*Assumption*[1]	*Population (million)*	*Dependency ratio*[2]
1981	—	683.8	0.84
2001	A	940.3	0.58
,,	B	1,003.1	0.67
2031	A	1,231.7	0.57
,,	B	1,375.4	0.56

[1] *Assumption A : NRRI in 1996*
Assumption B : NRRI in 2010.

[2] *Dependency ratio* $\frac{(0-14+60^{+})}{15-59}$ □

Faiz on Afro-Asian Literary Scene

The well-known Pakistani Weekly *Viewpoint* invited Faiz Ahmed Faiz to sum up the main features of the present literary situation, with particular reference to the most prominent trends in Afro-Asian literatures. Here is a transcription of Faiz's answers to some of the questions put to him.

Q. How do you view the present literary situation?

A. The literary situation today, like the present human social situation, is in some way very similar to the situation in the thirties. As you will recall, the euphoria brought about in the twenties by the end of the First World War ('the war to end all wars'), the breakdown of Victorian moral and social constraints, the hopes aroused among all oppressed peoples like us by the October Socialist Revolution and the rise of nationalist movements, the brief prosperity enjoyed by the mercantile citizenry through war profits and the rural masses by rising prices of their product, all combined to produce a general air of emotional abandonment, intellectual freedom, and creative gaiety. By and large, this was the era of romantic lyricism and art for art's sake.

This era was soon overtaken, however, by a double crisis in the thirties. The world economic depression hit the underprivileged classes in East and West alike, giving rise to a sharpened sense of 'class' consciousness and an intensification of class struggles in both Eastern and Western societies, supplemented by the ideological basis provided by socialist philosophies. The rise of Nazi fascism in the West and Japanese militarism in the East gave rise to sharpened antagonisms among the Western Powers to complicate the existing confrontation between the Socialist and capitalist systems, on the one hand, and the democratic and the authoritarian value systems, on the other. As in all period of social and political crises, this phenomenon was reflected in the world of literature by a great divide between two major schools of literary thought and expression, both creative and critical — of progressive realism' on the one hand, and 'subjective escapism' cloaked as aesthetic formalism, on the other. Thus, the great debate began on the role, function and evaluation of literature; between 'functionalists', on the one hand, who believed that the writer as an exponent and interpreter of social realities was 'an engineer of human souls,' and 'the aesthetes', on the other, who held that literature was no more than an artistic compendium of linguistic devices and the writer was no more than an engineer of words.

On the theoretical plane, this Cold War has been revived in contemporary literature once again by theories of structuralism, formalism, expressionism, etc., and by the incursion of linguistics, what V.S. Pritchett calls 'the ironmongery of words'. As an anti-thesis the post war years have produced a raw concept of the 'literature of commitment' and a more analytical approach to the theories of social and critical realism to relate the non-literary, ethical and social content — 'extrinsic' components of literature — with its intrinsic aesthetic standards.

Q. What about the anti-form movement?

A. The anti-form movement so called like some other forms of 'pop' art has two sides. On the one hand, it was, or is, a kind of protest against the norms and conventions of what the 'angry young men' considered to be a decadent and played-out literary and social Establishment, and, on the other, an attempt, like all anarchistic activity, to seek individual self-fulfilment by abjuring all social responsibility to your audience. However, to continue with the literary situation. The economic and political crisis of the thirties that I mentioned earlier had both global and local dimensions. On the global level, the world economic depression generated a radical movement in the form of the great body of the literature of 'social comment' in the West, and in our subcontinent the second most significant literary movement after the 19th century in our literatures — the Progressive Writers' Movement. The menace of fascism united the conscientious and politically-conscious writers of East and West into a great sweep of anti-fascist sentiment, particularly after this menace was made more manifest by the Spanish Civil War and the Japanese invasion of China. It also sent the timid of heart and the myopic of vision scurrying into the recesses of their own sub-conscious, the dream world of myth or legend, or the playground of linguistic and stylistic devices.

As I said, we are faced with a similar world situation today. On the global plane the escalation of the arms race, particularly the ever-ascending spiral of thermonuclear weapons manufacture initiated and led by the USA, coupled with the brink-manship of the new US establishment, has brought to the whole of mankind a wholly and qualitatively new menace of total annihilation. This is accompanied by all-pervasive efforts of the newly risen mafia of international monopolies to maintain their stranglehold on the resources of the Third World, and to reverse the process of history by perpetuating, or bolstering up, the backward social and political structures in those countries more amenable to such exploitation. On the national plane, the erstwhile euphoria of newly-won freedom has evaporated in many Asian and African countries by the replacement of foreign domination by domestic tyrannies and by the emergence of new class structures as, or more, exploitative than the one they displaced. The post-liberation literature in these countries again reflects conflicting moods of confronting reality or evading it, of protest and

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hope, or disillusionment and despair.

Q. What about the Afro-Asian writer's movement?

A. The disintegration of some Western imperialist empires in Asia and Africa after the Second World War, and the liberation of many Asian and African countries, lifted after many centuries the barriers of communication interposed between them by the imperialist Powers. Tentative groupings then began to go in search of each other again, and to restore some of their ancient cultural links severed by foreign domination. At the initiative of some Indian writers a conference of Asian writers of various schools of opinion was convened in Delhi in 1956; it decided to enlarge the circle of their confraternity by including their confreres from Africa, and thus, at the invitation of Soviet writers, the foundations of the Afro-Asian Writers' Association were laid in Tashkent in 1958. Its Secretariat was first established in Colombo in 1959, and later shifted to Cairo in 1963. Subsequently, the Association was enabled to congregate after every four or five years in a general conference in Cairo, Delhi, Beirut, Alma Ata, and more recently in Luanda in Angola. Thus, eminent writers, from both those continents, only some of whom were distantly acquainted with one another through meagre translations of Western publishers, got together for the first time to exchange views and to pool their experience in detailed discussion on the basic technical and ideological problems faced by the present-day writers in their respective countries. In 1968 the Association produced its quarterly journal, *Lotus* in English, French and Arabic, which is now in my charge.

Q. Could you enumerate some of these basic problems?

A. With few exceptions, the basic cultural problems in Asia and Africa stem from one primary source — the era of colonial domination — and demand one basic solution — the decolonisation of their cultures, including literature. Apart from this common feature, however, there is little uniformity of pattern, as the advent of imperialist-colonialist domination hit different levels of development. Among them were advanced feudal societies like ours, with developed languages and literatures of their own. There were, on the other hand, also pre-feudal, tribal or even pre-tribal societies, as in parts of Africa, whose ancient traditional cultures had already disintegrated through other historical factors and whose languages, and literatures, therefore, had not progressed beyond folklore and oral discourse. In the former case, the successors of the old feudal class, the new middle class, eagerly accepted Western norms and conventions of both literary creation and evaluation to veneer their urban classical heritage, on the one hand, and to alienate them from their folk tradition, on the other. In many African countries, however, their native languages were swamped altogether by the invading English, French, Spanish, or Portuguese, and gave to each country instead a hybrid patois of its own. When these countries were liberated, therefore, and they were the last to be liberated, the writer's reaction to this colonialist depredation was more fierce and his quest for his own native cultural and literary roots in his folk heritage was more impassioned than in ours. Even while writing in their acquired foster language they tried to rediscover the lilt, the idiom, and the nuances of perception and expression native to their folk traditions. To some extent this process is also under way in our part of the world, where the literary elite are trying to bridge their class and cultural alienation from their own masses by re-learning the idiom of folk literatures like Punjabi. In addition to this problem of rediscovering national, cultural and literary identity and relieving it of the debris of spurious overlays of colonialism, the modern writer is also faced with the task of adjusting these continuities of the past to the demands of present-day experience and social realities, as well as to the new advances in the techniques and stylistics of expression. In multi-lingual and poly-cultural societies like ours, there is the additional problem of finding a productive and acceptable relationship between the official or national linguistic medium, such as Urdu, with the regional languages which may ensure the progressive development of both. Then, there is the almost universal problem of raising the level of comprehension and appreciation of the culturally under-privileged masses without sabotaging the basic aesthetic values of literature. In short, a writer's work, like a woman's, is never done!

Q. Any suggestions for widening the dissemination of Afro-Asian literatures?

A. There is firstly the problem of translations which at present is the monopoly of certain Western publishing houses. It is time that this monopoly should be broken and taken over by private or State entrepreneurs; perhaps the idea of an Afro-Asian Literary Corporation or Consortium may be worth exploring. Secondly, it is time that our academic institutions concerned with literature should break free from the apron-strings of Western literatures and introduce into their syllabi the study of African and Asian literatures instead. Thirdly, more intensive facilities should be provided for cultural exchanges among writers of the two continents in addition to the platform provided by the Afro-Asian Writers' Association.

Q. Literature and propaganda?

A. In a sense, all literature is propaganda unless it totally fails to communicate, which it is no literature at all. Even nonsensical literature propagates nonsense. Literature fails to be literature and becomes journalese or pure propaganda only when it lacks the additional aesthetic dimension required of all literature.

Q. Finally, what values do you believe to be basic to all good literature?

A. Basically there is only one value — humanism. All other values, love of peace, freedom, social justice, compassion, alleviation of human suffering, self-realisation, adoration for goodness and beauty, flow from it.□

Krishna Sobti : The Turbulent Soul

K.S. DUGGAL

I have read and known several women writers but Krishna Sobti stands distinctly apart.

She is a woman writer who makes her readers, male or female, feel perfectly at ease; every word that she writes is an utterance from her heart and has the sparkle of unalloyed truth about it.

In one of her sketches, Krishna Sobti narrates an encounter with a woman in a party who takes her to be a singing girl and starts asking her all sorts of awkward questions. She enjoys it thoroughly. And perhaps more talking about it later to her readers.

At times she reminds me of Ismat Chughtai who once heard about the death of someone's husband and asked a friend wistfully, 'When will we become widows?'

Because they are women writers, when they attempt anything bold, Krishna Sobti and Ismat Chughtai are dubbed obscene, loud and lewd, indecent and vulgar. Ismat Chughtai has been dragged into court more than once. Her counterpart has somehow escaped it. Says Krishna Sobti, "Literature and law may not look eye to eye. Literature mirrors life, law limit it. Though literature too has its internal discipline."

Born on the banks of the River Chenab known as Jhanan in Punjabi folklore, she belongs to the region that produced romantic lovers like Heer of Ranjha, Sohni of Mahiwal and Saheban of Mirza. Says Krishna Sobti — "I was brought up on the banks of the Chenab. I played on its sands. I bathed and swam in its waters. The Chenab flows in my veins. The truth is the Chenab is its own peer".

An author of as many as half a dozen important works of fiction in Hindi, Krishna Sobti says that she writes because she is made to write. The character she has conceived, must find expression. There is an element of inevitability. An altogether fresh imagery. A language verging on poetry.

"The simplicity of language is the vitality of a language," says the authoress. Her works *Dar se Bichhdi* and *Yaron Ke Yar* are remarkable illustrations of spontaneity in writing. A North Indian writing in Hindi, she draws freely from Urdu and Punjabi aside from her proficiency in Hindi as acceptable to the Hindi protagonists. This freedom with the language and aesthetic use of her diction is found at its best in her latest work *Zindgi Nama*.

However, what has come to be known as the distinguishing feature of Krishna Sobti's writing is the boldness with which she presents the so-called seamy aspect of our life. At the same time, Krishna Sobti is highly conscious of her responsibility as an artist. Her interest is not only in condemnation and demolition, she is constructive in her approach and is prepared to accept the norms of healthy, purposeful, socially relevant creative activity.

A leading fiction writer in Hindi, Krishna Sobti has carved for herself an entirely new path. She is like no one else amongst the contemporaries. And she can claim to have demolished quite a few idols among her predecessors. She represents the spirit of her time; the turbulent soul of the fair sex, the bold women's lib, the formidable upsurge of the female.

Like a meteor Krishna Sobti flashed across the sides of Hindi writing with *Dar se Bichhdi*. Then followed the frightfully bold *Mitro Marjani* that has also been rendered into a play and staged with eminent success. Her *Mitro Marjani* shocks, gives severe jolts and yet endears herself to the reader: you would not like harm come to her. She appears to be vulgar, uncouth, outlandish and yet in the end Mitro is right and everyone else is wrong. At the worst she is uninhibited.

Krishna Sobti's readers had hardly recovered from the tremors that Mitro had created in the placid waters of the Hindi world when she gave another shock wave in *Yaron Ke Yar*. As if there were no looking back there-after, Krishna Sobti stormed her way through with *Surajmukhi Andhere Ke* and *Ham Hashmar*.

In Ratti of *Surajmukhi Andhere Ke*, Krishna Sobti is dealing with another layer of society, another set of characters. She has to delve deep into the recesses of Rati's mind. And this seems to have dictated an altogether different style of writing. She is deliberate and sophisticated. Her approach is essentially psycho-analytical.

A fiction writer with rare mastery over her craft, Krishna Sobti has uncanny perception of the distortions in the life around her. She rips open the smothered gutters and punctures the festering wounds with her clinical knife. She speaks out all that goes on in the remote recesses of Indian womanhood, as an unwanted child, a discriminated daughter, a suppressed wife with the status of only a footwear and a dismayed mother destined to suffer the indignities inflicted upon her by menfolk whether it is a father, a husband or a son. A bitterness of ages, she has poison in her tongue. She bites to kill. It is a mercy killing! The patient is beyond cure.

We have to start afresh, a new, vibrant society with healthy values. Maybe we have to go back and recall what we have lost and forgotten. This is what the authoress does in *Zindgi Nama*, an all-time masterpiece that won the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1980.

A refugee from Pakistan, Krishna Sobti has nostalgic memories of the undivided Punjab of Muslims and Hindus alike. The Punjab with Sikh farm-owners and Muslim tenants. The Punjab that waged many a battle, Hindus and Muslims

The author, an eminent writer, was formerly Adviser (Information), Planning Commission.

fighting shoulder to shoulder, warding off intruders from the sacred soil of their motherland. The Punjab of Guru Nanak who was hailed as "the Guru of the Hindus and the *Pir* of the Muslims". The Punjab with common folklore — superstitious practices, magic and divination, festivals and fairs. The Punjab of shared songs and stories, riddles and proverbs and the robust language of a carefree people that haunts the dreams of those hounded out of their hearths and homes. Like a living daughter Krishna Sobti bewails all this.

Zindgi Nama is a work of art, a thing of beauty. It is not a piece of fiction though it reads like a novel. It is not a memoir though it appears to be one. It is sheer poetry, a string of fond memories recollected in a mood of homesickness.

That language is only a handmaiden when handled by a writer of Krishna Sobti's eminence is evident from an entirely new diction that we have in *Zindgi Nama.* The fearless use of Punjabi idiom, the frequent resort to Punjabi mannerisms in dialogue, the copious employment of Punjabi vocabulary to create the desired effect are some of the devices that the writer has evolved to create a soulful picture of her beloved Punjab, of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. If creative writing can help promote communal understanding, *Zindgi Nama* does it admirably.

The present volume is only the first part of the story; Rajkamal the publishers promise another volume in which the authoress bids to re-create the times of the freedom struggle and the heroic role that the Punjab played in it.

Sahitya Akademi Awards have, of late, lost their original charm. They are no more considered coveted literary distinction. The reasons are many, the most disturbing being an element of rat-race that has entered this sacred territory. Recently, a leading national daily alleged that even Dr. Radhakrishnan was not immune from using his influence as Chairman of the Akademi in favour of an author whose language he was not conversant with. As if that set an example, the annual awards are now openly canvassed and sought with the help of pulls, political or otherwise.

However, it is heartening that, at times, the Akademi chances upon a work of literary excellence that merits distinction eminently. Such a decision when made lends lustre to the Award itself as a national institution. The Sahitya Akademi Award for Hindi voted in favour of Krishna Sobti's *Zindgi Nama* is indeed one such instance.

Krishna Sobti with her many-splendoured versatility and delicate sensitivity brings a breath of fresh air of freedom. ☐

Kampuchea's Foreign Policy

Kampuchea's Hun Sen (30), perhaps the world's youngest Foreign Minister (and also Vice-Premier), has explained the Heng Samrin Government's foreign policy in an interview to Asiaweek *magazine (March 5, 1982). The questions and answers are reproduced here.*

Q. Does the Heng Samrin regime have a truly Cambodian foreign policy, one that is more than a reflection of Hanoi's?

Hun Sen: Our policy is not subservient to that of Vietnam, but rather one of cooperation. Since the January 7 liberation (of 1979, when Vietnamese troops toppled Pol Pot), ours has been an independent foreign policy, though we have entered into a militant alliance with the brotherly nations of Vietnam and Laos....We seek friendship and peace with all nations.

What is the present state of your relations with Moscow?

After our country's liberation from Pol Pot, relations with the USSR improved. One cannot speak of the rebirth and progress of the Cambodian people without mentioning our privileged relations with the Soviet Union. Moscow has provided us with important aid, including food and development materials. I do not have all the figures, but I can say that in the years 1979 and 1980, we received some US $ 220 m. in Soviet assistance.

What about aid from Vietnam?

Vietnam is a poor country. It suffered enormous economic difficulties after the American war of aggression. Therefore, the help given to our people by Vietnam cannot be measured in words or figures. They gave their lives and blood for us, and the Vietnamese people made great sacrifices for the people of my country. (Despite its difficulties) in the years 1979 and 1980 we received more than $ 100 m. in aid from Vietnam. The Vietnamese also provided grain, rice and agricultural hardware.

How is the food-supply situation in Cambodia today?

Generally speaking the situation is stable. However, because of poor harvests last year caused by floods and drought, we may need some 400,000 tons of rice this year. We are worried because our aid from international relief organisations has diminished, and without their help we may not be able to meet our deficit.

The recent removal of Penn Sovan from his post as secretary-general of the Communist Party was seen in some quarters as indication of rivalry between the Hanoi and Moscow factions in Phnom Penh. Is there any truth in this reading?

Those are sepculations of the West. Penn Sovan was sick, and our policy has not changed since he left his job. These are only insinuations to create discord. Neither Moscow nor Hanoi has any interest in competing for influence in my country.

Estimates put the number of Vietnamese soldiers presently deployed in Cambodia at 200,000. Is that figure correct?

Perhaps not.

Will they ever leave?

The problem is this: Cambodia still needs the presence of Vietnamese troops. We would like to see them withdraw, as would Hanoi, but we simply cannot risk a repetition of what happened under Pol Pot. The threat against us is still there — a permanent threat from outside. Until these threats are removed, we would not like to see the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops. For example, if Thailand were to put an end to its cooperation with China, cut off aid to the reactionary Khmer forces along its border, and remove those forces from the border area, we would be prepared to start immediate negotiations with the Vietnamese for a partial withdrawal of their forces. Even now, we are prepared to meet with Bangkok to discuss the creation of a demilitarised zone along our common border and other matters conducive to the peace and security of our two countries.

What about your own army?

We are in the process of creating it. We are working on its quantity as well as its quality. We hope it will become operational within two or three years.

Parameters of Industrial Justice

V.R. KRISHNA IYER

A new industrial culture is building up with the Constitution as its corner-stone and the Court as its overseer. Gandhiji was the harbinger of this humane economic and legal order, where man — the toiler in tears — mattered. Nehru gave this legality a socialist bias. What is our terrible lot today? Nehru made the tryst with destiny to wipe every tear from every eye, at the midnight hour of August when India awoke to Freedom. And now, see what is the autobiography of Indian economic justice. I quote from Escott Reid (*Envoy to Nehru*) what I regard is a moderate economic statement, the truth being more traumatic than eye can see on the surface, heart conceive from five-star hotels and tongue can adequately tell without witnessing the blood toil, tears and sweat of the living skeletons. Right now, in 1981-1982, hardships weigh down hundreds of thousands of our children. It was worse before. I am shocked and shamed that in our motherland I plead with the professional patriots of all labels: do something to save these miserables, amidst your political ballyhoo.

National reconstruction is humane politics. Abolition of utter hunger and giving homes for human flotsams and jetsams is social justice. Have you seen babies lying in the mud and children crying after the trailing torn sari of the phantom mother slaving on stone-quarrying for a lawless construction contractor in Delhi, the capital city, or Calcutta, the Marxist metropolis with no Government, no labour officer, no working class noisemaker to shed a tear or care to call law to order?

We must change this social order shot with injustice, change this religion of material pleasure and worldly success devoid of ethics and morality.

Gandhiji, whom most politicians on auspicious occasions flatter as the Father of the Nation, said a few things on Industrial Justice. He has gone on record: "I want you to make your labourers co-partners of your wealth." "We have unfortunately come under the hypnotic suggestion and the hypnotic influence of capital, so that we have come to believe that capital is all in all on this earth. But a moment's thought would show that labour has at its disposal capital which the capitalist will never possess. It is wrong to think that a piece of metal constitutes capital; if we go to the very source, it is labour that is capital, and that living capital is inexhaustible ..." Gandhiji's economic ideology he spelt out in *Young India* way back in 1928: "According to me, the economic constitution of India, and for the matter of that, of the world, should be such that no one under it should suffer from want of food and clothing. In other words, everybody should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make the two ends meet. And, this ideal can be universally realised only if the means of production of elementary necessaries of life remain under the control of the masses. These should be freely available to all as God's air and water, are, or ought to be; they should not be made a vehicle of traffic for the exploitation of others. Their monopolisation by any country, nation or group of persons would be unjust. The neglect of this simple principle is the cause of the destitution that we witness today, not only in this unhappy land, but other parts of the world, too."

This contribution is from Justice Krishna Iyer's acceptance speech when receiving the Sir Jehangir Ghandy Medal for Industrial Peace at the Xavier Labour Relations Institute, Jamshedpur, on February 20, 1982.

It is ironic that Article, 48 (A) notwithstanding, God's air and water are rare because the big industrial plants want more profits at less cost, be the social cost what it may. If Big Industry bullies and Law's limbs hang limp, what hope has Labour from the Law? That takes us to Nehru's thesis at the Lucknow Congress: "I am convinced that the only key to the solution of the world's problems and of India's problems lies in Socialism, and when I use this word I do so not in a vague humanitarian way but in the scientific economic sense. Socialism is, however, something even more than economic doctrine: it is a philosophy of life and as such also it appeals to me. I see no way of ending the poverty, the vast unemployment, the degradation and the subjection of the Indian people except through Socialism."

Today, the Republic is constitutionally socialist. From here, we may glimpse the concept of social justice as articulated in the Articles of our legal Bible, the Constitution, which binds judge and lawyer, Government and Opposition, management and worker. Our country being a Socialist Republic, pledges social and economic justice (Preamble plus Article 38) and makes certain principles fundamental in the governance of the nation (Article 37). Kindly read with me Article 38 (2): "The State shall, in particular, strive to minimise the inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities not only amongst individuals but also amongst groups of people risiding in different areas or engaged in different vocations." Article 39, which has overriding effect as a mandate to the State, but has equal force to the private sector if activist judges oblige the State, by appropriate interpretation, not to extend State licences and other facilities unless Part IV be obeyed by it in action. When I say "activist judges," judicial eyebrows will be raised, I know. But the inevitability of history will force the pace. Articles 39, 39A, 41, 43 are a welfare code for workers, even as Article 43A postulates partnership. Article 43A says: "The State shall take steps, by suitable legislation or in any other way, to secure the participation of of workers in the management of undertakings, establishments or other organisations engaged in any industry." I read that provision only to show that, though it is in the Constitution, it is dismissed as a paper tiger and is more honoured in the breach than in the observance by the public, the joint and the private sectors, and ironically, by by the state itself on its legislative and executive sides. Lifeless Law is national deception.

INDUSTRIAL Jurisprudence must produce a comprehensive and effective code of industrial relations and regulations expressing the social philosophy of the Constitution which, I may point out, is non-aligned. It helps the weak but is pragmatic. A wider social vision shows that, conceptually speaking, "Industry" is where goods and services to satisfy human needs are produced by concerted action, by fruitful partnership. All the sectors of industry must realise this to be the new perspective of a nation in distress. Industrial peace is not the silence of the cemetery forced by law, but the song of joy where life has some stakes still. Industrial jurisprudence — the orderly progress through industrial justice — is the practical application of the basic structure of social justice to common welfare in the field of production. Judges are engineers of this process and artists of many chemicals and colours mixed in just proportion, the goal being that the industry will survive and those who sweat too will survive. To jettison the worker to keep profits up is unjust economics. But workers who kill the goose that lays the golden egg are abettors of national injury. A sense of belonging is the key to success on both sides.

Industrial justice and peace demands of judges a compound of legal learning, human equations and consciousness of national necessities. Justice Felix Frankfurter, the great American on the Supreme Court, put it in lovely diction: "A judge should be compounded of the faculties that are demanded of the historian and the philosopher and the prophet. The last demand upon him — to make some forecast of the consequences of his action — is perhaps the heaviest. To pierce the curtain of the future, to give shape and visage to mysteries still in the womb of time, is the gift of imagination. It requires poetic sensibilities with which judges are rarely endowed and which their education does not normally develop. These judges must have something of the creative artist in them; they must have antennae registering feeling and judgment beyond logical, let alone quantitative, proof." Chief Justice Earl Warren spoke what judges here must hear: "Our judges are not monks or scientists, but participants in the living stream of our national life, steering the law between the dangers of rigidity on the one hand and of formlessness on the other. Our system faces no theoretical dilemma but a single continuous problem; how to apply ever-changing principles of freedom."

I have talked to you about Gandhian perspectives and constitutional value-leanings. I have quoted to you what great judges regard as judicial know-how. But India, today, must surmount its current crisis, especially in the developmental-distributive field, by adoption of pragmatic humanism and production patriotism by the triple partners of the process. The State's Industrial Policy leaves much to be desired, not in an elocution competition enunciation and hortation, but in the commitment to principles of *economics where man matters* and "each according to his needs" has play. The State, it is a pity, has let down the Constitution for reasons best left to surmise.

It is equally a pity that the public sector is run on the life-style of the private managements, with politicisation and primitivisation making it worse.

Labour disputes, even in the public sector, are faced unimaginatively with focus on fight, not right, on force, not fair settlement. Long litigation over disputes is expensive and embitters. Yet, we have few model employers who will talk to labour and settle on a give-and-take basis at a stage when more give and less take may still be humane and a gain. It is equally a tragedy that Labour is often geared to battle, competitive over-kill, splittism and politicisation under adventurist leadership. The vast unorganised sector, mostly rural or migrant construction workers, is the most tortured. The organised sector itself has many strata and is self-divided through plural politicised unions. Unity, which is strength, and constructive partnership, which is the role of labour to make it the production backbone of the nation, are still a consummation devoutly to be wished. Goondas and policemen come into operation when strikes start and conciliation processes become fruitless rituals. Desperate workers turn noisy, vituperative and violent, because managements exploit politics, remain heartless and fail to regard the worker as partner. How transformed will the industrial cosmos be if both wings have enlightened entitlement to the prosperity and adversity of the Industry? Man matters and more production becomes relevant if the worker gets distributive justice *pari pasu*, the cards are played openly and the cake shared justly.

Harmony, in industry as in other national affairs, is music from the heart, not forced notes with the whiphand. The labour union, once faith is created and goodwill smiles on both sides, will take care of the quality and quantity of production because they have stakes in the size of the cake. This development-cum-distribution orientation alone will orchestrate industrial relations, not kilkenny cat fights of futility. Too many families are hungry and the nation must feed them. We have brains and brawn, but make headway backwards. Destructive politics — a tool in the hands of the capitalists and, at times, a temptation with unions — pollutes the air. No one believes the voice of the partisan Executive. And Judges, too, have covert prejudices and latent politics. A new wave of nationalism in production and humanism in consumption must be the note to be struck, the rhythm to be pulsed, if industrial harmony — that urgent desideratum — were to prevail. We are a socialist Republic and social justice is the national signature tune. We are hungry and poor and need all the resources even to survive. Within these parameters our norms of profit and wages and management partnerships must be worked out. This is the law of life and life of the law. This is social justice in its relativity and industrial justice *where man matters*. I stress this human side because among the billion "absolute poor" of the earth over 250 million are warehoused in India as flotsams, jetsams and dire-destitutes — men, women and children — the like of which elsewhere in the world no eye has seen, no heart conceived and no human tongue can adequately tell. In Tagore's words, they are "the eternal tenants in an extortionate world." Industrial equity, justice and good conscience must be read in this context

The ugly reality is that we have unsocial socialists and anti-socialist politicians. We have planners whose stock is too low. We have "feudal" capitalists devoid of even professional skills and clinging to familial lines of fossil management, with graduation in opportunist politics and corrupt tactics. We have workers who have no ideological nor trade union training and, on occasions, play capitalism from the other end or think that extremism in sound and fury is good policy. A progressive discipline, a fresh dialogue, a programme of realism-nationalism-humanism must be forged with focus on more production, more equity in the share of profits, more respect for each other, more social concern — in short, more patriotism in industry. It is no longer a private sector. All industry is in the People's Sector.☐

Budget Inflation and Plan

M.J.K. THAVARAJ

***Mainstream* has published three articles on the Central Budget by Prof. S K. Goyal (March 6, 1982), Girish Mishra and Prof B.B. Bhattacharya (March 14, 1982). We publish here the views of another expert on the Budget.**

BUDGET or budgetary policy cannot be seen in isolation. First, budgets at all levels of government are to be seen together. Secondly, fiscal policies are better revealed by budgetary trends over a number of years than by a single year in view. Thirdly, fiscal policy is to be seen in alignment with other economic policies and regulatory measures to gather a clearer picture of its impact on prices, development, income distribution and so on. Thus, stability will be affected by fiscal, monetary and pricing policies as well as by conditions of supply and demand and operations of the parallel economy. Fiscal policy will have larger impact on development, directly on the public sector plans and indirectly over the rest of the economy. Balance of payments will be influenced by international economic environment, trade policies and other external transactions of the Government. We are, however, concerned more about the Central Budget for 1982-83.

In contrast to 1979-80, economic indicators have been cheerful in the last two years. Thanks to good monsoon there have been two consecutive years of record harvest. Industrial production has also been looking up. Man-days lost due to strikes and lock-outs have declined. Consequently, the increase in national income has kept up with the average envisaged for the Sixth Plan period. Foreign exchange reserves have been drawn down by nearly Rs. 1,300 crores during the current year. A part of the IMF loan has been utilised. Edible oils and even foodgrains were imported. All these are expected to bring down the price level. But nothing like that has happened. All that the Government claims is a deceleration in the rate of inflation. Its claim is based on the fact that the rate of increase in the index of wholesale prices has slowed down. While wholesale prices in 1980-81 had recorded an increase of more than 18 per cent over 1979-80, the increase up to January 9, 1982, has been less than 9 per cent.

This, however, is no consolation. First, prices have continued to increase in spite of record crop, higher industrial production, and withdrawals from foreign exchange reserves. Secondly, consumer prices have recorded higher rates of increase from year to year. While the rate of increase was only 8.76 per cent in 1979-80 (a year of all-round deterioration in economic performance), the rate of increase has been 11.39 per cent in 1980-81 and 13.2 per cent up to August 1981. This implies that while national income increased, the real income of the majority of the working people and salaried employees is being seriously eroded. The general impression created is that the escalation in consumer prices is due to increase in prices of crude oil and petroleum products. In fact, oil is only a minor villain of the piece. It is increases in the price of primary products like cereals, pulses, edible oils, fuel, etc., which account for the bulk of the increase in consumer prices. Since primary products dominate consumer expenditure of poor and middle income groups, it is they who have borne the brunt of the inflationary trend in recent years.

What is more intriguing is the yawning gap between wholesale and retail prices. This has happened despite the relatively small increase in money supply in the current year. The upward spiralling of consumer prices could therefore imply (a) a step-up in the activities of traders and speculators with the help of black money; and (b) elongation of the chain of marketing and distribution as well as an increase in the margins gained by these intermediaries. Price rise could also be attributed to the inflationary effects of mobilisation and disbursement through the budgetary operations with which we are

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immediately concerned. In fact, taxation, escalation of administered prices, freight rates, tariffs, etc., of the public undertakings as well as large doses of deficit financing have contributed substantially to rising consumer prices.

The Jha Committee has established that about 80 per cent of the tax revenue in the country is raised by way of indirect taxes. They had also maintained that nearly 60 per cent of indirect taxes are drawn from relatively poorer sections of the population. Despite the glaring inequity of indirect taxation, Union Finance Ministers have continued to rely heavily on indirect taxation while at the same time extending considerable relief in direct taxes under the pretext of promoting savings and stimulating investment and exports. In fact, direct taxes were sought to be reduced during the two years 1981-83. Any increase noticeable in the revised figures for 1981-82 is either due to increased buoyancy or due to large profits reaped by the corporate sector. For instance, the profits of Oil India Corporation increased enormously on account of the drastic increase in the price of domestic crude.

There are a few distinctive trends evident in the pattern of resource mobilisation in the last two years. First is the exclusive reliance on indirect taxation. Secondly, greater emphasis has been placed on customs duties than on excise levies. Thirdly, railways have hiked their freight rates and passenger fares to unprecedented levels. Fourthly, administered prices of several investment goods and infrastructural facilities have been sharply increased.

The Budget for 1981-82 sought to raise about Rs 320 crores by way of indirect taxation, of which customs revenues were to account for Rs 290 crores. But the revised figures are higher by more than Rs 700 crores, of which nearly Rs 400 crores is attributed to increases in excise revenues. That is to say, 1981-82 witnessed taxation to the extent of about Rs 1,400 crores of which customs accounted for about Rs 600 crores and excise for about Rs 430 crores. To this we must add over Rs 350 crores mobilised by the railways and Rs 1,300 crores mopped up by way of hiking up administered prices of steel, coal, oil, aluminium, etc. In his Memorandum to the IMF the then Finance Minister had acknowledged that "the additional burden borne by the consumer because of these adjustments amounts to over 3 per cent of the GNP" (Para 13 of the Memorandum). Since the cumulative effect of prices of investment and intermediate goods, raw materials, freight rates, power tariff, etc., on consumer prices is a multiple of the amount directly raised by the Government, one could very well imagine how inflationary the pattern of resource mobilisation by the Central Government has been.

The mobilisation envisaged in the Budget Estimates for 1982-83 is no less than in the previous year. The mobilisation effort for the year had begun well before the Budget season. The previous Railway Minister raised Rs 320 crores by way of enhancement of freight supplementary charges with effect from January 1, 1982. The Railway Budget for 1982-83 has proposed to raise Rs 257 crores largely by revising passenger fares. Similarly, the Communications Minister raised Rs 100 crores by revising the tariff rates for telephones. The Budget has proposed to raise Rs 35 crores by an upward revision of postal rates. Thus, both the Railway and Communications Ministers have sought to raise more resources by resorting to extra-budgetary methods which are beyond the pale of Parliamentary voting procedures.

The General Budget has proposed to raise about Rs 590 crores almost exclusively by way of indirect taxation during a ful year. Over Rs 390 crores of this is expected to be collected by way of five per cent increase in the auxiliary duties on imports as in the current year. Excise levies are to yield about Rs 196 crores. However, it should be borne in mind that, in the current year, the revised estimate for customs and excise revenues is more than three times what was envisaged in the Budget. There is no guarantee that such gross underestimation will not be repeated. Exen if we ignore the element of deliberate underestimation of revenues, the total mobilisation since January 1, 1982 would exceed Rs 1,300 crores for a full year. It is not unreasonable to expect another round of increase of administered prices and charges of several public enterprises and infrastructural facilities. Dual pricing of cement is only the beginning of a chain of events to come. In the vicious circle of price-cost spiral which has entwined the public sector, a periodic revision of prices has become inevitable. Otherwise, increased losses in public undertakings would partially offset increase in tax revenues. Last year increases in administered prices preceded the Budget. In the ensuing year such increases may be expected to follow. Even if we ignore what is to come, mobilisation by way of customs, excise, freight rates and so on will have a cumulative effect on consumer prices. This can happen even if crop conditions continue to improve.

Since the Second Plan, the focus of fiscal policy has been on redistribution of income from the masses of consumers to the so called savers and investors who were supposed to usher in an era of accelerated growth and rising standard of living. What has really happened is a nominal increase in per capita income accompanied by an aggravation of poverty and inequality. While the gains of development have been garnered by owners of large property and multinational corporations, every crisis arising from drought, economic recession, industrial sickness and adverse balance of payments has led to an increase in burdens imposed on the large mass of consumers on the one hand and larger concessions and incentives for the very rich on the other. As seen earlier, the inflationary content of the Budget for the ensuing year will further impoverish the already immiserised poor. The so-called small savers may look at the enhanced limits of standard deduction, concessions on equity contributions, dividend interest income, etc, with some satisfaction. But they should be aware that even the so-called instruments of small savings yield much larger returns to the higher income groups. For instance, while the Capital Investment Bond is expected to yield a tax-free income of 7 per cent on the subscription, the effective rate of return on incomes above rupees one lakh may be as much as 22 per cent. Besides, up to a limit of Rs 10 lakhs, the subscription and the return would be exempt from income, wealth and gift taxes. Such is the nature of the innocuous-looking novel instrument! Social Security Certificate which tripples in 10 years is another such novelty.

As the Union Finance Minister has put it, the motto of the Budget is "save invest produce and get concession to export." Apart from concessions to savers and investors mentioned earlier, 30 per cent depreciation allowance for energy saving devices and systems or for minimising environmental pollution, tax exemption of luxury hotels on their gross receipts, exemption of plantations from wealth tax, continuance of investment allowance for another five years, increased deductions on capital gains, 100 per cent deduction in respect of donations to rural development programmes, for conservation of national resources, National Children's Fund, etc, concessional treatment of dividend income earned from companies manufacturing basic drugs, synthetic rubber and rubber chemicals, and concessions to savings and investments made by Indians staying abroad and so on, are some of the new features of direct taxation. Production is sought to be stimulated by way of excise duty concessions extended to 38 items embracing basic raw materials and other important industrial inputs and certain finished products. These concessions are made available if production of these items is in excess of 10 per cent over a period of twelve months beginning from March 1, 1982. It is not clear whether any distinction is made between increase in production out of already-established capacity and from newly-created capacity.

Similar confusion prevails in respect of income-tax reduction on export profit for exports whose turnover in the coming year will be in excess of 11 per cent of turnover in the current year. Tax relief of 25 per cent is also given to construction contractors operating abroad. Allowing the industries established in the Free Trade Zone to market 25 per cent of their output in the domestic market may have far-reaching consequences. This may amount to opening the flood-gates in terms of import liberalisation. Secondly, it may be difficult to resist similar concessions to 100 per cent export-oriented units outside the FTZ. Many of them have been established in collaboration with multinational corporations. They may come into clash with the interests of Indian producers. Cash subsidies on exports have also been increased while those on food are being curbed.

The Sixth Plan assumed price stability. Accordingly, the Draft Plan regarded Rs 3,500 crores as the safe limit for deficit financing. However, the Final Draft raised the limit to Rs 5,000 crores. But the deficit incurred during 1980-82 amounts to around Rs 3,675 crores. With the deficit shown in the 1982-83 Budget, the overall deficit financing during the first three years of the Sixth Plan would exceed the five-year limit by Rs 40 crores. Two more years are to follow. One can have genuine doubts as to whether deficit financing could be confined to the budgeted limit. Already, four instalment of DA due to Central Government employees have been officially announced. More may follow if the cost of living continues to rise. The constraints on state finances could compel them to resort to more overdrafts which have amounted Rs 1215 crores in the current year up to the end of February. A part of this will have to be accommodated within Central finances.

Can we be sure about the quantum of escalation in Defence expenditure? In the current year Defence expenditure increased by about Rs. 900 crores over the previous year. But what is provided for in the present Budget is only about Rs. 500 crores over the revised estimate for 1981-82. Is this realistic? What about other non development items like outlays on law and order machinery? Will the buoyancy in revenues be large enough to meet such unanticipated escalations? If found inadequate, the actual deficit financing will be far in excess of what is envisaged in the Budget. This is bound to stoke the inflationary fire.

The Sixth Plan envisaged an outlay of Rs. 97,500 crores, of which Rs. 48,600 crores is to be in the state sector. These outlays were reckoned in terms of 1979 80 prices. With the present Budget, the total outlay on the Plan for three years amounts to over Rs. 53,000 crores which is about 53 per cent of the amount envisaged for five years. Of this, about Rs. 27,500 crores will be in the Central sector and Rs. 26,000 crores in the States sector which account for about 56 and 54 per cent of the outlays envisaged under the Plan.

As figures stand, the overall outlay for the five-year period may be fulfilled in financial terms (that is, at current prices). But as the Planning Minister has acknowledged, there has been a 20-30 per cent cost escalation in public investment during the two years (1980-82). With the present trend of exclusive reliance on indirect taxes, inflationary financing and enhancement of administered prices of investment goods and economic overhead facilities, the upward pressure on costs of construction will continue. By a modest reckoning, if the costs of construction go up at the same rate as they have done so far, in real terms the Sixth Plan outlay may not be more than half of what was envisaged.

One consequence of cost escalations in public investment is that funds get diverted to the core sector. In the current year, in the Central sector, 56.5 per cent of the Plan outlay was earmarked for oil exploration, coal, power, transport and communication, steel and minerals. In the new Budget, the same sectors have claimed the lion's share. For instance, the outlay in petro-chemicals would be increased by 90 per cent in the coming year. Coal-power would account for an increase of over 60 per cent. The energy sector is accorded top priority. More than a third of the Central outlay would be absorbed by this sector. Thus, the core of the Plan is getting narrower. Inevitably, other sectors are being starved of funds. For instance, in the current year, social and Community Services accounted for less than what was envisaged in the Budget. The capital outlay on this sector envisaged in the Budget is less than what was envisaged last year. It is because of this that the emphasis in many sectors has shifted from the Plan to the new Twenty-point Programme. On close examination, one would find that the amounts involved in these programmes are relatively small. Even then, barring a few programmes like Minor Irrigation, Family Welfare, IRDP, NREP, Hill Areas, etc., the increases in most others are marginal. This has become inevitable in view of the shifting priorites.

One of the glaring manifestations of the brewing crisis in Plan implementation is the sharp decline in the relative emphasis accorded to the State Plans. The last Budget proposed to increase the State Plans outlay by 22 per cent though the overall increase in the size of the annual Plan outlay was only 20 per cent. In other words, the step-up the State Plans outlay was larger than that of the Centre according to the Budget Estimates for 1981-82. But, many States had to prune the outlay in view of constraints on resource mobilisation.

Central assistance was pegged to about Rs. 14,300 crores for the five-year period irrespective of increases in prices and costs. Since the buoyancy of State revenues does not keep pace with escalations in costs, States' own resources fall short of their Plan requirements. They do not also have access to a larger share of market borrowing. They were not entitled to the proceeds from Bearer Bonds and other instruments like Capital Investment Bonds. Consequently, many of them have run into heavy overdrafts. Hence, their Plan outlay tends to fall below the target not only in real terms but also in money terms. For instance, in the new Budget, while the overall Plan outlay is slated to go up by 21 per cent, that of the States will increase only by 14.4 per cent as compared to 27.7 per cent in the Central sector. It is indeed a very sharp decline considering the fact that in the last Budget the percentage increase was relatively higher (22 per cent) in the State Plan outlay. Some of the States like Kerala face the danger of no increase in Plan outlay from year to year. In the case of Kerala, annual Plan outlay has only increased nominally from Rs 273 crores in 1980-81 to Rs 275 crores in the two successive years. Out of the Sixth Plan outlay of Rs 1550 crores, the amount approved in the first three years is only about Rs 820 crores. It seems unlikely that the balance of Rs 730 crores could be utilised in the remaining two years. The same could happen to many other poorer states severely constrained in resource mobilisation.

This is the fate of Plan outlay in the States at current prices. Many of the States have given high priority to outlays on power development, major irrigation and transport and communication. The Centre has also accorded higher priority to these sectors. But, as seen earlier, cost escalations have affected the construction sector more severely. Showing down major construction projects would cost more in the longrun while at the same time delaying the benefits. This has necessitated the diversion of resources from socially-oriented programmes and activities to a few capital-intensive infrastructural facilities, some of which may not be so important from the point of view of the development of the economy of the State. The net result is neglect of programmes designed for the welfare of the weaker sections to which the new Twenty point Programme pays loud homage.

The increase in industrial production in the last two years is largely attributed to the utilisation of excess capacity found at the begining of the Sixth Plan. It is also maintained that excess capacity in the industrial sector is rapidly getting exhausted. If this is true, further growth of output will depend on good monsoon in the remaining three years and further expansion of productive capacities. The moot question is whether capacity creation consistent with the growth rates assumed in the Plan is feasible when the real worth of investments in the economy is drastically reduced by escalations in costs of construction. Will the projected stream of outputs flow from a truncated investment plan?

Thus, there are several features of the budget, which seen along with the relevant aspects of industrial and trade policies, would be highly pleasing to the IMF. Exclusive reliance on indirect taxation, inducements to savings, concessions to investment, relief to export, liberalisation of imports, steep increases in administered prices of public undertakings, curb on food subsidies, are all in conformity with IMF conditionality. Of course, all these elements were present in the Memorandum submitted by the Union Finance Minister to the IMF: One can argue that these are self-imposed disciplinary measures. They can also be construed as tunes played without the paymaster having to call them, since the piper is quite willing to oblige.☐

MARKS VERSUS LENIN?

They probably won't believe it when it comes chattering over the financial wire in the Kremlin, but Carl Marks is suing the Soviet government. He didn't like the outcome of the Revolution and wants a refund of $ 619 million and 65 years interest — preferably in gold.

Mr Marks is more capitalist than his name might suggest. He runs a New York securities and investment firm, and has filed an action in the Federal Court there to recover money sunk into two 1916 Tsarist bond issues. The underwriting syndicate included, among others, J.P. Morgan.

At the time, a five-year bond paying 5½ per cent in gold was pretty good buy. Vladimir Ilyich Ulanov, after all, was an obscure agitator holed up in Switzerland. Who was to guess that, for the price of a third-class Zurich-to-Petrograd railway ticket, he would wreck the Russian bond market?

Nor, apparently, the 3,000 innocents Mr Marks now represents. The last time anyone traded their 1,000 dollar bonds they peaked at their post-war high of two cents. Showing themselves thoroughly sore losers, the owners have now taken advantage of a law passed in 1976 allowing American citizens to sue a foreign government.

If they win their case, each bond will be worth not its original $ 1,000 but some $ 34,250 in accumulated interest—a rough total of $ 21,819,750,000 or 284 tons of gold. All they then need to do is to enforce the judgment against the heirs and assigns of the I. Ulanov (sometimes known as Lenin).

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Basis for Rural Development

E. HABIBULLAH, Major-General (Retd)

FROM February 24 to 27 a most interesting seminar was held in Jaipur which was sponsored by the North India branch of the United States International Communication Agency. The most notable feature of the report is the high-sounding, and even philosophic, theorising of most of our countrymen who participated, as opposed to the down-to-earth, trial-and-error analysis by the American participants, together with practical analyses done by them which could apply to India.

Dr R.K. Arora in his summing up put it correctly that the "rural development effort in the US is concerned with improving the capability of rural individuals." Also, in summarising the eight points of the American approach, he concludes with point 8. "The rural development programme is built on local initiative, though it does not depend only on local resources and leadership."

However, the social conditions prevailing in India and the economic inter-relationship in the village must be the guide. The setting up of small farms and making the small farmer more opulent is not the vital point for India as is the case with small farms facing the very large farmer who holds sway in the USA. What is vital for us here is to understand that the composition of Indian village society is traditional even today. This has its advantages and disadvantages. The main disadvantage is the acceptance of superstition and shibboleths as the governing features of life and extreme suspicion of anything resembling change. Though it was expected that the removal of zamindars, whom such a situation suited most, would release a desire to change rapidly, this has not happened. A new set of power-holders have come into the vacuum created. They are a small kind of bourgeoisie, who lend money, sell liquor or have shops, and flour or rice mills. These power-holders are gradually taking the place of the zamidars by owning tractors, employing the village artisans, and continuing to lend money. They are also sought after to give decisions in cases of differences or to browbeat the poorer sections.

This new power class seeks to keep itself in position by supporting the politicians in power. Through their favour they derive more power for themselves and pick up permits, agencies and official contracts. These are largely the elements who in fact control agriculture also, taking on *batai* (share-cropping) the lands of the very small land holders, who in turn sell their own labour or migrate to towns to add to their small incomes from land holding.

Each village has its ancient layout and still retains its ancient panchayat system to some extent, that is to say, communities live in communal areas, have their own community panchayat, well, occupations, etc. This suits the new power-holders and the new politician. It has distorted the village panchayat, in that the panchayat is not voted by individuals but by communities. The classic panchayat of the elders has gone for ever. In my village the "Julaha" and the "Teli" are the largest communities. Several communities make a pact to outvote the others. The local political boss supports the most powerful. This leaves the others frustrated, and ready to seek alliances that will help weaken the powerful combinations.

In this social and economic environment, it is not possible, or it is almost impossible, to seek initiatives, while power and the money have passed into the hands of a well defined dominant class, controlled by politicans.

On the other hand, the block and district levels are dominated by bureaucrats who are "Government servants" and not "public servants." Therefore the entire policy and decision-making, the needs of the community as such, and the locality (the target area) are at their mercy. That is why most of the Indian speakers at the seminar talked of integrated planning and levels of operation; but, as one of them said, there is total confusion as between operation and administration. Those responsible for showing what must be done must be village people themselves.

The primary input to enable them to choose properly, is education. While the majority of village children do not go to school, adult education is simply non-existant. Therefore, without guidance and consultation to locate the needs of the entire village community, the actual needs of each village become very difficult to define. The second most important factor is health. This again requires education of a different sort; but a health worker to serve not more than 1,000 of the population is essential. The best way to provide one, is to train a person from the village and at the same time provide basic health instruction in schools and combine such instruction with adult literacy.

Thirdly a minimum diet must be guaranteed and provided. Basically, *roti* and *dal* is the diet to be guaranteed; but a surfeit of either to the privileged classes will have to be disallowed till a surplus is produced. This can only be done by observing Article 47 of the Constitution, (duty of state to raise level of nutrition and standard of living and, to improve public health), and setting aside enough funds for the purpose.

Ultimately roads, electricity, transport and drinking water supply have to be the infrastructure of rural life before we can even begin to improve life, leave alone change the life-style of villagers. It is for this reason that the Sixth Plan is likely to go the same way as the Third, Fourth and Fifth.

In the U.S.A large farms have driven people to the cities. In India the sharpening of struggle and the growing disparity in the rural areas are driving the weak to the cities, leaving the field to those who can muster force. □

Discussion *(from p. 9)*

The major contradiction in this situation, however comes from a different relation. If the Government policy becomes neutral, in the sense that it does not prevent the natural growth of the system, but only supports its inherent tendencies, it is the large houses and the monopoly groups that will very rapidly start to nominate the scene. The existing distribution of assets and wealth are such that it is these groups which have the capability to expand, surplus to invest, entrepreneurship to promote and capacity to mobilise savings from all sectors. In other words, a neutral economic policy through a process of liberalisation and encouragement of growth would initiate a competitive process. But it would soon degenerate into monopolistic or oligopolistic situation.

One cannot, of course, have a set model of capitalist development for such an economy. But it helps understanding if we identify this potential of development as a combination of the Brazilian and South Korean types of development. It may have some large public enterprises, but the economy will be dominated by large and monopoly houses in combination with multinationals. It may build up a thriving modern sector, but surrounded by a large hinterland of backward and poor population. Exports will have to play an important role in this economy, but instead of being a leading sector, in an economy like ours, they are more likely to be a necessary support for maintaining its viability. Instead of being an export-led growth it is more likely to become an export-dependent growth.

THIS is not the place to go into the details of this model, but it is worthwhile to get an idea of its very broad outlines. Once the large and monopoly houses reach dominance in specific industrial fields, they would try to maintain a high rate of profit by pushing up the price or by preventing a fall in the price. With rising cost of production, the pressure on the prices will continue to be upward, when the prices are determined by cost with the rate of profit mark up. That is the source of contradiction in this system. Although the total size of the market and demand may sustain large number of competitive industries, there may not be enough domestic demand for specific industrial products at higher prices, unless the process of income distribution is such that the total size of the markets continuously expands. In other words, a monopolistic growth in an economy like ours will soon face demand constraint of its own creation and to overcome that it will have to find export market. But the prices in the export market cannot be controlled by the domestic monopolists, which would invariably be lower than the price they receive at home for the same products. There will, therefore, be increase in pressure on the Government for export subsidies so that the return on exports may be sufficiently attractive and the units may continue to operate without a fall in the overall rate of profit. Exports will not lead to their development. They will be necessary to sustain their viability.

At the same time, they try their best to reduce the cost of production. This is not to pass on the benefits of the cost reduction to the ultimate consumers. It is mainly to retain their rate of profits without having to continuously raise the product prices. Prices seldom fall in such an economy, but costs fall, only to contribute to the rate of profit.

There will be two ways of reducing these costs: Firstly, by reducing the prices of inputs, which would be the result if the Government allows large-scale import of raw materials and capital goods. The domestic prices of these inputs would almost invariably be higher than in the international market. Even if there is no inefficiency, they will have higher cost, because the factor and commodity prices are distorted in a monopoly-dominated economy. Secondly, there will be attempts to import technology that would reduce the unit cost of production. The technology chosen would often be labour-saving, leading to unemployment, which would not naturally be the concern of the monopoly producer. But there will be a search for these technologies and since in the modern world technology transfers seldom go unaccompanied by private investment, there will be a search for partners among the multinationals.

That is how the monopoly houses and the multinationals combine with each other as an inexorable logic of the system. The multinational partners would also help the units to export their products because of their marketing contacts, although they will mostly be interested in the domestic market of India and not so much in letting the Indian companies have a share of their own international market. They could also supply the raw materials and inputs that have to be imported for their production. The Indian company may pay for the association out of its profits but the country as a whole has to pay for it through its foreign exchange earnings from exports. So the dependence on exports will grow, and since these exports may not be able to meet all the import requirements, there will be pressure for borrowing from the international capital market, and from multinalional banks. Export-dependent growth will lead eventually to further dependence on the multinationals.

The other implication of a search for higher profits and lower costs will be the attempt to reduce real wages or to prevent their increase. In the initial phase of such development with the volume of industrial output increasing, there may be some addition to overall employment even if in any individual unit there is retrenchment and pressure on wages. Similarly, there can be some rise in the absolute level of living of some sections of population who can benefit from the spill-over effect of such industrial development. But the degree of inequality will increase with more and more assets and wealth of the country concentrating in fewer and fewer hands.

IN a nutshell, the consequence of this kind of export-dependent monopolistic capitalist development will be a steady growth in the economic power of certain sections of the bourgeoisie. Their interest will conflict not only with the working class but also with small entrepreneurs and petty businessmen. There will be increasing pressure on accommodating the multinationals and for the sake of such accommodation, on reorienting national policies towards greater alliance with the Western capitalist countries. One will increasingly hear the counsel that the independent posture in the foreign policy may upset our position in the international economy.

It is to be noted that if such a development scenario unfolds itself, the monopolist-large houses-multinationals alliance will find the greatest stumbling block on their path in Indira Gandhi. Her image of anti-imperialism will come in conflict with their need for accommodation with the Western capitalists. Her emphasis on self-reliance and growth of indigenous capabilities will clash with their demand for free imports of machinery and raw materials as well as technology. Her promotion of small-scale sector and spread of entrepreneurship will tend to negate the basis of their monopoly growth. And her anti-poverty programmes and incentive-schemes will divert resources away from the banks and other financial institutions which otherwise they could have used. Above all, her emphasis on the growth of the public sector can potentially build the real countervailing power in the system, against this large monopoly houses.

One need not conclude that Indira Gandhi will automatically be able to arrest the growth of these large houses — monopoly elements. What has to be stressed to that the interests of these elements and of Indira Gandhi are antagonistic. Indira Gandhi cannot give up her base if she wants to remain in power. The monopoly elements cannot grow in strength if that base is nor destroyed.

THE antagonism between these elements and Indira Gandhi's base will become clear if one pursues the implications of this model of growth a little further. A major problem for a sustained growth of this kind is that it is dependent on a steady increase in the marketed surplus of agricultural products, particularly of wage goods, such as foodgrains. For this it will be necessary that the surplus farmers should grow faster, for it is they who can increase the market supply. There will be an increasing tendency towards an *entente* developing between the rich farmers and the big capitalists; farmers' savings being increasingly invested in industrial securities. There will be increasing pressure on the Government to reduce the prices of fertilisers and agricultural implements which could increase the rate of surplus in agriculture. Side by side with this tendency will grow the inequalities of the rural areas, development being concentrated in smaller sections of the farm population and the vast masses remaining poor if not getting increasingly impoverished.

Here again there will be another source of conflict between this big monopoly-capitalist and big-landlord combine on the one hand, and the forces represented by Indira Gandhi on the other, because such a system with growing inequalities cannot be sustained for long without repression. It will be impossible for Indira Gandhi to allow such repression to go on in any significant scale because thereby she would antagonise herself from the base of her support — the overwhelming masses of the Indian poor. In fact, every time she puts forward an anti-poverty programme or formulates a slogan that encourages the poor to consolidate, she heightens the consciousness of the people and makes it even more difficult for them to be suppressed. If these monopolist-landlord elements come to dominate the country, they cannot allow Indira Gandhi to continue.

WHERE do the Left forces stand in this scenario? Are they strong enough to withstand the pressure of the reactionary groups on their own without Indira Gandhi? Can they arrest the development of the Indian economy along the path of monopoly-capitalist and big-landlord alliance without the support of the large masses which stand up behind Indira Gandhi and traditionally with the Congress which she represents?

The reactionary groups will try to divide the base of the Left in numerous ways. Since the economy will not remain stagnant, according to this model of development, there will always be crumbs of development which will be available to different sections of the population. The perceptible, even if temporary, improvements in their conditions will bribe them away from any alliance that can prevent this kind of development, particularly since economism has been the cornerstone of the Left movement in India. There will be split in the working class, in the peasantry as well as among the middle class. In the vast complex of the inter-play of pressure groups which, as we have discussed above is the essence of politics, the lines will be drawn not simply on economic terms but also along caste, communal, regional and linguistic affiliations. It would always be necessary for the Left to forge a coalition of interests. Can they do this without aligning themselves with the coalition that Indira Gandhi will have to develop in order to retain power and maintain her leadership of the ruling group?

As during the time of Nehru, the strength of the ruling group, this time led by Indira Gandhi, would depend upon the strength of the groups that form the ruling coalition. If the Left can strengthen these groups and thereby strengthen this coalition, they will in fact strengthen themselves. For given the state of the Indian economy, there is definitely another alternative path of development which is viable and which has the potential for development towards socialism. This is a path of the maximum spread of growth both in industry and in agriculture so that increasingly larger numbers of people can enjoy the benefits of progress. In industry, it implies the growth of small and medium entrepreneurs and in agriculture the growth of medium and small farmers. The overall rate of growth of gross national product may not be as high as the model of monopolist-capitalist growth outlined above, but it can still be a reasonably high growth with social justice, with increasing emphasis on providing subsidies and incentives to the weaker sections and generating indigenous capacity for self-reliance.

It would be wrong, however, to think that this kind of growth can be engineered through regulations and controls only. The growth of productive forces cannot be suppressed if the potential is there just because the Government wants to impose controls. The laws of economics follow the operation of objective forces and the market has ways of manifesting itself in the form of open or black economy if a legal framework is sought to be imposed upon contrary objective tendencies of development. Instead of controlling the growth of productive forces, it would be necessary to guide their development, to let them grow but along the desired channels.

THE only way to prevent the growth of monopolist-capitalist elements is to develop countervailing power mainly in the form of public-sector enterprises, but also supported by the growth of small and medium enterprises. The Nehru era slogan of public sector retaining the commanding heights of the economy has become even more significant today. The public sector must utilise all the opportunities of development that are available to the monopoly and large houses at our present stage of industrialisation. It should enter all the fields, wherever it can sustain itself out of its own investible surplus. It should maintain its command through the prices of its products and services, the profits earned, and finances mobilised. It should become a truly countervailing power. It must be efficient, vibrant and growing without subsidies. It must earn sufficient returns and work to full capacity.

If we have such public-sector enterprises then the alternative path of development that has been broadly outlined can definitely withstand the pressures from the monopoly-capitalist-big landlord alliance. This is not to say that this path of development will automatically lead to socialism. It will again depend upon the strength of the pressure groups that the Left forces will represent and how that strength grows over time and space.

But this is an option that is available to us, an option which Indira Gandhi in her programmes and pronouncements, is trying and has promote. Whether she will succeed in realising these options in practice will depend upon the strength of the coalition of forces she is trying to forge in her favour. If the Left could strengthen that coalition, it would strengthen its own cause. In the context of the state of the Indian economy today the ultimate interest of the Left and the compultions of the ruling group represented by Indira Gandhi have largely converged.□

Of Wars and Pacts

(Continued from page 5)

Communist stand, by linking the present agreement to the Baghdad Pact (Mutual Security Agreement of 1959). Not only that. In many policy utterances made by Pakistan's President during the last two years he has emphatically given the indication that he is interested in building up a "strategic consensus" with the United States in its headlong confrontational course the latter has taken in South Asia, in regard to the Soviet Union. This is diametrically opposed to India's regional strategic perceptions.

One of the mainstays of India's national security policy has been the desire to establish the subcontinental region as a strategic entity free from the cross-currents of super-power rivalry; and for thirty years now, a major obstacle in the path of achieving this regional independence has been Pakistan's security involvements with the USA or West Asia or China. In the 1950s Pakistan jointed SEATO and CENTO, thus subjecting a crucial segment of the sub-continent to cold war pressures. During the years of India's maximum exposure to a Chinese threat, Pakistan's rulers not only sought out China as an ally but invited its presence into the subcontinent, over the Karakorum Pass. When Bhutto ruled, Pakistan was declared a part of West Asia. And now, General Zia has chosen to contribute to the US strategic policy in South Asia.

In these circumstances, so long as India's and Pakistan's security policies do not converge on a common meeting point on regional security, it is difficult to envisage how a no-war pact between the two can hold any significance except as a temporary, stop-gap convenience in order to contrive a respite before contemplating aggression: and that is not what India is seeking.

On the other hand, even if a Treaty of Friendship is acceptable to Pakistan at present, the present talks between India and Pakistan might still lead to a third variation of a no-war pact. In such a variation the participants would remain adversaries on security matters, but might nevertheless come to an agreement on forms of conflict control. This could be a positive outcome from the present talks and one that will carry considerable strategic significance.

During the next decade it is possible that both India and Pakistan will acquire small nuclear armouries. In that case, the mutual nuclear threats would be a destabilising factor for both countries. The two could from now work out a credible pact foreclosing the use of the nuclear option — a sort of mini-SALT Treaty — from which both would benefit. Just as the US and USSR (while remaining adversaries) offered up their cities as hostages (by banning development of ABMs in SALT-I) India and Pakistan could devise like inhibitions to make their non-nuclear declarations credible. Even if that is the only outcome from the no-war negotiations, it would still be a significant achievement. □

We have accepted in India as our objective a socialist pattern of society. That means not only economic organisation but something deeper which involves a way of thinking and living. The acquisitive society, whose chief aim is profit-making, not only brings conflict in its train but is opposed to the basic urge of modern man for social justice. Socialism is based on the growth of material resources as well as social justice and a co-operative method of working.

Jawaharlal Nehru

LET US SHARE OUR GREAT LEADER'S CONCERN AND ACT ACCORDING TO OUR CONSCIENCE

SAH BROTHERS

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Doctors in Distress ?

Mainstream

VOL XX NO 30 SATURDAY MARCH 27, 1982 Re 1

POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

When Caste is King

AN Allahabad High Court Judge was gunned down along with his son late at night on a forest road in South U.P., in what looks like a well-planned ambush laid by a dacoit gang.

This incident, shocking by itself, has hit the headlines as the Judge happened to be the brother of the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. Reports from reliable sources suggest that this outrage was the result of protracted caste tensions that mark both the administration and social life in the entire Hindi region, particularly in its heartland covering UP, Bihar, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. The dacoit gang which had massacred Harijans in Deoli happened to belong to the Rajput community: after some time it agreed to surrender to the police on certain tacit assurances from the authorities. Following that surrender, another dacoit gang leader Chabiram was persuaded by some political elements to offer surrender, and he with his men waited for several days. Chabiram had the reputation of being some sort of a Robin Hood who would not harm women and would rob the rich to help the poor. But Chabiram belonged to a backward community and instead of accepting his surrender offer, the UP police killed him and his men; the villagers mourned his death, and the impression got round that the Rajputs whose preponderance in the administration is conspicuous would not spare a dacoit gang from a community low down in the caste hierarchy. It is even suggested that the hapless Judge was killed by a gang which wanted to avenge Chabiram's killing. Even the UP Chief Minister is faced with threats of revenge.

The entire episode brings out the enormity of caste warfare that has been going on in this Hindi belt. If the Janata Raj in 1977-79 marked the ascendancy of backward communities displacing the dominance of Brahmins in administration and politics, the Congress-I victory in the 1980 poll brought the Rajputs to the forefront because, as a matter of expediency, the Congress-I leadership promoted the Rajputs. The clash between powerful caste lobbies has contributed in a large measure to the virtual breakdown of administration over the greater part of the Hindi belt.

What is indeed amazing is that only the day after the Judge's assassination,

in this issue

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the Union Home Ministry's annual report was presented to Parliament, claiming that the overall law-and-order situation in the country has shown a distinct improvement. Not only the Hindi belt, the country is yet to recover from the shock of communal violence in Maharashtra and is still reeling under the new-dimension communalism in Kanyakumari at the southern tip of the land. But the Home Ministry report calmly claims that the *number* of communal incidents has come down over the past year. There has been tension again in Aligarh, and violence in Baroda, in the past few days, not to speak of the continuing social or sectarian tensions in other parts of the country, whether in Assam or elsewhere in the north-east, or in Bihar or in Punjab or in Gujarat. For sheer complacency in the face of harsh reality, the Union Home Ministry under the nonpareil Giani Zail Singh is unbeatable.

Not that the police has been inactive. Loud claims to the contrary, there have been in States like UP and Andhra Pradesh fake encounters staged by the police to get rid of troublesome rural workers seeking minimum wage or human conditions of living. And yet Zail Singh's extraordinary set-up sees nothing but improvement in the law and order situation all over the place. Would that we were all blessed with the same kind of blindness which so resembles bliss!

Ironically enough, amidst the smugness that permeates the Ministry's report, note is taken carefully of the increase in labour unrest and of the militancy of trade unions, of student unrest, and the like, without however going into the causes or sensible remedies. The sense of physical insecurity that prevails among citizens in many parts of the country, including the national capital, and certain sensitive border areas, would seem in the eyes of the Home Ministry to be less important or urgent than the "militancy" of trade unions and the working people's demonstrations or struggles to secure a part of what is legitimately due to them as the producers of national wealth. Organised crime, of which the marauding dacoit gangs of UP are a symbol, and the nexus between criminals and some of our politicians, which raises the social status of killers and robbers and renders even evidently had little impact on the Giani's dominion. What is described as the Left-wing extremist movement is presumably of greater concern to the Ministry than plain bestiality, ranging from dacoit outrages to massacre of Harijans or armed attacks on minorities.

In a recent survey report the Government itself expresses concern at the crime growth rate having gone beyond the rate of population growth in the last two decades, warning that "if the trend continues, growth of crime and population would outstrip the growth of police strength in the ensuing decade."

Most disturbing of all is perhaps the fate of the much-advertised anti-dacoit operations in UP, India's most populous State. It is clear that many gangs are still very active, some dreaded ones having established a base for themselves and some others having established political links or links with the police or both. Coupled with caste civil war, the easy availability of lethal weapons, including sophisticated firearms, to criminals on the rampage is a factor with grim potentialities that has not been adequately understood by the powers-that-be, though we are now told that the Government is "examining measures to regulate the availability and use of arms by the public." Even the large-scale issuance of firearms licences in the last few years is difficult to understand, and what steps are being taken to end the traffic in unlicensed arms cannot be said to be clear. This is true of UP, Bihar and many other areas, and new areas are getting involved in the murderous racket. Whether or not any "foreign hand" is involved, it is a fact that weapons with foreign markings are seized now and then. The public has a right to know more about all this. Is the Home Ministry in a position to furnish the answer? If not, what is the justification for its huge apparatus?

To point out all this is neither to ignore the good work done by some officers and men of the police force in some places, nor to raise a hue and cry just because it is a Judge or a Chief Minister's brother who happens to have received the fatal bullet this time. A police official has been quoted as complaining of total neglect of research in this sensitive sphere; others have pointed out that honest and upright officers quite often end up facing punish-eased out for incompetence, corruption or worse. But how do we set about rectifying this situation? Who is to take the initiative? The straight and simple answer would seem to be, the Central Government, but it is the Centre's Home Ministry, once handled by stalwarts and now under the control of comic-strip characters, which is to blame for the deterioration in recent times. If the ruling party has often found the company of dacoits and thugs congenial, some of the Opposition parties are no better; it is hardly necessary to go into the history of the parties and forces behind organised communal riots or casteist violence.

If the curse of casteism is to be eliminated, it has to be attacked not merely as a law-and-order problem, but a socio-economic challenge polluting our national life. Mere pontificating on caste evils by politicians will not do. In our daily life it has to be combated while measures, both political and constitutional, need to be taken to deal with its baneful effects in our political life.

Democracy and casteism cannot coexist.

C.N. Chitta Ranjan

March 23

COMMENTARY

Doctors in Distress?

The convulsion that lately racked India's premier medical institution appears, on the face of it, to have subsided. The Bihari MP who started the furore with charges of incompetence against two prominent cardio-thoracic surgeons has been quietly backing off from his earlier allegations. The Prime Minister has intervened on behalf of the two doctors, who have been exonerated and persuaded to withdraw their resignations. 'Political interference' has been denounced, and the 'honour' of the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences, held at the height of the melee to be the issue at stake, has been vindicated to the satisfaction of those involved.

But the AIIMS case is not simply a morality play depicting an injustice redressed. The attack on Dr Gopinath and Dr Venugopal is neither the first of its kind nor will it be the last. Some years ago, a brilliant surgeon at the AIIMS was slandered in a cowardly manner through a planted press report about his 'colour-blindness'. The more exacting and conscientious a doctor is, the more he drives himself and his juniors to work, the more he shows up the mediocrity and sloppiness of others and excites the malice of the meaner sort. So it has been with the cases mentioned: Dr Gopinath, it seems, is even less dear to the Resident Doctors' Association on account of his irascible temperament and tyrannical insistence on standards. The 'colour-blind' surgeon's competence to perform the complex operations in which he is a specialist, acknowledged world-wide, was questioned only when he took a public stand on the appointment of a politically powerful senior colleague's favoured candidate. If you rock the boat, you can expect to get mud splashed on you; lie low and bob along on the scummy surface with the rest, and you'll be safe: a common enough phenomenon in public institutions, and all the more so in a high-profile outfit like the AIIMS.

The Gopinath-Venugopal episode has provoked some media exposure of the political machinations within the Institute, the shortage of facilities, and the ramshackle infrastructure, and rightly so; but not enough of an outcry, and certainly not enough analysis among those who currently decide how we shall live or die. It is only to be expected that political VIPs will meddle in the Institute's affairs, cultivate lapdogs, jump queues, etc, etc.

Health is at the top of everybody's priority list and the AIIMS, for all its deficiencies, presents a concentration of medical expertise which is present only in isolated pockets in the country. Thus, about 80 per cent of the patients who throng its corridors and wards come from outside Delhi, mostly from UP and Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir (and, in recent years, from Afghanistan and Yemen). At least half of these patients from neighbouring States are among the poorest in the land, and the most seriously ill. They choose to endure the discomfort of travel, grope their way through the chaos and hubbub of the various departments, put up with harsh words, rudeness and indifferent paramedical attention. Why? Bihar, the home State of the irate Paswan, sends up a substantial contingent — health services there being either non-existent or at rock-bottom, in terms of both medical competence and honesty. Perhaps that is what the honourable parliamentarian should exercise his ire upon — since he is apparently in a position to make waves — rather than confine his indignation to the death of his kinsman through the alleged negligence of AIIMS doctors.

We are forced each time to come back to the tired old story of demand, supply and distribution. As long as you have huge multitudes of poor, malnourished people without elementary health facilities, a system of health care which is alien and inaccessible to them, a health establishment which views medical care as a commodity to traffic in, you will have a stampede at the AIIMS, and shins are going to get broken — but not of the kind of doctor who curries favour with the powerful and sees only VIPs by appointment in his out-patient clinic. He will continue to collect his awards and junkets abroad.

A doctor, after all, is as fallible as any of us; it is the frailty of our flesh that gives him his almost magical power. Struggling with pain, illness or death, we are as vulnerable before him as before a deity or a beloved; and this happens whether we are high or low, whether our doctor is a sage or a quack. He can use this power either "to alleviate human suffering and preserve human life", in the tradition of the great healers of the past, from Hippocrates and Galen to Lister and Jenner, or to exploit human misery in order to accumulate wealth and influence, or simply to make a living. His choice of motivation depends on his temperament and upbringing; and the question raised by the AIIMS affair is not fundamentally whether Doctor X or Y is a good guy or a rotten egg, but how we intend to develop health services in the country.

About 90 per cent of illnesses are self-limiting; this means that most complaints eventually just go away, having been dealt with by the body's own defence mechanisms — and also that 90 per cent of medical intervention is statistically bound to succeed. This does not imply that no help at all is necessary; in fact, the act of demanding and receiving help is in itself profoundly therapeutic. But it does call into question the kind of investment of effort, time and money we put into producing the kind of drugs and doctors we have. Certainly we need high-expertise models like the AIIMS, to deal with grave illnesses and to promote research and development; but what we need much more urgently, at this stage, is an army of health workers equipped with basic training in treating everyday minor complaints and detecting major problems to refer to hospitals and doctors. It has been done with enormous success elsewhere — China being the trail-blazer in this area — and, if we are serious enough to take up cudgels against the prejudices of the medical establishment, it can be done, and must be done in India.

A book recently published in India, *Where there is No Doctor*, written by a visionary activist called David Werner, provides a blueprint for a solution to our problem, if anyone out there is listening or cares. Otherwise we can look forward to more scandals, influence-mongering and scrambles in the citadels of privilege and more death and disease in the wasteland surrounding them.

Manjulika Dubey

March 22

SCRAPBOOK

Human Rights, Reagan Style

Western correspondents stationed in India, especially American, keep their eyes open for the slightest opportunity to denigrate India, and readily pick up news items and comments in our media, particularly the press, to serve this purpose. But Indian correspondents posted in the Western countries, especially the United States, generally turn the blind eye to even ugly situations and extremely undemocratic practices in a country which presumes to consider itself the leader of the "Free World", the democracy of democracies.

Here is an example: a longish, shocking story of discrimination against blacks, published quite prominently in the *Washington Post* (March 6, 1982). It tells of the blacks in one county in South Carolina who are systematically denied the right of representation and whose rights are now sought to be permanently frozen by the Reagan Administration, aided and abetted by the very Senator, a conservative, supposed to represent the constituency. The following excerpts from the *Post* report speak volumes:

HALF the population of Edgefield County is black. Until the 1980 census the blacks were in the majority. But in the last 100 years a black has not won against a white candidate....

That disparity has had ... predictable results. Streets in white neighbourhoods are paved; in many black neighbourhoods they are not. White neighbourhoods have sewage systems; most black neighbourhoods do not....

Eight years ago some blacks here went to court to overturn the county electoral system which, they said had shut them out of their rightful share of local power. In 1980, under the old test of what constitutes a voting rights violation, they won their case. Four days later the US Supreme Court said a different test should be used, the test that the Reagan Administration, (Strom) Thurmond (local Senator) and other Congressional conservatives want to write into the law.

If the new Supreme Court standard is written into the law, blacks in Edgefield County and in other parts of the country say they believe it will become almost impossible to win a voting rights case.

The problem, as far as Edgefield County blacks are concerned, is the at-large election system. Although blacks make up a solid majority of registered voters in two of the county's five election districts, there is a county-wide open election where voters can vote for all five county commissioners. Because whites do not support black candidates the blacks don't win.

(The trial was held in 1975, and District Court Judge Robert Chapman withheld his opinion, believing the state legislature would take up the issue; finally on April 17, 1980, he declared the county election system unconstitutional).

Chapman found that "whites absolutely refuse to vote for a black" ... No black has ever received a Democratic nomination or been elected to public office against a white candidate in Edgefield County. He found that blacks were excluded from the jury system, and that, until the trial began, blacks were excluded from county employment.

(After recounting how desegregation was turned into a mockery at Strom Thurmond High School) he said (the) County has "a long history of racial discrimination in all areas of life. There is bloc voting by the whites on a scale that this court has never before observed, and all advances made by blacks have been under some kind of court order. Black voters have no right to elect any particular candidate or candidates, but the law requires that black voters and black candidates have a fair chance of being successful ... Black participation in Edgefield County has been merely tokenism, and this has been on a very small scale." Chapman ... ordered the county not to hold elections until a "new and constitutional" system could be adopted.

But four days later the US Supreme Court (in another case) ruled ... that plaintiffs must prove that local officials consciously intended to discriminate against blacks. Edgefield County blacks had proved only that the system had the effect of discriminating against them. *Chapman had to reopen the case).*

There is a clause in the Voting Rights Act requiring states such as South Carolina, with a history of racial discrimination, to submit any changes in voting laws to the Justice Department for approval. Edgefield County made changes in 1966 and 1976 without obtaining the required approval....

Last fall the House overwhelmingly approved legislation extending that section indefinitely and clarifying the standards of proof to allow plaintiffs anywhere to prove a violation of the law simply by showing that their election laws are discriminatory in effect. So far nearly two-thirds of the Senate, 65 members, have agreed to support that bill.

But in spite of the specific language of the bill barring any requirement of proportional representation by race, the Reagan Administration is strongly opposing the measure and is asking Congress to adopt the "intent" standard. ...

Charles Coleman, the county attorney bridles at outside criticism that in the county whites refuse to vote for blacks. "I don't think that's any of their business. It's my prerogative, my right. If I want to vote white, it's my business," he said....

Coleman said the real problem in Edgefield Country is that blacks don't vote. ...

Willie Bright, a black born here 44 years ago, has worn out the tires on his car trying to get blacks to register and vote. But he understands why they don't.

"If you've never been poor, there's no way you can understand," he said. "Whites don't understand poor blacks. Lots of blacks don't understand poor blacks. Black poor people expect white people to run everything. It's always been like that. When you're poor, you're worried about existing today, not what's going to happen tomorrow."

Nathaniel Jackson, president of the local NAACP, said most Edgefield County blacks work on "white-owned farms, in white-owned kitchens. They may rent their homes from whites. In countless little ways they are still dependent on whites. And they are reluctant to take a chance on offending those whites."

Bright added that blacks are still not comfortable going to the 142-year-old county courthouse on the old-fashioned town square to register. It is still a place where whites are in charge, and, historically, the courthouse meant nothing but trouble for blacks. ...

FOCUS

Women's Honour : Battle Is On

ANJALI DESHPANDE

UNNOTICED, unhampered, Delhi is smoothly sinking into an abyss of no culture. Traditional values lie abandoned, and modernism has not succeeded in penetrating deeper than the skin. People still cling to the age-old images of the ideal woman who would stay confined to the kitchen, would not dare go out unchaperoned. Women out at work or in colleges are deemed fit to be trifled with, and a woman visiting a restaurant without the protective arm of a man is just not tolerated. Traditional culture, not ideal in the modern context, is being systematically destroyed without anything positive to replace it. We float in a cultural vacuum, and wild abandon and anarchy are the rule.

Open-air and closed-door strip-tease and semi-strip-tease acts, in the name of cabarets, are mushrooming all over the city. Borrowed disco tunes are percolating from the upper strata to the lower-middle classes. It is pathetic to watch distorted, vulgarised versions of the *bhangra* being danced to the tune of these jarring discs. Bombay films tirelessly drill the image of the 'nice woman' rescued at the eleventh hour by a strapping hero, implying that nothing bad can ever happen to the *Indian Woman* and at the same time teaching woman to bank upon someone else's muscle instead of developing her own personality and physical strength to deal with a world growing more and more brutal and cruel every day. Some years back the cultural invasion was slow and gradual. Now the pace of the onslaught is growing. It took a decade for a perceptible change in the past, and now it takes just a day.

Molestation of women has not been rare in this accursed capital city, on the campus or outside it. The recent campus incidents got attention because of publicity and the firm legal action insisted upon by the students, teachers and principal of Indraprastha College and taken by the police. The molestations in the vicinty of a single college for four days reveal how eve-teasing a most inexpressive word to describe the insults heaped upon women every day by all and sundry everywhere — is being used as a political weapon to discourage women from venturing out of their homes, to force upon them the image and role of the "ideal woman" nurtured by tradition.

The first day, on March 17, a girl from Miranda House was chased by eight men loaded in a car and on a motorbike, in broad daylight (2 p.m.) on Mall Road; frantically seeking protection she landed in a police officer's-house, the eight boys were arrested and the publicity began. No eyebrows were raised when it turned out that one of the hoodlums was an ACP's son, but the miscreants being taken into custody so promptly, despite the ACP's son, did generate some astonishment, demonstrating how rare a nugget dutifulness has become.

Predictably, the police did not deem it necessary to keep a vigil on the Mall for the next few days, especially since the accused, identified and booked, were safely behind bars. Next day eighteen boys accosted three girls of IP College, on their way back to college from a restaurant not very far from the college and generally considered a part of it, and molested one of them, slapping another.

At the time one girl was separated from her friends and the other one was being slapped at the gate of restaurant, and the girls were shouting for help, about twenty-five customers in the restaurant went on calmly devouring their chowmiens while the six waiters continued serving, unruffled. Although the ring-leader of the gang of eighteen, Pavan Verma, and his closest associates who were regular customers of the Madhubans restaurant had been spotted even before they began teasing the girls and making obscene remarks, the owner of Madhubans flatly denied knowing them when the police asked him the next day. And this after a waiter had given all information about Pavan Verma to the girls the day before the incident.

When the girls returned to college after that, the constable supposed to be doing his shift duty outside the college was as usual nowhere to be seen. The girls gave the police an earful when the latter swarmed all over the place taking down statements. But this did not deter two CRP men from molesting girls at the gate of the restaurant the next day! The restaurant owner had requested two CRP men, two *pahalwans* from the Chandagi Ram Ka Akhara and two other toughs to guard his joint. These six men, presumably posted at the gate to protect women customers, molested girls. As the news spread and students from IP hostel rushed to the spot and began questioning the molesters, the police whisked away the CRP men in a jeep. It is said in the campus that the two *pahalwans* have intimate contacts with the police as they are hired by the police to rough up persons considered a nuisance.

Since than the CRP has approached the principal begging her to drop that particular case—and the concerned CRP men magnanimously offered to touch the feet of the girls. The CRP's honour, if any be left, was at stake, and worse, the two men would lose their jobs. In India being unemployed may be worse than going to the gallows, but the girls or the principal are in no way obliged to help save their jobs. The attitude of policemen is clear from a comment made by a constable during investigation: "If they wear jeans and go out with boy friends, they deserve to be molested," he said.

Publicity for these incidents is already showing its effect on two fronts — legal and social. The Principal of IP College has emphatically stated that they are not going to drop any case, nor raise the walls of the hostel to imprison girls and give them a false sense of security. The students are bent upon bringing the guilty to book. For the first time a case of "eve-teasing" is receiving wide support.

On the domestic front, parents are relucant to send their daughters to college. Many students dislike the publicity for it creates problems at home. Yet they realise there is no way but to fight at home as well as outside. The shocked silence is breaking. Parents of the victims do not want the cases to go on, they do not want their daughters to appear in court, to be stigmatised. The social stigma is the hurdle that stopped the Principal of St. Stephen's College last year from registering complaints about Holi molestations inside the college despite loud protests from the girls.

First and foremost, women have to shake off the false image foisted on them — and learn not to feel ashamed when in fact is not they who are in the wrong. They are not the sinners. The young women in IP College have managed to fight their families and insist on legal proceedings. The policeman, the loafer, the gardener at the college, the father all argue on the same premise — that if only she had stayed at home nothing of the sort could have happened. Yet many girls are realising that to live with heads bent, turning a blind eye to everything, is far worse than appearing in court.

A sense of acute insecurity is still pervasive. Even if the girls do get lessons in self-defence they need courage inspired by security to use the techniques. And as it is, few know the art of self defence. Women are given to dressing up and appearing smart; there is nothing wrong in being well-dressed but modern women must learn not only to value their bodies but to trust their physique. The body can with proper training be a wonderful weapon.

The general public are apathetic in the rare instances when girls do try to hit back at anyone trying to harass them. People in general are apathetic because they are afraid and they feel guilty. They are afraid of the collusion between the goondas and the powerful people behind them. Some are themselves guilty of teasing. Sensible, aware women and men have to break the sense of insecurity and assist those who have found courage, moral, psychological and physical, to fight back. It is not a skirmish, it is a war. The fight will neither be easy nor a minor one, for it strikes at the very roots of the social system. The battle has just begun.

The Public Account Car

R.K. SACHDEVA

SETH is a typical self-employed businessman. He buys a brand-new car every two years and his entire family makes use of it. He is not affected by either the five-fold increase in petrol prices or the three-fold increase in the price of a car during the last ten years—for he does not spend anything either on the purchase or on the maintenance of his car. He makes others spend on it.

Only a few days ago, he bought his latest for Rs. 72,000 from the showroom and disposed of his previous car which he bought about two years ago. He has bought this car in his business account which indeed he did in the case of his earlier ones also.

He bought the car which he has just sold two years ago for Rs. 50,000 against borrowed capital from the bank at 15 per cent interest. During the period of two years, he spent Rs. 500 a month on petrol and maintenance of the car. The total expenses entered in his business accounts for the maintenance of the car during the period of two years were three-fold, namely: (1) interest on capital at 15 per cent per annum or Rs. 15,000 for two years; (2) depreciation at 20 per cent on book value, that is, 20 per cent of Rs. 50,000 or Rs. 10,000 during the first year and 20 per cent of Rs 40,000 or Rs 8,000 during the second year, making a total of Rs 18,000; (3) operating cost at Rs 500 a month or Rs. 12,000 during the period of two years.

So, the total expenses entered in his accounts were a sum of Rs. 15,000 on interest, Rs 18,000 on depreciation and Rs 12,000 on operating costs, making a total of Rs 45,000.

Seth keeps his accounts straight and makes no secret of the fact that he uses the car for his own and his family's purposes. So the income-tax rules allow him to debit only two-thirds of his total expenses on the car to his business accounts, that is, a sum of Rs 30,000.

Seth's income falls in a high bracket and his income-tax liability for a marginal income of Rs. 30,000 would have been of the order of Rs 20,000. So, the net post-tax cost to him as per his books for the maintenance of his car during the

(Continued on page 34)

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Lilmuni Manjian is Dead

A CORRESPONDENT

ON Sunday, March 7, at nine in the morning, Lilmuni Manjian of Sonajori village, Jabagudi panchayat, Madhupur Block in Bihar, died.

In actual fact she didn't simply die, she was killed. She was killed by the people who tolerate a social and political system that provides medical care only to the rich and to townspeople and denies it to poor villagers. Of those people who tolerate and therefore perpetuate this state of affairs doctors themselves are very largely responsible. It is indeed ironic that society holds doctors in such high regard when they are often responsible through their callous and undisguised pursuit of money and prestige for so many deaths. The case of Lilmuni Manjian is a particularly shocking example.

Having borne two children without undue difficulty the birth of her third child seemed unlikely to cause trouble. She did not, of course, have any antenatal care which might have foreseen and helped to avoid a difficult labour. Indeed, the idea of antenatal care would have been quite a new one to her. She went into labour on the morning of March 4, and by evening when the baby was not born it became apparent that something was wrong. Her labour pains stopped. This was Nature's way of protecting her, for if the pains had continued and the birth of the baby was obstructed she would surely die. Nature protected the mother's life, but sadly the baby had already died.

The relatives spent the next day anxiously waiting for the return of a volunteer nurse working in a village about two miles away. She arrived as night fell and went to her in spite of the walk across fields and a stream in the dark and heavy rain. As there was nothing that could be done immediately she sedated her and passed a catheter to relieve her distended bladder and returned home with difficulty at 1 a.m. At 7 a.m., as her condition had become weaker an intravenous infusion of dextrose was given and, as there was some uncertainty of being able to take out the baby there, it was decided that in spite of the difficulty of carrying her, she should be taken to a doctor in Madhupur, who would be able to extract the dead baby after which her condition would surely improve and her life be saved.

She was carried six miles to Jagdishpur station and from there by train to Madhupur. She was weak but her pulse had improved following the infusion and she was quite conscious and talking. At this stage there was 90 per cent chance with skilled and immediate care of saving her life.

The doctor, a professed "Christian" and Vellore-trained surgeon who has the expertise and facilities (he performs Caesarian operations when required) refused to treat her. He said and I quote, "They are Santhals, they will not pay." The nurse said that if they could not pay she would pay. He said, "I have no nurse, I can't expect my wife to help such a case." The nurse said, "I am here and will help." When he could say nothing more he became angry, and went inside again telling them to take her away.

She was taken to another doctor who at first agreed to treat her, then changed his mind saying he had no instruments to take out the baby. He even refused to let them keep her on the veranda outside until other arrangements were made. The reaction of the nurse there, which is not uncommon, was to blame the villagers for her condition. Is it a villager's fault that he lives in a village? Is it his fault that in the village there are no health facilities whatsoever for miles around? Was it the woman's fault that the baby's birth was obstructed and the baby died?

Three other doctors in Madhupur were contacted; of them one was away, one was about to go out, and one, the Block Medical Officer, said he had no instruments. Madhupur is a town of about 40,000 population and the Block headquarters of more than 500 villages, and the Block Medical Officer has no forceps or equipment to treat an obstetric emergency.

By now it was 1 p.m. The nurse bought a bottle of saline and infusion set and with difficulty put up an infusion to keep the woman alive while the search for help continued. After much trouble, with the co-operation of one doctor before he went out, a jeep was borrowed and the woman was taken in it to Deoghar subdivisional general hospital 37 miles away reaching there by about 5 p.m. The woman survived the terrible bumpy journey on the floor of the back of the jeep but was becoming delirious. The doctors were reluctant to do anything saying she would die, One of them, seeing the concern of the nurse for a poor villager laughed at her behind her back. After persuasion they agreed to try and at about 6.30 p.m. they succeeded in extracting the dead baby under general ansesthetic. The woman having somehow survived the journey, survived the general anaesthetic and the bleeding which, luckily, was slight, following the birth. There was hope. Now with skilled attention if her weak condition (she was in "shock") could be overcome with careful monitoring and proper use of drugs and infection checked, she could still survive. But this sort of attention is not for a poor villager in a government hospital. Her blood pressure was not checked, her temperature was not taken, there was no spirit to wipe her skin before the injection, there was no tape to secure the needle of the intravenous infusion, there was no suction to clear her throat when she was still unconscious after the anaesthetic, there was no oxygen cylinder. Here these, the most elementary medical facilities, are only for the rich and influential. Her body, unrecognisable as her former self, gave up the unequal fight.

There are those who will say that she was bound to die or that it was God's will or that all that could be done in the circumstances was done. I do not agree. Lilmuni Manjian's death was by no means inevitable. It was the direct result of collective negligence. it was a shameful waste of a young woman's life. Even those doctors and others who wished to help were rendered ineffective and demoralised by the general indifference. Those that treated Lilmuni Manjian as less than human, in so doing became de-humanised themselves. If this story can in any way help people to care and to think about the social causes of her death, her death will not have been completely useless. These things must change and will change if enough people care and if those who care speak out and are not numbed by a feeling of helplessness or fear for their personal safety. To care does not require a particular ideology, religious or political. It means simply to recognise that we are all human beings and if we help each other we can make life better and happier for everyone.

New Nuclear Balance

M. SHANKAR

On March 16, 1982, Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev fired another salvo in the "battle" for "peace" in Europe which is being fought as much at the negotiating table in Geneva as in the mind of Mr X, the average European citizen increasingly concerned about the continent and precarious nature of his existence in a nuclearised continent — about the dangers of living in the shadow of a potential holocaust.

Speaking at the 17th Congress of Soviet Trade Unions, the Soviet President suggested a wide array of arms control measures, including some specific proposals concerning its medium-range missiles deployed in the European theatre. These included the decision to "introduce, unilaterally, a moratorium on the deployment of medium-range missiles in the European part of the USSR," as also the intention to reduce, during the course of this year, "a certain number of its medium-range missiles on its own initiative." The unilateral freeze on deployment would continue to be in force, he said, until an agreement was reached on the reduction of medium-range missiles in Europe or until the Americans began "practical preparations to deploy Pershing 2 and Cruise missiles in Europe.

The other suggestions made by Brezhnev included (i) the resumption of strategic arms limitation talks and a mutual commitment not to undertake a new arms build-up by deploying sea-based or ground-based long-range missiles, and (ii) a mutual restriction of naval operations including the restriction of the area of operation of missile submarines, and confidence-building measures, particularly on busy sea-lanes.

The reaction of Western leaders to the Brezhnev proposals has been, expectedly, cool and skeptical. They have pointed out that the freeze promised by the USSR is nothing new and would not materially affect the situation as the Soviets have already deployed between 250 and 300 SS-20 missiles since 1978. Moreover, as the SS-20s are mobile warheads, not based in concrete silos, they have argued that any decision not to deploy new missiles in the European part of the USSR is meaningless as additional missiles could easily be moved west of the Urals if occasion demanded. The 4000 km range of these missiles would, the West Europeans allege, in any case place European targets within the reach of missiles stationed in the eastern USSR. President Ronald Reagan, for example, held that "the proposed nuclear freeze simply isn't good enough...If President Brezhnev is serious about arms control, and I hope he is, he will join in real arms reduction" and accept Reagan's earlier offer of a "zero option." Other US officials dismissed the Brezhnev speech as a "propaganda ploy" and "yet another transparent effort to disrupt NATO unity."

Undoubtedly the Brezhnev speech, like President Reagan's earlier offer of a "zero option" — which proposed the dismantling of all SS-4, SS-5 and SS-20 missiles in exchange for a US commitment not to deploy 572 Pershing and Cruise missiles under a 1978 NATO decision to modernise nuclear forces — is in part a public relations exercise. Public gestures and pronouncements the world over are designed to appeal to public sentiment and rarely ever, particularly when parallel negotiations are going on, provide or are intended to provide a realistic basis for negotiations.

While the media is a routine tool of diplomacy, appeals to public opinion on the issue of stationing new missiles in NATO countries assume greater importance in the face of the burgeoning peace movements in Europe. Last year hundreds of thousands of anti-nuclear protestors marched through the streets of European cities. Though the intensity of these protests has weakened since the imposition of martial law in Poland, Brezhnev can, by throwing this public gauntlet at the USA reasonably hope to reactivate the European disarmament, movement, thereby increasing pressure on the US Government to reach an agreement at Geneva and resume talks on limiting strategic arms. At the same time the Soviet Union can capitalise on the growing sentiment against an uncontrolled nuclear arms race that has surfaced within America itself.

For the first time within the United States disarmament issues have moved to the centre of the political stage and are becoming the focus of popular protest. In California over half a million people have signed a petition for a mutual US-Soviet freeze on the production, testing and use of nuclear weapons. In Vermont 155 town meetings have endorsed resolutions calling on the state legislature to send a petition to the US Congress urging a similar freeze. The "freeze movement" has surfaced in several other US states — Massachussets, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Maine, New York, Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Oregon and Washington. The resolutions by Senators Edward Kennedy and Mark Hatsfield calling for a "mutual and verifiable freeze on the testing, production and further deployment of nuclear warheads, missiles and other delivery systems" has won support from 17 Senators and 122 Congressmen. The disarmament movement in the United States has support at the grass-roots level from the Roman Catholic Church, ecological groups and on the campuses. The rationale as in Europe is provided by Reagan's macho talk, of reasserting American military superiority, the enormous defence budget and weapons procurement programme and the deteriorating economic situation.

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More significant than the Soviet desire to provide a public earnest of its interest in arms negotiations, however, is the fact that the Soviet leader, for the first time, has made a declaration that any American move to substantially upgrade its missiles in Europe would be considered an unacceptable alteration of the strategic balance and would evoke reciprocal action on the part of the Soviet Union. "If the governments of the United States and NATO allies", Brezhnev warned, "were, actually to carry out their plan to deploy in Europe hundreds of new American missiles capable of striking targets on the territory of the Soviet Union, a different strategic situation would arise in the world. There would arise a real additional threat to our country and its allies from the United States. *This would compel us to take retaliatory steps that would put the other side, including the United States itself, its own territory, in an analogous position*". (Emphasis added)

Some Western commentators have interpreted the veiled Soviet warning as a threat to place missiles in Cuba. Most have, however, dismissed the threat as bluster and bluff and have chosen to see in it a concession to the Soviet hardliners, particularly the armed forces. While there is no doubt that there are voices within the Soviet establishment demanding a tougher posture vis-a-vis the USA (Marshal Ogarkov's recent plea for an increase in defence expenditure to modernise Soviet nuclear arsenals and conventional equipment in order to meet the US threat, comes to mind), it would be worthwhile to examine whether there is any validity in the Soviet assertion that the deployment of 572 Pershing and Cruise missiles would substantially alter the strategic balance.

Though different figures have been bandied about regarding the number of medium-range delivery systems and nuclear warheads deployed by the two sides in Europe, the Soviets themselves have conceded that the Soviet Union has an edge over the West. In an article by Lt. General Nikolai Chervov the Soviet Union published figures which included all US and allied launchers capable of reaching Soviet soil. The launcher total for NATO came to 1031 and to 1055 for the Soviet Union, leaving the Russians with an edge in warheads of 2035 to 1482. But the Soviets contend that if Washington deploys, as planned, 572 Pershing-2 and Cruise missiles, the balance would tip to the advantage of the Western alliance.

The debate over numerical superiority in theatre nuclear forces has helped to cloud an understanding of the real issues involved, for the Soviet Union has had superiority in medium-range missiles ever since the Americans withdrew the Jupiter and Thor missiles from Europe in the wake of the Cuban missile crisis. This superiority was acceptable both to the United States and to West Europe. The Soviet Union could deter a US attack by holding Europe "hostage" and the West Europeans in turn could rely on the protection afforded by the American strategic superiority in inter-continental ballistic missiles to deter a Soviet attack on Europe. The credibility of the American nuclear guarantee however began to be increasingly questioned by West Europeans as the Soviets achieved near-parity with America in the strategic realm leading to the two-track NATO decision to modernise theatre nuclear forces and begin negotiations on limiting these forces with the Soviet Union.

The Russians argue that the SS-20 missiles are a replacement for the earlier SS-4 and SS-5 missiles and have the same range. They hold that under the guise of modernising their nuclear forces in Europe the Americans are attempting to tilt the nuclear balance against the Soviet Union. While Russian intermediate range missiles can only reach targets in West Europe and not in the United States, American intermediate range missiles in Europe would be able to target the Soviet Union itself. They would substantially reduce the warning time available to the Russians as their flight time would be much shorter (as low as 6 to 7 minutes for a Pershing missile placed in West Germany) and the trajectories would be lower.

Now, for the first time, the Russians have invoked, even though obliquely, the agreement reached with the United States at the time of the Cuban missile crisis in 1962. While the Soviet Union officially agreed to withdraw its missiles from Cuba in return for a lifting of the US naval blockade and guarantees of non-intervention in Cuba, Khrushchev also demanded and received a tacit US assurance regarding the withdrawal of US missiles from Europe, in particular from Turkey. This has been mentioned by Khrushchev in his memoirs and is confirmed by Robert Kennedy in his account of the Cuban missile crises — *13 days*. In a private meeting with Dobrynin, the Soviet Ambassador in the United States, Robert Kennedy, while refusing to agree on a public quid pro quo over Soviet missiles in Cuba and American missiles in Turkey, assured the Soviet Ambassador that "President Kennedy had been anxious to remove those missiles from Turkey and Italy for a long period of time. He had ordered their removal some time ago and it was our judgement that within a short time after this crisis was over, those missiles would be gone". On April 25, 1963, five months after Robert Kennedy's talk with Dobrynin, the US missiles were withdrawn.

Most experts agree, however, that though the Soviet Union's decision to remove its missiles from Cuba and avoid a collision with the United States may have been facilitated by the American assurances on Cuba and on European missiles, it was also dictated by the weaker military position of the Soviet Union and its immense nuclear inferiority. Today if the Soviet Union were to place missiles in Cuba in retaliation against the placement of American missiles in Europe (as it has obliquely hinted) the situation would be far more dangerous as the United States would confront a near equal adversary.

Nothing brings out more horrifyingly the increasing risks of a nuclear war and the imperative need for speedy disarmament. The proliferation of nuclear weapons, the improvements in the speed, range, accuracy and yield of these weapons, the advent of an era of sweeping technological advancements in anti-ballistic missiles, anti-satellite and submarine technology, particle beam and laser weapons, and the growing shift towards nuclear war-fighting doctrines drive home the compelling necessity for the two super-powers to reach agreements on limiting, freezing and reducing their nuclear arsenals. □

South-South Meet : Two Facets

N.K. SARKAR

THE Cancun Summit became a failure because of the intransigence, obstructionism and the high-and-mighty attitude of President Reagan. When the South-South Conference was called by Indira Gandhi in the wake of the Cancun meeting, the move raised in the developing countries the expectation that it would give a fitting reply to the insolence of Reagan by developing concrete steps for South-South self-reliance. Unfortunately this expectation has not been fulfilled. It has nevertheless served a useful purpose. It is necessary to carefully analyse the reasons for its failure and to understand the positive contribution it has made.

The two most important speeches made on the same day in New Delhi show clearly the differing expectations from the, Consultations. President Nyerere's Third World Lecture highlighted the need for a radical change in the development philosophy. He deprecated the philosophy of consumerism of the North which is being slavishly imitated by most countries of the South. "Judging by our action," he said, "our national objective seems to be to 'catch up with the North', and development seems to mean buying the most elaborate (technology) and the latest invention in every field, regardless of our capacity to pay for it, even to maintain it. Thus we have created a continuing dependency on the importation of technology and spare parts, which then requires us to produce for export regardless of our people's hunger and present needs".

Instead of defining development as the setting up of a 'modern' sector based on the consumerist philosophy of the North and the technology used to serve that philosophy, President Nyerere would rather define development as "provision of basic needs for all our people". Such a goal would not only reduce the misery of people's lives, but at the same time reduce dependence on the North. "For we shall be concentrating on the kind of economic production and investments which can be sustained by our own resources and our own capacity." Such a policy of national self-reliance would alone ensure the attainment of South-South self-reliance. (See *Mainstream*, February 27, 1982).

Unfortunately, President Nyerere's speech fell on deaf ears. Instead, Indira Gandhi's speech, more or less, set the tone of the deliberations. The dominant note in Indira Gandhi's speech was Unity of the South for strengthening its bargaining position vis-a-vis the North. Both Nyerere and Indira Gandhi emphasised the need for South-South unity; but one wanted it to attain a greater degree of self-reliance while the other wanted to extract more resources from the North. The nine points Indira Gandhi placed before the conference were all aimed at, and required for their implementation, more resources either from the North or from the oil-exporting countries. Indira Gandhi wanted the North and the oil-exporters to give more for the development of the South and she implored the South to achieve a greater degree of unity to obtain better terms from the North (See *Mainstream*, March 6, 1982). In contrast, President Nyerere wanted the South to change their development goal so that greater resource flow from the North would not be necessary. Nyerere's prescription required basic change in internal social and economic structure, while Indira Gandhi assumed these to be unalterable.

It is not difficult to understand why the call for unity to strengthen the bargaining position of the South roused more enthusiasm among the delegates than Nyerere's call for changing the development strategy and objectives. Most countries of the South are ruled by a type of bourgeoisie whose class interest has been deeply linked with the interests of the transnational corporations of the North. Since the colonial days these classes have been used by the foreign companies to extend their influence and their hold over the countries concerned. Even in countries like India where the bourgeoisie is very strong and has reached the monopoly stage, the link-up with foreign companies, is becoming more important for them today than ever before because of the technological dependence Nyerere talked about and because of the problem of internal market created by consumerist development.

It is natural, therefore, that the ruling circles in these countries would not to respond to a call for radical transformation of the economy, making the countries entirely independent of the North. They feel more happy if instead they are asked to unite in order to get a larger share of the surplus that is being taken away by the North. So long as the ruling classes in these countries have economic links with the foreign companies, their anti-imperialism is only half-hearted and is limited to obtaining a better share of the profit, more aid, more grants and loans at lower or no interest, better access to foreign markets, etc. Even in a country like India, where the people won their independence after a bitter struggle lasting over a century, the feeling against imperialism has become considerably lessened in recent years and collaboration with foreign firms is now regarded as a status symbol giving the indigenous companies prestige, greater solvency and better access to both internal and foreign markets. The social consequence of the change in values has resulted in greater penetration of American "culture" and the English language among the upper classes. The philosophy of con-

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sumerism is taking deep root among the upper classes and this has enabled the upper classes to become more wealthy, more westernised and more consumerised in terms of Western luxury goods, while the vast majority of our people are becoming more and more deprived of even the essentials of life.

The rejection of the philosophy of production for satisfying basic needs and the adoption of consumerism as the basic development objective is an inevitable consequence of bourgeois domination over these countries. The representatives of these classes cannot be expected to adopt a philosophy of production of the basic needs for the people. For such a philosophy requires a production system in which investment is guided not by profitability but by social necessity. This in turn would require abolition or at least severe limitation of private property in capital. A system of production for basic needs and rule by the bourgeoisie cannot go together. No wonder, therefore, that President Nyerere's speech did not rouse any enthusiasm at the South-South Consultations.

It was taken for granted by the conference that the main task before it was to find the best way to negotiate with the North to extract more "concession", aid, loan and other facilities. If South-South self-reliance was ever talked about, it was primarily for presenting a united front at the negotiating table vis-a-vis the North. No wonder, therefore, that the various schemes of regional co-operation suggested in earlier international forums received only passing mention and no serious thought was given to them. For example, in all the four major areas that were raised before the meeting, namely, food, energy, trade and financial flow, the major solutions suggested depended on generous contributions from the North or the oil-exporting countries.

The Food Fund, already set up by the IMF, was suggested as the solution to meet the food scarcity of food deficit countries and the need to strengthen

which should not be ignored. It was this anti-imperialist element in it which enabled it to obtain the support of the developing countries. However feeble, and however great the betrayal by the leadership, it was a protest and an expression of indignation against the insults, injustices and exploitation perpetrated by the North on the South, which drew the support of the people. Moreover, the meeting provided a good forum where the imperialist countries could be exposed and the anti-imperialist consciousness of the people in the developing countries could be pushed up to a higher level. Thirdly, the labours of these meetings are not entirely fruitless; some of the schemes of regional and sub-regional co-operation formulated at these meetings are quite sound. If they are not implemented or are sabotaged by the transnational corporations, as commodity agreements often show, it is because of bourgeois domination over the countries concerned. With the elimination of bourgeois influence or its reduction, it is possible that these schemes will be implemented with success and bring considerable benefit to the participating countries. The Indian proposal placed before the meeting for mutual technological assistance is one that can help the participating countries achieve considerable self-reliance. In view of the strong tie-ups between the ruling classes in most of these countries and the transnational corporations of the North, it is likely that most countries of the South would rather seek the help of the transnational corporation than the help of such South-South organisations in the sphere of technology transfer.

Thus the dual nature of the South-South conferences need to be recognised. While the bourgeoisie uses these forums as a bargaining counter, their anti-imperialist content and the contribution they make in the struggle against imperialism should also be remembered.

It is also necessary to keep in mind the difference in the degree of anti-imperialism of the countries in the South in formulating any realistic scheme of

[redacted]

the effort of the imperialist countries to shift the burden to the South is intensified, the countries of the South become politically more conscious and realise the need to develop South-South self-reliance. If one compares the resolutions and speeches of such meetings over the years, one is struck by the increase in their militancy and the growing desire for South-South co-operation. This itself is a very significant contribution that these meetings have made towards the growth of anti-imperialism. It is likely that as their implorations get turned down more and more by the North, an increasing number of people in these countries will realise the futility of trying to catch up with the North and will join the movement for restructuring their economy and their society to make it more basic-need oriented. □

Making District Credit Plan Work

B.K. MUKHOPADHYAY

IN the present article an attempt is made to review the performance of District Credit Plans. While doing so special emphasis has been placed on the State of West Bengal.

Under the Lead Bank Scheme of the Reserve Bank of India, the concerned banks were called upon to prepare Credit Plans for each lead district after completing the fact-finding surveys in those districts. Since the Credit Plans for the three-year period 1980-82 are now being formulated and implemented according to the new guidelines issued by the RBI, a review of the implementation of earlier DCPs has become essential for the purpose of making the new DCPs more effective, as this will help eliminate the shortcomings noticed in the course of formulation and implementation of the existing DCPs.

The objectives of such a study may be enumerated broadly as follows: (i) to find out the reasons for divergence, if any, between planned targets and actual performance; (ii) to examine the extent to which conscious efforts were made by the participating institutions in the district, with special emphasis on the extension of agricultural credit; (iii) to review the part played by the District Level Consultative Committee (DLCC) in coordinating and monitoring the performance under the Credit Plan; and (iv) to suggest measures in the light of findings related to the above in order to activate the implementation process.

Identification of factors responsible for deviations from planned targets has been done with separate reference to financing agriculture and allied activities sector, industry sector and service sector.

The reasons for shortfalls in the matter of extending loans to the agricultural sector (with reference to planned target) may be summarised as follows: (i) Inadequate progress in extension of irrigation facilities; (ii) growth of farm financing has been hit by inadequate distribution centres for agricultural inputs. Poor response from the agriculture Department with reference to implementation of planned programme was another factor; (iii) financial institutions, particularly co-operative banks, did not find it encouraging to extend farm loans mainly because of unsatisfactory repayment performance; repayment rate may be put around a paltry 20 per cent; (iv) location of bank branches has largely stood in the way of farmers going to the banks for getting loans: for the bankers, absence of proper land records and uncertainty about the 'patta' allotments made it difficult to extend loans: 'pattas' of persons whom banks have financed have been subsequently cancelled and transferred to some other persons; (v) credit absorption in the agricultural sector is low owing to poor adaptability techniques.

Financing of allied activities, particularly dairying and pisciculture, was inhibited by the shortage of veterinary experts in the villages. This implied that the veterinary certificates necessary for cattle insurance cannot be obtained by intending loanees. Difficulty was there in maintaining steady supply of fish spawn, fingerlings, etc.

Some developmental programmes have also faced certain special problems which, in turn, affected smooth implementation. For example, the SAHP (Special Animal Husbandry Programme) faced problems like: (a) difficulties in identification of loanees; (b) non-availability of heifers; and (c) unwillingness of entrepreneur to avail of loan for the scheme.

Moreover, financing of agricultural projects requires adequate supervision and proper extension work. The progress in farm financing has been limited because most of the banks do not have adequate manpower for undertaking these assignments.

In the industrial and service sectors the implementation process has been fair. Poor performance of banks may be ascribed to the inability of local entrepreneurs to run their units efficiently. Financial institutions have experienced considerable difficulty in the realisation of loans in respect of units operating in this sector and they have also failed to find out suitable entrepreneurs in the district. Some other reasons may be put forward in this connection: (i) problem of input procurement; (ii) infrastructural bottlenecks; and (iii) problem of marketing.

The District Industries Centre (DIC) has come into existence replacing the erstwhile Rural Industries Project. The DIC is supposed to supply all sorts of facilities required by an entrepreneur operating in the industrial sector. But the DIC is still in its infancy. Some of the schemes the DIC have recommended to the banks have been found to be not very practical. The huge amount to be invested should be backed by marketing facilities, etc. On an experimental basis, schemes involving lesser loan component could be tried. Functionally, the DIC acts as a recommending agency instead of operating in close association with the banks in matters like loan extension, loan recovery, etc.

Unhealthy competition among commercial banks has also affected implementation. Shortage of manpower at branch level has affected to some extent work like quicker loan disbursement, post-loan supervision, etc. DRI financing was affected by follow-up constraints and the scattered nature of settlements. In some cases recovery was only 2 per cent of the DRI advances, mainly owing to poor post-loan supervision, mainly due to shortage of manpower. Difficulty is faced in matters like keeping track of the large number of loanee accounts, etc.

Infrastructural inadequacy, in particular, has affected implementation of DCPs. The entire district is virtually devoid of railway connections. The railway network touches only a few of the growth centres. Poor supply of electricity has affected production tempo in the industrial and service sectors. Energization, of pumps required for irrigation has also suffered. Also, little effort has been made to encourage units that can run without power or with little power supply.

Diversion of production loans for consumption purposes is another factor observed.

Finally, the poor state of repayment of loans has stood in the way of advances to all sectors of the district economy. This unsatisfactory repayment position has made banks shy of providing credit to agriculture. Direct lending to this sector, however, is found to be comparatively less risky. The repayment position of most of the existing fishery loans is not also satisfactory, not to speak of the case of transport operators. Institution-wise, commercial banks have been able to recover loans better than co-operative banks. Again, recovery of loans is not uniform throughout the district. The result is that fresh disbursement has been affected. Recycling of fund, which is vital for conducting successful banking business, has thus not taken place satisfactorily.

The District Level Consultative Committee was formed to bring about better understanding cohesion and co-ordination among bankers and financial institutions, Government and other functionaries involved in the implementation of various development programmes. Co-ordinated effort by different functionaries for timely and successful implementation of the DCP was aimed at. In many districts the DLCC has been found to play an active role in many respects. It has been able to involve different development agencies in DCP formulation implementation. It has also been involved in making periodical review of progress in implementation and has strengthened co-ordination among different agencies.

However, at times, the decisions at the DLCC meeting have either not been given full effect to or have taken a long time to materialise. One instance can be cited. Although it was decided that fitness/clearance certificate would be issued to vehicle owners only after they had obtained clearance certificates from the credit institutions (in order to reinforce the loan recovery drive), the decision was acted upon by the concerned Government departments after a long time. In some cases, again, the monitoring system of the DLCC has not been adequate. Mention may be made of inadequate and irregular supply of statistical data/information necessary for monitoring such a time-bound target-oriented programme (submission of completed Gutta Committee format, etc.).

The plan indicates sectoral as well as geographical spread of credit to be disbursed by different financial institutions operating during the three-year plan period. It has adopted a methodology under which the financial institutions and other development agencies were called upon to submit socio-economic data with reference to their respective command areas according to the format suggested by the banks.

An impression prevails that all the discrepancies cannot be fully explained by the divergence in the level of infrastructural development. This is owing to the fact that the assessment of credit need done in some of the DCPs ultimately proved to be not quite practical. Spatial variations in levels of development were not fully reflected. Again, some of the figures used for preparing block profiles are found to be erratic and not methodical.

The process of DCP formulation has been found to suffer from the absence of exercises related to resource use (physical as well as human), Moreover, although the DCP has been divided into anchalwise targets, linkage was inadequate between the credit plan on the one hand and the performance budgets of the individual branches of the banks operating in the district on the other. This may be taken as one of the reasons why bank personnel at branch level were often not very much aware of the DCP. In many cases branch-wise allocation of overall targets were not prepared and sent to the branches. Moreover, targets were separately fixed according to the nature of the branch (urban, semi-urban, rural), nor was the factor of 'age of the branch' considered for fixing targets.

For effective implementation of the DCP there exists the crucial requirement of active involvement of all development organisations—financial and non-financial. Cooperation among various agencies has been found to be of a commendable order at the district level. But at the sub-divisional, block anchal or village level, the necessary coordination has not always been there. This has been felt particularly in the field of realisation of overdues. The credit agencies complain of inadequate co-operation from Government agencies in matters like loan realisation. Government officials share the view that bankers generally place less stress on post-advance supervision, which leads to non-realisation.

Public participation is a must for the success of any development programme, particularly in a backward district where there is low absorption of credit. What is found to be true in most districts is that banks have formulated schemes for entrepreneures in the small-scale sector but only a handful entrepreneurs in fact came forward to make use of the same. In some cases even a sanctioned loan was not finally utilised by the party.

Government officials pointed out that rigidity in norms of lending, procedural paraphernalia and lack of proper follow-up measures on the part of the financial institutions, particularly commercial banks, acted as bottlenecks in the process of gearing up development in the rural areas. Lack of clear demarcation of operational areas among the financing agencies has also caused a problem in extending credit both spatially and functionally.

Implementation has also been slowed down owing to inadequate attention to the execution of special programmes such as Comprehensive Area Development Programme (CADP), erstwhile Small Farmers' Development Agency (SFDA), Fish Farmers Development Agency (FFDA), State Animal Husbandry Programme (SAHP), etc. For example, the pace at which FFDA's programme has moved is not very encouraging. SAHP has hardly been able to effectively involve bankers in the implementation process.

Micro-level planning has been getting importance in India in recent times. District is more an administrative unit than an economic unit. That is why the credit plan should have its origin at micro-level from the blocks. What is required is study of resource endowment and potential for growth of each block. This will help in formulating a rolling credit plan in tune with the changed planning pattern at Government level. This DCP has considered the block as a unit in planning. This is a good beginning, but formulation of block-level schemes with due consideration of the available and latent resources of the region is a must. Demarcation of area of operations (institution-wise) is another point to be considered seriously.

Identification of growth centres is a must, from credit disbursal point of view. Limited resources spread over a wide area will never generate backward and forward linkages. Credit advance on clusterbasis should be considered. A systematic approach of village adoption will solve the problem of multiplicity of agencies. Borrowers will also gain knowledge of the financial institution which is to be approached for credit. Village adoption would be less complicated if the subsidy reaches in time in the case of programmes subsidised by the Government.

Additional employment should be the criterion for sanctioning assistance for expansion of existing large and medium-scale industrial units. Big industrial projects may be located in locations with resources so that ancillary units can come up in the next phase. A thorough study of the size and character of unemployment is necessary to create a sufficient number of job opportunities.

Schemes for financing dairies, cottage tanneries, handlooms, poultry farming, etc, will help create jobs for agriculturists as well as educated persons. Financing a scheme of purchasing sewing machines will help create employment opportunities for women. Similarly, schemes for financing autorickshaws and trucks will add to employment generation. Household industries, self-employment of rural artisans under DRDA and DIC should be extended to cover all blocks. Local works need to be taken up, like major and minor irrigation, water supply, rural roads, village forests and pasture development. Construction of field channels, land levelling and provision of inputs for introduction of high-yielding varieties should be accelerated, along with activities like soil conservation and land reclamation. Labour-intensive activities like brick-making, garment-making, handlooms, powerlooms, furniture and toy-making will open new vistas of employment.

Banks and co-operatives should earmark specific amounts to meet the requirements of allottees of surplus land and Government waste land and to all categories of SC/ST taking up owner-cultivation for the first time. Improved methods of cultivation, when supported by the timely supply of package of inputs, would pave the way for more effective labour utilisation. Irrigation facilities would enhance employment by increasing the intensity of labour use for most crops. A change in cropping pattern results, which in turn increases labour employed per crop.

In the cottage and small-scale sectors the need is for co-ordinated action. District Industries Centres have to come up in a more systematic way. Training for improving existing skills of artisans as well as developing new skills should be looked into. Price support and special incentives for marketing need to be designed. Schemes should be selected in such a manner that employment-investment ratio becomes higher. Traditional activities need to be churned up. Pottery, mat-making, sweater manufacture, initial leather curing, etc. should get priority. Technical know-how should percolate more and more so that the drive for new entrepreneurship moves at a greater pace.□

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Uncertainty in Bangladesh

PARTHA S. GHOSH

BANGLADESH politics is again in a flux. Those who heaved a sigh of relief at the dispersing of the cloud that hovered around the recent Cabinet reshuffle are having second thoughts. The clouds are still looming on the political horizon, and if the recent anti-Indian activities in Dacca are any indication, they may burst any day. The ever-growing rift within the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the increasing discontent of the armed forces with the political process — a phenomenon which has become an integral part of Bangladesh politics — carry dangerous portents for political destabilisation. No wonder if the country is soon pushed back to the square one situation of uncertainty that had followed Mujibur Rahman's assassination in August 1975.

A part of the present malady is ascribable to the Constitution of Bangladesh itself. The peculiar mixture of vital elements of presidential and parliamentary forms of government which it provides can hardly bring permanence to any government. Conflict for power is inherent. The Constitution in the present form can work only in a situation when the President commends the loyalty of an overwhelming majority expressed not merely through ballot but also through a long record of habitual affection (like that for Mahatma Gandhi in India, Julius Nyerere in Tanzania or Charles de Gaulle in France). Abdus Sattar cannot of course claim to enjoy such a position. To ascribe the present malady to a document called the Constitution, however, is unrealistic. The Constitution of any country is always the result of the existing political situation and not *vice versa*. Thus, if the Constitution of Bangladesh provides for a complicated system, it is the politics of the country which is to blame and not the other way round.

Bangladesh is being ruled at present by a delicately balanced triarchy consisting of the President, Parliament and the Army whose respective influence, power, legitimacy, role and everything else one can find in the lexicon of political stability, are yet to be defined beyond controversy. Naturally, there are under-currents of power struggle in which each of the units has its own justification to consider itself more suited to govern than the other two.

Ever since the liberation of Bangladesh, two elements have plagued the country's political life; the internal rifts within political parties making the growth of a healthy party system difficult, and the role of the army in politics. But the two cannot be seen separately, for each gets sustenance from the other.

Squabbles in Bangladesh political parties — ruling as well as opposition — are too rampant to allow a stable government. This has resulted in ever-increasing politicisation of the military or, more appropriately, the militarisation of politics. The army has understood the inherent impotence of civilian power, and this had made it meddle with the Government as a matter of right.

This phenomenon, however, has origin in the freedom struggle itself. In the aftermath of the liberation war, Bangladeshis were at a loss to make out who deserved their loyalty — the leader (Mujib) or the institution (military). Things could have been settled down and stable civilian rule established had the politicians who became the rulers provided a reasonably honest and welfare-oriented government instead of devoting most of their energies to self-aggrandisement and indulging in intrigues This dismal state of political affairs, coupled with the undermining of the political system through rigged elections made the military assume a role which a democracy cannot afford to permit.

Zia-ur Rahman, owing to his military background and political ambitions, tried to strike a balance between the two incompatible forces — the desire of the military to have a share in the affairs of the country and the general longing of the Bangladeshis for democratic values and institutions like elections, Parliament, etc. He tried to restructure the army administration with the object of diffusing the power of the military. His strategy was to see to it that the military worked in cooperation with para-military forces like Ansars, Bangladesh Rifles, Combat Police Force and Village Defence Parties. He also sought to cushion the disaffection of the junior officers by increasing promotional avenues. All these strategies were directed to curb clandestine factionalism and groupism resulting from ideological conflict which had a tendency to tempt ambitious army officers to hatch adventurist plots to grab political power.

Having reduced the possibility of a military challenge to his rule, Zia sought to manipulate the political process to his advantage by taking recourse to a tricky strategy. He got elected into the Bangladesh National Assembly a vast number of informers of his erstwhile military regime. It is reported that as many as about 30 per cent of the elected representatives of the Assembly were in this category. Such a strategy was supposed to ensure him political support, besides providing an active channel of communication with the military. That Zia's experiment failed to accomplish what was desired need not be emphasised.

The power and influence of the army in Bangladesh politics is as real as Bangladesh itself. Sattar finds it difficult to reconcile this to his position as an elected representative of the masses. Ever since his election as President, there has been an undercurrent of tussle between him and the army chief,

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General Ershad. But in this game Sattar appears to be at the losing end.

In the beginning, emboldened by the massive popular mandate, Sattar had hoped to cut the military's influence to size. But as soon as he started advertising his popular base, General Ershad issued a press statement in defiance of the Presidency and went to the extent of advising the soldiers not to remain silent spectators.

Ever since, it has been a record of the army's systematic encroachment in the governance of the country. It won a major battle when it forced the President to reconstitute the National Security Council on its own terms. In the last week of December 1981, Sattar had replaced the National Defence Council (NDC) by a National Security Council (NSC) to consist of a chairman and nine members. While the President was to be the Chairman, the Vice-President, the Prime Minister, the Ministers in charge of Foreign Affairs, Industry, Finance and Home, and the three Chiefs of Staff (Army, Navy and Air Force) were to be the members. The Army strongly protested against the inclusion of ministers, including the Prime Minister, in the NSC. That this protest could not be overlooked is evident from the fact that on February 2, 1982, only a month after its formation, the membership of the NSC was slashed from ten to six. Actually, the President was browbeaten by Ershad to take the decision. When newsmen asked him what the army had in mind as their next step if their demands were not acceded to, the General is reported to have replied in a way which could mean much more than the exact words: "You will come to know of it in proper time."

The NSC now consists of the President, the Vice-President, the Prime Minister and the three Chiefs of Army, Navy and Air Force. Considering the fact that the NSC is supposed to assist and advise the Governments on all matters relating to national security as a whole, one can easily gauge the influance the military would wield in the governance of the country.

Probably Sattar has come to realise that discretion is the better part of valour and has accordingly started pampering the army. He is aware that he lacks, unlike Zia, a military clout which could have provided him some kind of in-built support from people in uniform. His reported prior consultation with the Chiefs of the armed forces while dissolving his Cabinet recently can be seen in this light. He has more than once lauded the armed forces for their role in the socio-economic development of Bangladesh.

President Sattar knows that he is sitting on a volcano. The BNP is faction-ridden and making it difficult for the Government to implement its policies. On the economic front, the country is facing a serious crisis. There are reports of the IMF putting pressure on the Government to devalue the *taka* by 30 per cent. The unsound financial situation had impelled the Government to reduce drastically the outlay of the Second Five-Year Plan from *taka* 25,595 crores to *taka* 18,000 crores. On the food front, the situation is precarious. It would not be surprising if famine hits Bangladesh during the coming summer. According to an official estimate, there is a shortfall of 2.8 million tons of foodgrains while the Government has been able to procure through imports only 1.55 million tons. Food price is rising by leaps and bounds. In the first week of February, the Dacca rice market registered a rise of *taka* 40 per maund in two days. Of course, part of this rise was attributable to panic buying.

Other social indicators also presage a grim future. The law and order situation is bad. Crime is increasing steadily. According to an estimate, during the first eleven months of last year, 1754 murders, 1809 dacoities, 1173 robberies and 7815 cases of rioting took place. The country's judicial system is crumbling. Reportedly, there are 3.5 million cases pending in law courts, many for years. The time-tested device of engaging the youth in futile education by indiscriminately opening the gates of colleges and universities, is also giving way. About 31,500 students sought admission in Dacca University this year against a total number of 2,500 seats.

Considering the dismal state of affairs, probably one can give the benefit of doubt to Sattar. Perhaps he is well-meaning and is actually interested in bringing about reforms. There could be reasons to believe that in the face of serious internal rift in the ruling BNP, he is finding it difficult to implement his policies. The dissidents in the party, who are not small in number, have launched a relentless campaign against the Prime Minister, Shah Azizur Rahman. Sattar's election as chairman of the party in January 1982, which it was hoped would put an end to intra-party rivalries, has failed to do so. To get rid of these political tangles and enforce his rule with determination and vigour, Sattar seems to have found it expedient to enlist military support.

It would be interesting to watch how Sattar reconciles the problem of political stability with that of social justice. The pro-Pakistani Islamic fundamentalist forces have already raised their heads, as is evident from recent anti-Indian activities in Dacca. Sattar increasingly finds it difficult to accommodate the views of these elements in his so-called drive for reform. In the given situation, he may be forced to choose to strengthen his alliance with the army. To what extent that alliance would be conducive to social justice is a moot point, for theoretically they are incompatible. The element of factionalism within the army further complicates matters. There are reports of serious challenges to General Ershad's leadership. The exoneration of Khondakar Mushtaq Ahmed, who engineered the assassination of Sheikh Mujib, has added another complicated variable in the political goings-on in Dacca. He enjoys the full confidence of Prime Minister Rahman (actually the Prime Minister manipulated the lifting of criminal charges against Khondakar Mushtaq Ahmed) who is reportedly getting ready for a showdown with Ershad.

In sum, Bangladesh presents a grotesque picture of internal squabbles, intrigues and personal ambitions where the rules of the political game will probably be honoured more in the breach. A serious political crisis is in the making.☐

Israel and American Left

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

Israel has long had a role in US politics and foreign policy postures. In this article the author describes how parochial conceptions of Israeli interest have swung a large body of American liberal opinion to the Right — particularly on foreign policy issues — and the impact of this on the Left. The article is reproduced with due acknowledgement from *The Nation* **of New York (December 5, 1981). The relevant issue of the journal was received late but the facts and arguments in the article remain valid.** Editor.

At the moment, the United States is governed by an Administration that indulges Israeli extremism on the West Bank of the Jordan River, and that supports anti-Jewish extremism in South America and South Africa and Saudi Arabia. To call this a paradox would be an over-statement. What is striking is that leading intellectuals are prepared to support the government on the second count because they sympathise with it on the first.

This article will try to deal with the effect of the Middle East conflict on American liberals. It will thus, necessarily, be an article largely about Jews. There was a time when Israel was accepted by most liberals as a democratic state with many socialist features and as embodying an affirmative victory over the dark racial prejudices that in many ways participated its birth. Today, when Israel puts itself forward as a sturdy ally in the cold war and and a reliable bridge-head against Arab and Iranian ferment, there has been a certain, how shall we say —, coarsening of the Zionist position. If Israel has become the natural friend of the overdogs in America and elsewhere, will this not have a consequence or two for liberal Jews and thus for American liberalism? A limited but significant number of commentators have already answered "yes" to this question, and striven to win over doubting liberals to a new pole on the right.

It is impossible to reduce the complexity of the argument to a single example. Still, two slight anecdotes from the contemporary scene may help to sketch an introduction.

In June of this year, liberal circles in New York City were briefly but noticeably convulsed by an exchange in *The Village Voice*. Jack Newfield, a grizzled foot-soldier in the stage-army of the good, accused his colleague Alexander Cockburn of concealing anti-Semitic attitudes beneath a facile anti-Zionism. Newfield's article, though clumsily written and argued, bore all the symptoms of a long-pent-up misgiving about socialist attitudes toward Israel and Zionism. But it did not, or could not, confine itself to the Middle East. It accused Cockburn of being a closet Stalinist and "anti-West".

Some months after that suggestive exchange, President Ronald Reagan cracked enough fingers and femurs to get his Awacs deal past the Senate. On the night of the vote, ABC's *Nightline* features a three-way debate between Faisal Al-Hegelan, the Saudi ambassador to the United States, Yitzhak Rabin, former Prime Minister of Israel, and Richard Allen, Reagan's ultra-reactionary (and pro-Menachem Begin) National Security Adviser. Since the Saudi ambassador was almost incoherent with self-satisfaction, it came down to Rabin versus Allen. Why, Allen was asked, had America abandoned its written pledge to eschew sales of strategic arms to the Arab world?

Well, he replied, the situation had changed. Iran was in chaos, Ethiopia didn't look too friendly, Libya seemed positively menacing. Anwar el-Sadat had been slain. A certain notorious superpower stood by ready to exploit these distressing developments. So, what Saudi wanted, Saudi was going to get (and no nonsense, by the by, about *them* recognising Israel's right to exist). Rabin sat through this with an air of distinct discomfort. Weren't those *Israel's* hardware arguments he was hearing? Wasn't it just that reasoning that had impelled him, when he was Israel's ambassador to Washington, to urge American Jews to vote for Richard Nixon in 1972? Had'nt Israel stood by Haile Selassie and the Shah until the last ditch? Allen's proposition that a percieved threat implies the promiscuous armament of the nearest "bulkwark" may seem like a non sequitur anyway (it is). But to Rabin, and to some others, it only sounds like a non sequitur when it isn't being applied to Israel. The best the former ambassador and Prime Minister could do was to threaten faintly that Israel might keep the Sinai. All in all, it was not an auspicious evening for Israeli "social democracy."

This is not the first time that Israel's policy has yielded unlooked-for results. In the 1950s, Israel became an ally of British and French colonial policy. It supported the French Government's murderous repression in Algeria. It was a junior partner in the 1956 Suez crisis provoked by Britain and France. It shared "intelligence" and military information with Paris and London in a common front against Arab nationalism. This had two effects (beyond speeding the farcical collapse of British and French influence). It isolated those in Israel who sought a *modus vivendi* with the Arabs. And it compromised Jews on the British and French Left while strengthening the hand of conservative forces. So long as loyalty to Israel was an issue in the conflict, there were many people who felt that the Anglo-French colonial policy could not be criticised quite as it deserved. Though, as ever, Jewish radicals were in the forefront of protest, there were many others, Jews and non-Jews, who were fatally ambivalent.

The French Socialist Party took decades to recover.

Both of these features are present in the current and continuing argument is America. And so is a third one, though its outlines can only just be discerned. Once the French Right had no further use for Israeli support, it moved back to a more traditional position. As soon as Iraq became a better customer and partner than Israel, there was what might politely be called a "tilt" that direction. And when Israel protested at this poor return on friendship, many in the salons of Paris were overheard to say that that was the trouble with Jews. There will come a time when the American Right, for all its unwelcome support for Israel's current settlement policy in Palestine, decides in its turn to support Israel as the rope supports the hanging man.

(Sadly, the Israeli establishment has seen this point and drawn the wrong conclusion from it. It is common to hear Israeli spokesmen justify their hard line by saying that they do not wish to be abandoned "like South Vietnam or Taiwan." By appealing for support as an encircled and embattled state, Israel has moved toward psychological identification with the pariah community. Hence some of its less palatable alliances in the Third World.)

The future attitude of the Right toward Israel is, strictly speaking, outside the scope of this article. I want to propose that the evolution of Israel into a colonial and military power has already placed American liberals in a very ambivalent and uncomfortable spot. I hope we may take it for granted that, as Irving Howe and Bernard Rosenberg put it a few years ago in an essay in *The New Conservatives* (New American Library):

> The overwhelming thrust of Jewish thought and writing in America these past several decades has been liberal, notably more so than in the population at large; and whatever radicalism we have had in America has found disproportionate support among Jews.

For the sake of symmetry, let me add the natural corollary Howe and Rosenberg made:

> It is hardly a secret that the number of Jews active in liberal, protest, radical and civil libertarian movements is highly disproportionate.

The Howe-Rosenberg essay, which makes a convenient point of entry to the argument, was titled "Are American Jews Turning to the Right?" In answer, it gave a much qualified "not necessarily." It stressed racial factors and the undeniable improvement of the socio-economic position of Jews in the United States. It gave some attention to the evolution of *Commentary* magazine under the stewardship of Norman Podhoretz (concluding that his mounting attacks on the Left did not yet amount to a neo-conservative position), and it emphasised the security and the prosperity of American Jews.

Howe and Rosenberg fairly concluded that there had been no general Right-ward shift among Jews. What they did *not* do, except in the most tentative manner, was to scrutinise the influence of Israel in shaping the answers to their crucial original question. When the authors did do this, they preferred to stress ideological and even psychological factors. Discussing the predicament of Jews, they wrote:

> Black antagonism ... is linked in their minds with global anti-Semitism and the enmity of Arabs toward Israel. Personal fright on the streets, poor public schools, a meritocracy in decline — all merge *psychically* with the precariousness of Israel and the mortification of Soviet Jewry. Who can easily separate in such reactions the warranted concern from the "paranoid" excess? (Emphasis added).

This approaches the root of the matter. Since the days of Hubert Humphrey there has been a measurable decline in the Jewish vote for liberal causes and positions. But this decline has not been as sharp as Milton Himmelfarb's electoral analysis in *Commentary* would have us believe. Nor is it traceable to any one issue. Rather there is a certain nexus of emotions involved — very much like those described by Howe and Rosenberg. Clearly, the question of Israel is near the heart of this confusion, and if the Left fails to recognise it, the Right does not.

The furthest that Howe and Rosenberg would go in this direction was to state, cautiously:

> Yet the *paradox* that must be recognised is that insofar as Israel functions — must function — as a state dealing with other states, its impact upon American Jews is — perhaps must be — conservative. (Emphasis added).

Note the throat-clearing and the conditional in that thoughtful sentence. The key word is "paradox." I want to argue that, increasingly, there is nothing *paradoxical* about positions that favour Israel's policies and are highly conservative; that there is now a better "fit" between Zionism* and conservatism than ever before, and that this has exacted a high price from the American liberal coalition. Irving Kristol once wrote, crassly, that a neo-conservative was a liberal who had been mugged by reality. I would not wish to borrow his pseudo-intellectual method. But, as one of the hired pens of the New Right and the Reagan Administration, he has hit on the ghost of a point. Many of those who have moved rightward are former liberal Zionists disturbed by the resentment of ghetto dwellers and repelled by the Third World attitude toward Israel.

Let me define what I mean by the use of a counter-example. Writing in *Commentray* almost two years ago, Midge Decter packed the whole problem into fifty words:

> In a world full of ambiguities and puzzlements, one thing is absolutely easy both to define and locate: that is the Jewish interest. The continued security and, in those happy places where the word applies — well-being of Jews, world-wide, rests with a strong, vital, prosperous, self-condident United States.

This is question-begging on a Homeric scale. "Security" is of course a well-known code-ward. (Is Israel more or less secure for holding Arab territory?) And we all know what some people mean by a "strong" United States. But the idea that the issue is an "easy" one, devoid of ambiguities and puzzlements, is breathtaking. In order to minimize misunderstanding, I state my own position, which is that the problem is highly complex and sensitive. And that Jewish security and well-being depends, perhaps rather more than other people's, on the defeat of chauvinism everywhere. And that the Israeli ruling establishment, both the Labour and the Likud parties, has moved away from this position. And that those in the United States who call themselves Zionists have, as a consequence, wavered in their traditional allegiances. Inevitably, this had led to confusion among liberals and intellectuals — a confusion that can only intensify as Israel becomes more conservative. The idea of Begin as an "aberration" used to be convenient as an escape clause, but it now lacks the crucial merit of plausibility.

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*All shorthands are odious, but very few are dispensable. Some define "Zionism" as the end of exile and the ingathering of all Jews. Jacobo Timerman defines it as "the national liberation movement of the Jewish people." Most Arabs define it as a theory of racist colonisation. George Orwell said of it that it had "the usual characteristics of a nationalist movement, but the American version of it seems to be more violent and malignant than the British." Others on the Left have seen it, with varying degrees of enthusiasm, as the Jewish version of self-determination. I use it here to mean those who accept the rationale of Israel's actions as a state even when they disagree with some or many of its specific policies.

I have the impression that Howe has somewhat modified his own position to take account of this. In a recent interview with me, he said that "Israel has replaced liberalism as the secular religion of American Jews." This suggests, to put it no higher, that coexistence between the two commitments is becoming problematic.

Why should this not be the case? The Jewish people have the same right to a "state dealing with other states" as do any other people They have no less right to form opportunistic alliances, purchase weapons, impress neighbouring countries and suppress inconvenient minorities. There is no categorical reason to criticise Israeli policies any more than those of Iraq, the Philippines or China. What makes the argument bite hard on American life is the *real* paradox, unidentified either by Howe or by Podhoretz, that Jewish people in the Diaspora do have a general interest in resisting forces of bigotry and reaction, whereas, at least in the short term, the state of Israel does not. Indeed Israeli leaders have an occasional interest in actually *allying* with such forces. And, sad to say, many of the policies of that state — especially in the Third world and on the West Bank — positively *appeal* to those who do not normally care for Jews. Let me attempt to give a few recent and important examples.

Perhaps the first time that the realisation of such a collusion between Israel and the American Right occurred to a large number of people simultaneously was when then Ambassador Rabin exceeded his diplomatic status to urge that Jewish-Americans vote for Nixon. But in 1972, there were many to argue that he had made a slip — even if an emblematic one. Now, that view would be very much harder to defend. An episode that threw the issue of Israel and the Right into sharp relief took place in New York City in November 1980. It showed that uncritical attitudes toward Israel have a way of rebounding on Jewish interests. and on the liberal politics that were once inextricable from them. (Nixon's anti-Semitism is now better known than it was in 1972).

At a gala dinner for the centenary of Vladimir Zeev Jabotinsky, the Right-wing Ziqinst ideologue, Prime Minister Begin pinned a Jabotinsky medal — one of a very limited number to be conferred — on the swollen breast of the Rev. Jerry Falwell. Many liberal Jews, most notably Rabbi Alexander Schindler, were outraged by this brash endorsement and said so in public. Was it not Falwell's movement that had implied (or the least) that God was indifferent to the Jews? What was Begin, who if anything overstates the intimacy between Jews and Scripture, doing with this character? The Rabbi soon got his answer. Writing in the Jewish *Week-American Examiner*, Herbert Zweibon, Erich Isaac and Rael Jean Isaac were contemptuous of Schindler's soft-hearted caveat. Falwell's view of Jews or any other kind of American was not the point. What counted was his attitude toward Israel, and toward Zionism's American "friends."

They wrote of Falwell:

> Even apart from the vital issue of Israel, at this time there is a far greater communality of interests among Jews and the Moral Majority than there is among Jews and the National Council of Churches. An America with a strong family that fosters traditional values is far more likely to be a comfortable place for Jews than an America where no values are upheld.

This, of a man who forced even Roy Cohn onto the record with a denunciation of anti-Semitism! The objection to the National Council of Churches, by the way, was not to its presumed anti-family and anti-traditional stands so much as to its advocacy of "dialogue" with the PLO. So, better to cooperate with the most bigoted force in the country than with those who would share the Holy Land with its Arab inhabitants. Writing in *Commentary*, Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab were hardly less complacement. They did not exult, as Podhorety had alreada done, about Jimmy Carter's failure to get a majority of the Jewish vote in 1980. But they were as tender as could be to Falwell. He was for instance, a great improvement on his frantically anti-Semitic predecessor, the "evangelist" Gerald Winrod.

Falwell, certainly, feels free to advise Israel and the Jews. He recently told *Jewish Press* magazine that "there is no question Judea and Samaria should be part of Israel", adding that the sooner the Golan Heights and Jerusalem were fully annexed as well, the better for all concerned. What is depressing is to find Lipset and Raab writing an unequivocal "QED" under all this garbage, as if to say, "If he is uncritical of Israel, how can he be a bigot?" Picture for a second what *Commentary* would print if anybody on the Left had spoken of the Jews as Falwell has done.

It's clearly on the Left that *Commentary* sees the threat to Jewish interests. In a boring symposium published in the magazine's January 1980 issue; the editors asked readers to reconsider "axiomatic" Jewish attachment to what they termed "the standard liberal agenda". The pretexts for doing so were illuminating:

> This axiom might seem to have been called into question by certain recent developments — the widespread support among liberals for quotas, the diminishing enthusiasm among liberals for the PLO, and the paucity of Liberal protest

against the anti-Semitism that surfaced in the wake of Andrew Young's resignation.

There are many striking aspects to the "question". (For one thing, how do you call an axiom into question? For another, how do you characterize the departure of Young from his post as a resignation"?) The first three ingredients or clauses restate the same point in different ways — loyalty to Israel is assumed to take precedence. The very last reflects back upon the very first. It is implied, as if it were pointless to debate the matter, that affirmative action is bad for all classes and sexes of Jews. This bold assertion is then juxtaposed, as if naturally enough, with waning liberal support for Israel. Tautology intervenes for a second to match sympathy for the PLO with hostility to Israel. Then we learn that Young is responsible not only for his own firing but for any prejudiced remarks that might have been made about it. Earlier I quoted Howe to the effect that subliminal and intuitive factors were important in perceptions like these, and I think that the editors of *Commentary* really have no choice but to agree.

As Prof. Bernard Avishai showed in a striking and incisive article in *Dissent* (Spring 1981), *Commentary's* neo-conservative politics will not help most American Jews one bit. And most Jewish intellectuals can survive spurious appeals to their emotions. They can see often more clearly than their Christian or secular counterparts, that Begin is a mediocre fanatic and that Falwell is a *lumden* demagogue. Yet there has been a certain reluctance to face these conclusions, and to reject the phony logic that has led to an alliance between the most vocal proponents of Zionism and the New Right.

As Howe and Rosenberg rightly said, Israel is a state. A state, moreover, that occupies and governs the territories of others — by right of conquest. Here is the root of the matter. It is impossible to find excuses for military rule without experiencing a certain coarsening — certain identification with the overdog. With at least a certain part of your mind, you see the world from the point of view of the policeman, the intelligence agent, the paid informer and (but it's true) even the torturer. You find that it's lonely being a cop, something that liberals don't understand. The intellectual ramifications of this are probably, in the medium and long term, incalculable. But among them are:

(1) The Third World changes shape. No longer a desperate and exploited area, it becomes minatory, arrogant, mob-like and greedy, impelled by a hatred of achievement and led by people who would rather shout than work. The best literacy analogue here is Saul Bellow, who managed to write a whole book on Jerusalem without meeting or alluding to an Arab and, in *Mr. Sammler's Planet*, seemed to have rehearsed this shudder of distate on the streets of New York. He has added his name to the rightist Committee for the Free World. From Today Kollek was Ed Koch Midge Decter? Think about it.

(2) Next, it becomes harder to criticise American foreign policy. Never mind which Arab royal house is the temporary favourite in Washington; Israel will depend upon, and act as executor of, a rugged and adventurous American posture. It will also be a major customer and laboratory for military equipment. At least you can be sure that Israel won't be an Islamic republic by next Thanksgiving. Those who put Israel first, therefore, must mute their criticisms of the arms trade and the Rapid Deployment Force. They must also subcontract their consciences when it comes to Israel's own arms trade — with Somoza before he was overthrown, with Duarte, with Botha and even with the anti-Semitic *caudillios* of Argentina. Once you make a fetish of "security", you will the means to the end.

(3) A related point. If there is one issue that still unifies liberal and radical disquiet, it is the spread of nuclear weaponry. Yet, in the one area of the world that needs such technology least, it has been Israel that has set the pace. There has been a certain lack of forthrightness among liberals on this point: a willingness to make allowances. But it was agreed by many liberals that Israel acted judiciously in blasting Iraq's nuclear reactor off the map. Note here the official Israeli justification — that an Iraqi bomb would be "a mortal threat to the Jewish people". Where in the Holy Land could a thermonuclear weapon explode without wiping out countless Arab Palestinians? I don't mean to say that Iraq might not run that risk. I mean to show up the sectarian nature of the Israelis' rationale, and the dismal way in which it was echoed by pro-Begin parrots in less exposed positions.

(4) Having reproved the Third World for its ungrateful and demogogic conduct, those formerly liberal figures who have swallowed their doubts about Begin are also berating Europe. In many of the articles that deplore the spread of "pacifism and neutralism" in Europe — or, if you prefer, the first stirrings of reluctance at the prospect of being expendable in the next war — one finds an apparently irrelevant paragraph. This paragraph attacks European governments for their role in the Middle East and their view that the PLO cannot be excluded forever from negotiations. Whatever the objection of this policy, it can hardly be on the ground of "pacifism and neutralism." A policy of "Israel first" leads quite speedily and smoothly to a policy of America first." Jews will not be the only ones to suffer if such a programme succeeds in global terms. And as for liberalism. ...

(5) Because the Soviet Union supports the Arab cause, and because it shamefully persecutes its Jews, it becomes harder to resist the conclusion that the "main enemy" is the USSR. This has opened a whole flank in the liberal community to doubts about detente and rearmament.

(6) Many Jews and many Israelis are secular, and support secular politics. Yet, as Israel falls more under the domination of the lugubrious orthodox parties, this consensus too comes under pressure. Rabbi Meir Kahane has the legal right to live in Hebron and carry a weapon. An Arab born there has neither right. This consequence of the Law of Return may be an unintended one. But, many American liberals only objected when Begin proposed to alter the law's definition of a Jew. Secular consistency, an important component of liberalism,

can only be harmed by double standards like these.

Can I substantiate any of these offensive assertions and innuendos? I believe I can. One particular political voyage has called in so many ideological ports as to be symbolic.

In 1967, Martin Peretz, now editor-in-chief of *The New Republic,* broke with his friends on the Left about Israel. Since then, he has made the PLO a touchstone issue.The cult of "anti-terrorism" has taken a sturdy hold on that once-proud magazine, and has spilled over from gung-ho attitudes on Israel to a pastiche of Reaganism in general — at least in foreign policy.

In discussion with me, Peretz has pointed out that his magazine criticizes Begin quite often. He has also argued (correctly) that in many cases a shift to a more conservative position *predates* an attachment to Zionism (cf. the justly forgotten *nouvelles philosophes* in France). Peretz certainly visualises his general political perspective as comparable to that of Daniel Patrick Moynihan — apparently tough abroad and seemingly tender at home. Such a stance leads to aggressiveness abroad and, at best, negligence at home. It melts into the zombie world of Carl Gershman and the Social Democrats USA, who act as coat-holders to Jeane Kirkpatrick, who in turn acts as valet to Reagan. And, when Kirkpatrick wishes to combine her new role as Government spokesman with her old job as reactionary pamphleteer, in whose pages does she receive hospitality? I'm afraid you saw this coming. Writing in *The New Republic* of November 11, Kirkpatrick could find nothing to criticise in the Reagan Administration's foreign policy except the faint possibility that it might treat with the PLO. I yield to anybody in my admiration of the lady, but I must thank her for a perfect statement of the Begin mentality and its international complexity:

> The PLO preaches a brand of Palestinian nationalism and radical politics that links the struggle for the destruction of Israel to El Salvador, Africa, the Middle East — *indeed, everywhere.*

The italics are mine. Perhaps they are otiose. *Indeed everywhere.* Only connect, says Kirkpatrick, and you will see that the vernacular of her Zionism commits you against revolution worldwide.

Peretz is not new to this line. He published pro-South African material from Arnaud de Borchgrave. He helped to start Claire Sterling's campaign on "the terror network." Constantine Menges, then a clown from the Hudson Institute and now a government full-timer on Central America, got his first serious airing in the pages of *The New Republic.* J.B. Kelly and Elie Kedourie, both of whom preach jihad against the Arab and Iranian world, have also been honoured guests in the magazine's pages. There is only one thing that this salad of persons has in common, and that is an unswerving commitment *contra mundum* to Israel's imagined interests. I do not, therefore, think that it is paranoiac to identify *The New Republic's* rightward lurch as largely a function of the Middle East conflict.

So, some small ironies in conclusion:

● In October, *The New Republic* published an endorsement of Mayor Koch's dismal re-election campagin in New York City. The magazine decried his black critics as "anti-Semitic." Among those who found this hard to take was *The Village Voice's* Newfield, who wrote a letter of protest and was smartly called to order by Peretz. Those who use guilt by association are seldom invulnerable.

● Kirkpatrick would perhaps not have written, and Peretz might not have published, such an overwrought piece unless she and he had at least suspected that the American Right would chivvy the Jews into the sea for a few petrodollars (as the French Right dumped Israel as soon as Iraq looked like a better bet). What return will Israel get for its role as a ditto to American foreign policy? More pertinently, what do American Jews and liberals stand to gain from being discreet on the point?

Kirkpatrick, Podhoretz, Kristol and the others were *at best* indifferent to the fate and (later) the revelations of Timerman, who now makes his home in Israel and cares for Zionism and the Jewish people not less than many who live elsewhere. He has stated that he sees his new country set on a course of fanaticism and disaster. I would be a hypocrite if I claimed to agree with Timerman on all points (the phrase "the Jewish Mediterranean" in his memoir seems to me especially insensitive as a description of the view from Tel Aviv), but he does remind us of an important fact. For many liberals, loyalty to Israely simply means loyalty to the Israeli Government. As I.F Stone has pointed out, dissent in Israel receives very little coverage in the United States. The substantial number of Israeli Jews who oppose their Government's policies of annexation and discrimination receive almost no encouragement from their better-placed counterparts. They are ignored, by *precisely* the same people who drone about Israel being pluralistic and democratic.

It would be a good thing if Israeli and American liberals saw more of one another. They might learn from common experience that nobody stands to gain from an alliance between the American Right and the most chauvinistic elements in Israel, and that euphemisms about "security" only serve to conceal the deadly errors that are being made in its name. The friends of the Jews are not Falwell and his Lynchburg ranters, nor the racist hooligans of Gush Emunim and the Jewish Defense League, nor the international arms dealers who shop both sides of the street, nor the schmaltx peddlers like Koch, nor the sunshine patriots like Podhoretz.

Howe's implied question still requires an answer. If it comes to a choice between Israeli policy and liberalism, which will American liberals choose? The choice has been put off for a long time, and many sincere people obviously would prefer to postpone it indefinitely. But, meanwhile, a small but significant part of the spectrum has chosen the first option and, thereby, consciously abandoned liberalism altogether. (Numbers here are not decisive: in Israel, extremists like Geula Cohen and Kahane have very few followers but have succeeded in creating a polarization favorable to the Right). If this sad division succeeds in reawakening the critical faculties of others, then the vital coalition of the Left might still be salvaged.□

Growth Possibilities in OECD Economies

An Alternative View—II

VIJAY LAXMAN KELKAR

FROM all this evidence it is possible to argue that the relatively lower growth rate of productivity in the services sector in face of output expansion has been a major cause of slowdown in the aggregate productivity growth and in the overall growth rate of the OECD economies. Such a consequence of differential productivity growth is not difficult to demonstrate through a rather straightforward algebra.[19]

At this stage it should be noted that the concept of productivity and its measurement in the services sector has a number of methodological problems. These problems compound when applied to non-market services which accounts for a major portion of the services sector. There is a growing awareness of those problems and attempts are being made to refiné a methodology for these measurements.[20]

One of the problems is that conventional measures tend to underestimate the productivity in the services sector. This problem can be particularly acute in the case of public services, non-market services. Of course, not all the sources of bias lead to under-estimation of productivity. For instance, it is possible that not all of the services inputs get accounted for as inputs in the services sector. In-company services such as accountants, legal departments of manufacturing concerns, etc., are included as inputs to the manufacturing sector. With these qualifications from the available evidence it is indeed possible to conclude that the services sector has experienced a relatively lower rate of producvity growth.

There are various reasons for the above phenomena. Firstly, this has been due to technological problems, that is, low capital intensity or a lower degree of mechanization of production and a lack of capital intensive technologies in this sector.[21] Georgescu-Rogen has identified production characteristics of the services sector as being a cause of the relatively greater "idleness" of factor inputs and hence a lower productivity in this sector.[22]

It can also be argued that unlike the commodity producing sectors where international trade has played an important role in promoting technology diffusion through international competitive pressures there was no such mechanism operating in the services sector as in this sector the share of international trade in much lower. According to a recent study the share of exports of services in the total exports of West European countries and of the US have been around only 10-12 per cent.[23] When one takes into account that the share in gross domestic product in these sectors is around 60 per cent, it is clear that the services sector as a whole is much less "open" in the sense of international trade. However, in our view, perhaps the most important reasons lie in the nature of the output of this sector, that is, the degree of "information" content in the output of the services sector which means that due to lack of technologies in "information processing" the possibilities of capital deepening were rather limited.

In a major study, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) has concluded that in the services sector capital intensity or capital input per labour input tends to be much lower compared to the other sectors, for example manufacturing. This study shows that in the decade of the seventies relative capital-labour ratios observed in the private services sector in major West European countries such as France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Great Britain, Sweden, etc., were only 35 to 60 per cent of the figures for the overall economy (1977). Yet another comparative study of capital per employee for a factory worker (manufacturing sector), and officer worker (services sector), shows, that in the US on an average capital investment per office worker is only 2,000 dollars compared to the factory sector average of 25,000 dollars per worker and 70,000 dollars of the agricultural sector[24]. A more recent study prepared by the OECD shows that in 1976 capital intensity in the private services sector is only about 50 per cent compared to the manufacturing sector (see Table IX). Interestingly, this table also suggests that the rate of growth of capital per employee during 1963-1976 may have been higher in the manufacturing sector compared to the private services sector. For instance, in the US, capital per employee in the manufacturing sector was 29,446 dollars in 1976 compared to only 19,053 dollars in 1963, while in the services sector even in 1976 capital per employee was 15,165 dollars while in 1963 it was 11,867 dollars.

The ECE study also looked at the question of whether any positive relationship exists between growth in productivity and growth in output in the services sector — to examine whether Verdoon's law also applies to the services sector. Interestingly, this study concludes that unlike the manufacturing sector, there is no evidence of positive relationship between output and growth in productivity in the services sector. One can only speculate on the reasons for this finding. Perhaps this only reflects

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the lack of mechanisation in this sector, that is, relatively lower capital intensity of the production process.

The above data may have to be taken with some caution. There are measurement problems and these measures may not be strictly comparable. More appropriate measures may have to be drawn from the input/output tables. For instance, for the US the latest detailed input/output table is available for 1972. That table also gives data for the value added in each of the sectors. With the help of the corresponding sector-wise employment data it would be possible to work out more satisfactory indices for capital intensity. Such a measure was developed by H. Larry in his study of the labour intensity of manufactured exports from developing countries and this approach seems to be a feasible one. (*Imports of Manufactures from Developing Countries*, 1968). There seems little doubt that all available evidence captures the essential feature of the services sector, namely, a relatively lower degree of mechanization.

Perhaps the most important feature of services sector employment is that these occupations are predominantly information-related activities — involving either production or distribution of information. Recently, OECD has completed a series of rather pioneering studies through the information computer and communication working party of its Committee for Scientific Technological Policy (1981). The results of these studies are now available. These studies show that in the OECD economies on average the share of information-related occupations in total employment has increased at the rate of 3 per cent for every five-year period and now accounts for more than 33 per cent of the total labour force of OECD economies. More importantly, the studies have shown that 75 per cent of the total growth in information-related employment in the period 1960-1978 has been in the services sector. In other words, "information processing" is the key attribute of output of the services sector.

These OECD reports of expert groups have clearly shown that the phenomenal technological breakthrough in micro-electronics can dramatically influence the productivity of such information-processing activities. There are two important driving forces in this field of information technology: first, cost reductions due to micro-electronics; secondly, combination of computer and telecommunication systems — "Telematics". In other words, considerable possibilities now exist for increasing substitution of capital in these sectors and thus would rapidly increase the labour productivity of the sector that today is employing more than 60 per cent of the total labour force in advanced industrialised countries.

According to these studies, such possibilities exist in all sub-sector: it includes sub-sectors producing market services and non-market services. For instance, as seen from Table XI "Informational occupations" account for 40-45 per cent of the total labour force in the sub-sector trade and distribution while in the sub-sector finance and insurance the share of "information-related" occupation is as high as 80·90 per cent. Even in public administration and the transport sector the share of informational occupations is close to 50 per cent. Even simple occupations described as "routine information handling" occupations are now accounting for as high as 25 per cent of the total economically-active population in countries such as the US and Japan. In important public services sectors such as health, education, etc., which account for 66 per cent of the total government employment in West Europe, there are considerable possibilities for increasing productivity through these technological innovations.[25]

Table IX

CAPITAL PER EMPLOYEE: MANUFACTURING AND PRIVATE SERVICES, SELECTED COUNTRIES, 1963-1976(1)

US dollars

Country	*Manufacturing*		*Private services*	
	1963	*1976*	*1963*	*1976*
France	10,701	18,806	8,128	12,865
Italy	4,737	5,923	4,770	5,747
Japan	2,892	12,526	1,969	6,437
United Kingdom	11,194	12,607	10,337	10,909
United States	19,053	29,446	11,867	15,165

(1) Stock of capital at constant prices per full-time equivalent employee. These figures must be treated with great caution, since they are compiled from a wide variety of sources. They are not fully comparable across countries.

Source: OECD, *Information Activities, Electronics and Telecommunication Technologies*, (ICCP, Series 6), 1981.

What we are arguing is that in future the lower growth in productivity of the services sector need not be a "drag" on the world economy as now through technical change and capital deepening it is possible to overcome the present low productivity. These possibilities are being increasingly recognised by a number of social scientists, policy-makers and labour union activists of the OECD countries.[26] They recognise that advances in micro-electronics technology is a fundamental and basic innovation and can have revolutionary consequences. An excellent report prepared by S. Nora and J. Minc for the President of France has pointed out the profound implications of this new technological change in all these dimensions — political, sociological, economic, etc. This report has among other things highlighted the productivity implications to the services sector.

At this stage it may be useful to quote one of these authors (J. Rada) in order to get some understanding of the nature of these technological innovations.

> "The recent developments just referred to are centred on the creation of integrated silicon microcircuits. These have acted as the catalyst in the synthesis of electronics, computing and telecommunications technologies. The raw material which these technologies have been developed to handle is information, and the collective name for this technological trinity is 'information technology' or 'telematics'.
>
> "The extraordinary significance of information technology has led some to compare it to the wheel, the steam engine and the mastering of electricity. These impressive claims are based on the technology's role in enabling information to be

Table X

INCREASES IN EMPLOYMENT IN INFORMATION-RELATED NON-MANUAL OCCUPATION: SELECTED COUNTRIES

Occupational grouping	*Country*	*Period*	*Absolute employment increase*	*Proportion due to:*		*Employment increase as a proportion of total employment increase*
			%	*Sectoral shifts (1)* %	*Others (2)* %	
Information related occupations	Germany	1950-1970	76	49-51	49-51	1.18
	Japan	1960-1070	70	53-65	35-47	0.66
	Sweden	1960-1975	47	48-54	46-52	1.30
	United Kingdom	1951-1971	48	42-50	58-50	1.18
Non-manual occupations	Australia	1961-1971	28	85-86	14-15	0.62
	Japan	1965-1977	44	81-85	15-19	1.15
	United States	1960-1970	31	82-85	15-18	0.68

(1) These figures are expressed as a range where the upper estimate is obtained using end year occupational proportions as weights and the lower estimate using base year weights. The difference between these is the inter-action term.
(2) In particular, increases in the occupational grouping's share of employment in each sector.
Source: Information-related occupations, IA;
Non-manual occupations: Australia: Occupation by Industry, Matrices, Industries Assistance Commission. Japan: 1965 Census of Population; 1977 Employment Status Survey. United States: Census of Population, 1960 and 1970.

handled and processed quickly, economically and, most important of all, through a coherent system using a uniform signal, the electronic impulse ('bit'). The information handling capabilities of the technology have reached a point at which it can perform and extend a wide range of functions that were previously only within the reach of human intelligence".

This sector has been experiencing exponential growth in terms of cost reductions. According to the calculations of Kendrick the rate of growth of total factor productivity of this manufacturing sub-sector has been perhaps highest during recent years.[27] For instance, according to Kendrick in the US semi-conductor industry productivity has grown at a rate of 10 per cent per annum during recent years. This sector has also one other important characteristic: it is not energy-intensive.

These technologies would not only increase the productivity of the services sector but would also increase overall productivity in the manufacturing sector by (i) moving the structure of production of the manufacturing sector towards higher productivity sub-sectors, and (ii) by improving energy efficiency, as well as productivity of individual manufacturing processes. For instance, in 1979 an expert group of the West German Ministry of Research and Technology estimated that new information technology can lead to energy saving up to 38 per cent in road transportation and 15-20 per cent in energy consumption in the household sector. What all this shows is that these new micro-electronic-based technologies are fundamental and basic innovations in the "Schumpeterian" sense and that they will have an economy-wide impact, especially in the context of a sharp increase in the relative prices of energy, thus also helping in accelerating the energy transition of the OECD economies. In addition to micro-electronics, we are on the threshold of equally important breakthroughs especially in the field if bio-engineering, energy-related technologies and newer forms of energy[28]. All these innovations will only have an additional beneficial impact on the growth prospects.

After one takes into account all these factors — (i) increased labour productivity in the services sector, both market and non-market services; (ii) increased efficiency of manufacturing sector; (iii) improved energy efficiency due to, among other things, the introduction of micro-processors; and (iv) other major technological advances — it is clear that the growth rate of the OECD economies, with an appropriate policy mix, can be stepped up quite substantially. For illustrative purposes one can argue that if productivity in the services sector increases due to these new technologies at the same rate as obtained in the manufacturing sector in recent years, the overall growth rate of productivity of the OECD economies can even exceed those achieved in the years 1950 to 1970 — 4.5 per cent per annum — and thus can lead to GDP growth rates at an even higher level than 5.5 per cent.

The above discussion indicates possibilities for rapid growth provided the OECD economies follow a different kind of policy mix. This will call for different policy measures than those adopted at present. Here we will only briefly outline the elements of an alternative policy package. Clearly, in the new policy measures emphasis will have to be placed on up-dating the technology of the services sector and

Table XI

PERCENTAGES OF "ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE" IN "ROUTINE" (1) INFORMATION HANDLING OCCUATIONS

Country	Time	1950/1	1960/1	1970/1	1975/6
Austria				20.2	
Canada		17.0	19.4		
France			12.7		17.5
Japan			12.8	17.5	21.0
Sweden			19.6	24.6	25.5
United Kingdom		18.9	21.8	23.2	
United States		16.8	19.7	24.2	

Source: OECD, (*ICCP*) *Series No. 6*, op. cit.

on restructuring the energy base through a massive public and private investment programme centring around more intensive utilisation of micro-electronics and new energy-efficient technologies. Equally, the macro-economic policy would have to manage the aggregate demand at much higher levels so that during the transition period involuntary unemployment levels are kept at a minimum. Such an expanded public investment and expenditure programme will have to substitute present public expenditures policies which are increasingly oriented towards armament expenditures.[29] In other words, a programme of disarmament will have to be an important element of this package. This will have the additional benefit of releasing technological resources in the form of trained scientists and engineers who are engaged in defence-related activities towards other areas, for example, improving energy-efficiency. In addition to the step-up of public investment, increased private investments in the form of new plants and equipment to modernise existing industries, for example, consumer durables, Industrial machinery, etc., will play an important role. Such a modernisation programme is now necessary as the existing capital stocks in many of the industries are becoming rapidly obsolete in face of much higher relative prices of energy. This would become one of the key determinants in the restructuring of world industry as brought out in the recent UNIDO survey (*World Industry in 1980*). M. Bailey in his recent analysis of US productivity has also shown that this issue is of considerable importance.[30]

In addition to the demand for investment goods or capital goods, consumer demand can also be stimulated by aiming at "modernisation" of consumer durables. In the post-War years buoyant consumer durables demand as well as investment goods demand played a crucial role in maintaining buoyant effective demand. For instance, the US economy saw a considerable shift in the privately-held asset structure during the post-War year. The share of consumer durables in total household wealth increased from 10 per cent in 1945 to 14.7 per cent in 1965 and to 17.6 per cent by 1973. Between 1945-1970 the stock of motor vehicles increased by 250 billion dollars out of the overall increase of consumer durables of 680 billion dollars.[31] It is being increasingly demonstrated that existing stocks of consumer durables, for example, automobiles, are not "efficient" given the new structure of energy prices. Interestingly, this is beginning to get reflected in the second half of the decade of the seventies when the share of automobiles in total durables did not show any increase. This could mean that the consumer demand for "new" types of consumer durables that are energy efficient can be stimulated. In other words, in the next wave of industrialisation or "re-industrialisation" consumer durables demand may play a role similar to the post-War years.

We are aware that we have only barely outlined the new policy package. However, we would like to take care of one of the possible objections. It can be argued that the proposed policy package could be inflationary. Before we look into this argument, a point needs to be made regarding a possible "excessive" obsession about inflation. There are groups of countries where inflation has had no adverse impact on capital accumulation and rate of growth in the economy. For instance, in many of the large Latin American countries during the last decade there has been considerable economic expansion in an environment of rising prices. Admittedly, this question is a complex one as it has implications, among other things, for income distribution, employment, etc. But this does raise a legitimate doubt about macro-economic objectives where control of inflation has maximum weight. In any case, proposed investment programmes will in fact reduce the inflationary pressure in the OECD economies. In our view a major source of the present inflationary pressure is relatively slower increase in the productivity of "sheltered" sectors (services sector). This is because in the OECD economies wages tend to get determined in the "exposed sectors" with a high productivity growth (manufacturing sector) and these get transmitted to other sectors where productivity may not increase at the same pace and thus bring pressures on aggregate demand and investible resources. This is the essence of the "structural" type model of inflation developed by the Scandinavian economists applicable to small open economies.[32] With some modifications, such a model would capture the inflationary process of other OECD economies. In such a case, an improvement in the productivity of the services sector ("sheltered" sectors) would then remove the present inflationary bias and can lead these economies to non-inflationary growth.

Admittedly, there are other important "structural" factors in explaining the present inflationary process in the advanced industrialised countries. For instance, the growing concentration in various sectors and consequently increased oligopolistic power of transnationals is playing an important role in sustained upward pressure on prices. Equally, the increasing role of transnational banks in the expansion of international liquidity would have the consequence of accommodating higher rates of inflation. Hence, for a fuller theory of inflation one will have to take into account these and other important structural aspects.

We are quite aware that the new policy package would encompass important political and sociological issues such as attitudes about leisure, working time, quality of life, participation of the working class in technological change, etc. After all, the problems involved are not only economic. They are a part of much broader issues, namely, the long-term goals of these societies. It is not difficult to see that some of the major implications of the new technologies would be: (i) shift of employment from the present services to manufacturing and "new" services; (ii) increased availability of leisure; and (iii) qualitative change in the concept of work, etc. These changes have wide-ranging sociological and political implications. Hence, there is no doubt that activisation of a political process that would demand such a transition is really the heart of the matter. What is being argued here is that there are now possibilities of pursuing appropriate policy-mixes which, along with new technologies, can make such a transition smoother.

There is an additional point. In order to ensure that such an acceleration in growth rates is successful, it will have to be implemented in a coordinated manner, that is, by international coordination of national economic policies. This has become essential for two reasons: (i) growing inter-penetration of the OECD economies which has led to a greater integration of the product markets as well as of the factor markets; and (ii) "multipolar" nature of OECD economies, that is, breakdown of the hegemony of one single economic power over the international economy. For instance, the gross domestic product of Japan and the EEC together now exceeds that of the US. The consequent breakdown of the international economy is perhaps most vividly reflected in the current instability of the international monetary system. In the background of these profound changes in the structure of international capitalism compared to the early post-War years, there is no doubt that a new development paradigm is required where increased international economic co-operation and co-ordination of national policies will have to assume central importance in the coming years. In other words, reliance on "market mechanism" alone may take the OECD economies away from vigorous growth unless there is coordination and "policy planning" with a longer-term perspective. This would suggest a sharp departure from the present policy postures in the advanced industrialised countries.

Although this paper has been focused entirely on the problems of the advanced industrialised countries and on the possible role of new technological innovations in these countries, we do not want to suggest that these technologies do not have implications for the developing countries. Obviously there are. However, this rather important issue requires separate and in-depth examination. Here we can only note that the developing countries will have to work out consciously their own strategies so that they can pursue their autonomous development more vigorously. At minimum they will have to safeguard themselves from being further dominated by the developed countries through these new information-processing technologies.[33] These changes will also have an impact on world trading patterns and patterns of industrialisation which can be turned to the advantage of the developing countries provided there are conscious efforts by the international community and by the national governments of the developing countries.☐ (*Concluded*)

FOOTNOTES

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19 For such a two-sector model, see J. Skolka "Unbalanced productivity growth and public services" *Journal of Public Economics*, 1977.

20 A. Recs, "Improving Productivity Measurement," *American Economic Review*, May 1980.

21 Baumol was perhaps one of the first to point out this possibility in the context of urban services. See W. Baumol, "Macro-economics of unbalanced growth: the anatomy of urban crisis", *American Economic Review*, 1967.

22 Georgescu-Rogen, "The economics of production", *American Economic Review*, 1970.

23 *World Bank* Working Paper No. 410, August 1980.

24. J. Forrester, "Multinational Business and Office of the Future", *The Economist Intelligence Unit Quarterly Review*, No. 3, 1980.

25. See OECD, *Policies for Innovation in the Services Sector*, 1977.

26. (i) S. Nora & A. Minc, *The Computerisation of Society*, 1980.

(ii) J. Rada, *The Impact of Micro-electronics*, ILO, Geneva 1981.

(iii) European Trade Union Institute, *The Impact of Micro-electronics on Employment in Western Europe in the 1980s*, 1981.

27 J. Kendrick and E. Grossman, *Productivity in the United States: Trends and Cycles*, 1980.

28 For a recent discussion of issues related to impact of advanced technologies in industrialised countries, see Colin Norman, *God that limps*, World Watch Institute, Washington, 1981.

29. Control of armament expenditure is an issue of profound importance even in the rather limited context of management of OECD economies. It has of course even much wider connotations. All these issues have been ably discussed in the recent UN report on disarmament and development, see UN Report of the Secretary-General, *Study on the relationship between disarmament and development*, October 1981.

30. M.N. Bailey, "Productivity and the Services of Capital and Labour" *Brookings papers on economic activity*, Vol. I, 1981.

31. J. Musgrave, "Durable goods owned by consumer in the United States, 1925-1977", *Survey of current business*, March 1979.

32. O. Aukurst, Inflation in the Open Economy: A Norwegian Model, in L. Krause and W. Salant (ed), *World-wide Inflation*, Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C. 1977.' In such a model the "traded" goods sector is the "exposed' and "non-traded" goods account for the "sheltered" sector.

33. John Galtung has made very perceptive observations. See "The structural theory of imperialism" in *Essays in Peace Research*, Copenhagen, 1978.

WHAT A SCREAM !

A feminist theatre group, Mrs Worthington's Daughters, has come up with a novel and enterprising way of attracting money to the stage. Not for them the standard application form to the Arts Council or adverts in their programmes; instead, the touring company, set up three years ago, is offering to work the names or products of commercial sponsors into the scripts of their plays.

Imagine the sort of thing:

Ariel sings:
Full fathom five thy father lies
(accessible only by Northsea Dives)
Of his bones are coral made

Miranda, dancing:
Coral Maid! Coral Maid! Coral Maid!
It's the new ice cream with the yummy-scrummy taste!

Ariel resumes:
These are pearls—yes, watch her eyes light up as you give her a Prospero pearl, imitation but indistinguishable from the real thing—oh, dear, where were we...ah, yes...that were his eyes.

Miranda:
I scream, you scream, we all scream for Coral Maid ice cream...

And so on. But Mrs Worthington's Daughters have yet to go as far as altering venerable scripts like Shakespeare. Instead, they propose to write sponsors' names into their new productions as well as including "live" adverts during the interval. Equity are sniffing around.

—From 'Dairy', *Guardian Weekly*, March 14, 1982

Hand-rickshaws in Calcutta

A Human Question

Unnayan, an independent organisation in Calcutta established in 1977 and engaged in community research and planning in a variety of fields, has prepared a paper for a seminar on "Banning the Unlicensed: Planning for the 'Unorganised' Sector?", in March 1982. We here publish extensive extracts from the paper as the questions raised concern a large number of poor people in Calcutta.

ON September 21, 1981, an amendment to the Hackney Carriage Act of 1919 was passed in the West Bengal State Assembly which, when and if implemented, is likely to bring to a virtual end the service of hand-pulled rickshaws in Calcutta. This legislation, which is designed to enforce the impounding and destruction of *unlicensed* rickshaws, in many ways brings to a head not only the 30-year-old controversy over whether to ban rickshaws in Calcutta, but also the wider confrontation between the authorities and the formal sector on the one side, and the huge, unorganised, so-called 'informal sector' in Calcutta.

After careful study of the rickshaw situation in the city (Published as *Rickshaws in Calcutta*, Unnayan, February 1981) and of subsequent developments, this paper presents clearly the facts about hand-rickshaws in Calcutta. In our experience the rickshaw situation is symbolic of polarisation taking place in our cities between a privileged minority with a particular set of values and a huge, and increasingly marginalised, majority of the poor. This polarisation, in one sense, is a direct outcome of the nature and structure of present systems of planning and decision-making. In this sense, and in the context of the surprising fact of legislation of this nature being put forward by a Left Government, not only the 60,000 pullers or the lakhs of households, and businesses that will be affected, but also the planners and the Government and all of us, are victims of a set of values and an unscientific decision-making process both of which need challenging and change. We believe the legislation needs re-examination; but this must take place in the course of a wider reconsideration: it is not just a question of keeping rickshaws or banning them. All citizens should know the facts, and all should take part in making the decisions.

Despite their age (they came into use in Calcutta nearly a century ago), rickshaws continue to be used throughout the city, and remain among the more heavily-used systems of transport, by all types of people — households, shopkeepers, businessmen, small manufacturers, school-children, and as ambulances. Most vehicles, however, are not licensed (only 6,009 out of a total of perhaps 35,000 to 50,000); since the number licensable was fixed at 6,000 in 1939 — over 40 years ago. For the past thirty years and more, their continued presence has however been questioned, especially by Government planners, for reasons such as that "they are slow-moving" and thereby cause congestion in the streets. At the same time, because of the "illegal" status imposed on 95 per cent of the vehicles plying, the trade — like so many others in Calcutta — is riddled with exploitation.

The confrontation has come to a head with the new legislation to enforce the impounding and destruction of unlicensed vehicles. This step, if enforced, will have drastic effects: since some 30,000 to 45,000 rickshaws are unlicensed, some 60,000 to 90,000 pullers will be rendered unemployed, as also people employed in ancillary industries; there are no plans for alternative jobs. Rickshaws account for over 10 per cent of the estimated 6.8 million trips made in Calcutta every weekday — so lakhs of households and businesses will have to find other ways to move around in the city, where transport is already very inadequate. There will be widespread disruption.

There is also the question of social justice: the legislation, whether by design or inadvertently, only serves to reinforce the already dominant position of licensed owners, who will remain unaffected. Their 6,000 licences — the last new one was issued by the Government in 1944 — are renewed every year, and no new applications are ever entertained. Why are they protected? If the Government's reasons for removal of rickshaws stand — that it is a supposedly inhuman trade and a transport mode that supposedly causes traffic jams because it is slow-moving — then why are these few protected? The reasons should not be allowed to be that 'this is what the law says'; or that many policemen are said to be owners, or that the President of the All-Bengal Rickshaw Union, the oldest owners' union, is Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

It is also argued that it is 'reactionary' or 'conservative' to think of retaining rickshaws, and that given all of Calcutta's problems, there is need to be 'progressive', in this and other fields. We suggest that the focus of this concern is misplaced, even confused: firstly, is it really 'progressive' to get rid of rickshaws, 'conservative' to keep them? We believe it is not necessarily so, and it is much more conservative just to get rid of them but to protect the status quo where the ownership of transport in the city — as in all other fields — is concentrated in the hands of a few.

Aside from rickshaws, however, it is important to realise that rickshawallas and the uncertainty they are facing, are typical of a large part of Calcutta's life. Some 40-50 per cent of the city's work force, is employed in the 'informal sector', of which all the 'illegal' rickshaws and their pullers form a part. This means millions of people are — officially — not fully within the scope of the law, and of regulations (although there are many informal arrangements, such as bribes and settlements, by which the legal, official world reaches this sector and an uneasy and usually exploitative balance is maintained). Despite the scale of this situation, most 'planning' decisions which have tried to regulate the city's life, have seen this sector as an obstacle and have — just as in the case of rickshaws — tried to deal with problems by confrontation and exercise of authority.

Our conclusion is that the legislation may be, like many plans, the result of obsolete values, and that another type of planning process is needed, one that takes into account *all* levels of society, and all sectors of the economy in Calcutta. But even more than this, the planning process required must be not only sensitive to the lives of all of Calcutta's various citizens, but be one that can in particular constructively support and help the dominant 70 per cent majority of its population who are poor, and exploited, to improve their lives.

In terms of rickshaws, there is at present hardly much substantive ground on which such decisions can be taken. It was, therefore presumed that a comprehensive policy paper, looking at all aspects of the subject, could help in the decision-making process. The cycle-rickshaw as a comparative mode was also included to give an overall picture of the informal sector passenger transport modes in the city, and the result was the Unnayan report on *Rickshwas in Calcutta*.

A synopsis of the attributes of hand-rickshaws is provided below, largely gleaned from the report. This is done to highlight the role of the vehicle in various dimensions, as well as to place in context the various reasons which traffic planners and policy makers have put forward to date, for the restriction and even removal of rickshaws.

In balance, we find the hand-rickshaw to be little understood, much maligned but a useful and efficient transport trade. It needs organisational, technical and structural change, but is nevertheless appropriate to the particular demands of Calcutta's physical, social and business networks. While it is true that there are severe structural problems in the trade, and that some traffic conflict takes place, there has to be a better plan than a sweeping removal which will cause so much disruption in the lives of so many people and in the life of the city.

The hand-rickshaw, the many roles that it plays in the life of Calcutta, and the question of whether to ban it or retain it, are symbolic of a much wider process of change and 'development' that is increasingly affecting all of us. It is vital that we take part in this change and not let it simply envelop and overwhelm us. We therefore strongly recommend careful review of the policies relating to this trade that seem to be emerging in the city, and urge all citizens to join in a public debate.

There are about 35,000, possibly 50,000, rickshaws in the city, with an estimated 75,000-1,00,000 pullers. The number of workers directly or indirectly involved in the hand-rickshaw trade represents around 8 per cent of the total working population in the hand-rickshaw zone of the Calcutta Metropolitan District. It therefore supports more than one lakh families or over half a million people living in Calcutta and its hinterland of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

The trade is highly labour intensive, presently costing only roughly Rs 300 per work-place.[1]

Surveys suggest that 92 per cent of the pullers come from Bihar, and maintain a kind of dual residence, in Calcutta and in their native villages. Of them 96 per cent are married, but only 7 per cent have their families in the city.

Rickshaws are readily available, at convenient locations, at all times of day and night. They carry passengers close to their final destination. They are available late at night, and in a city where there are few ambulances, they are specially useful for emergencies such as taking invalids to hospital. They are available during rush hours when other modes are grossly overloaded, and especially for movements in and through the dense neighbourhoods of the central city.

During the rains in Calcutta, when the streets are usually flooded, the rickshaw is often the only mode available or willing to transport passengers. (The 'extra' fare charged at these times has to be seen relative to the fact that the puller takes a considerable risk, in the conditions of most Calcutta roads, of running on a surface he cannot see because of the flood water, and that the passengers can reach their destination without getting dirty or spoiling their clothes. Also, that taxis — if they can ply — usually charge a premium at such times.)

They offer freedom from worry — children are sent to school by parents in the care of a trusted puller.

The rickshaw is used for various types of travel, as given below:

To/From Work	During Work	Education	Medical	Social	Shopping
19%	7%	17%	9%	23%	23%

Based on a survey conducted by Unnayan in 1980 with a sample of 100 rickshaws, distributed throughout the city.

About 7 lakh one-way passenger trips a day are made by hand-rickshaw in the Corporation area; roughly the same as the number of trips made in trams every day and 10 per cent of the total number of daily trips (6.8 million) made in Calcutta.

Goods carriage is a major activity near all the central markets, especially Sealdah, Machuabazar and Posta. In a count of rickshaw movements in the early evening on Howrah Bridge, 70 per cent of the vehicles carried goods or bulky baggage. Rickshaws allow owners to travel with their load; sometimes goods are carried unaccompanied. They are ideally suited for petty tradesmen, to carry small quantities of goods, not sufficient for tempos. Rickshaws are ideally suited for delivery to small establishments in narrow lanes where most petty businesses and industries in Calcutta are located, and are in some places the only vehicle that can travel in such areas. In other words, their removal would make such transport very difficult for all such concerns — or require replacement by another, similar vehicle.

Passenger travel by rickshaw is costly when compared with public modes like bus, tram and train. However, for short distances (below 1 km) it is cheaper than taxis. One kilometre by taxi is Rs. 1.50 (taxi fare however is fixed for first 2 km, meaning a minimum charge of Rs 3), whereas in a rickshaw 40 paise to Re 1 is the rate per km. For goods carriage, rickshaws are cheaper than other modes.

Street occupancy takes two forms (a) Room for moving vehicles, and (b) room for stationary vehicles.

(a) *Room for moving vehicles*: Emergence of rickshaws on to major streets and along major roads are the only situations where serious conflict arises with other modes of traffic. At present, rickshaws (and thelas) are in any case prohibited from many major roads and much of their movement is along urban back lanes, where they do not affect the flow of other vehicles since the latter cannot get there. On main roads, rickshaws tend to keep close to the kerb.

It is agreed that in planning transport for the city, priority should be given to mass public transport; however, banning of rickshaws from, say, all bus routes would have only a marginal effect on bus speeds and would seriously reduce the usefulness of rickshaws.

Calculations by traffic planners of junction capacity and traffic flow normally tend to assume that motorised traffic is the dominant and legitimate mode in a city, while slow-moving vehicles are marginal and disruptive. In Calcutta and in most Indian cities this assumed marginality is not necessarily correct, either in terms of the ratio of numbers of vehicles or in terms of social and economic functions. The 'disruption' said to be caused should therefore be seen in relation to the importance of the roles played by the different transport modes in the lives of citizens, not simply from the point of view of car drivers. For rickshaw-pullers and their passengers, motor vehicles are a nuisance and dangerous.

(b) *Room for stationary vehicles:* Space requirements for stationary rickshaws are very small, in comparison to other modes: Rickshaw — 1.3 m². Car — 12 m². Bus — 28 m².

A major reduction in the number of stationary rickshaws would provide relief to trucks near retails markets but would have little effect on general traffic flow; and would seriously reduce the effectiveness of rickshaws.

Rickshaws are cheap, costing around Rs 600 per vehicle, and are easy to maintain compared to other modes. The cost of the vehicle is recovered within the year, given prevailing costs, rates and wages. Energy is purely manual, and so it is labour intensive. This makes the running of the vehicle independent from the crunch of the fuel crisis (which caused, for instance, taxi fares in Calcutta to rise from 125 paise per km in 1980, to 138 p in January 1981 and 150 p in June 1981; 20 per cent in six months) but also pollution-free — which is not an insignificant issue in our cities. This is aside from the issue of using renewable energy (man-power) and saving non-renewable energy forms such as petrol.

Very few pullers own their own vehicles — less than one in a hundred. The normal custom is that the puller rents his vehicle from the fleet of an owner, on a shift basis. The owner typically takes responsibility for the cost of keeping the vehicle in service including payment for repairs, licensing and any overnight garaging.

A licensed rickshaw is a lucrative investment, offering a return on capital of about 150 per cent per year. A rickshaw licence can also be sold, for prices up to Rs 1500 and even Rs 3,000. The average fleet size appears to be 25 vehicles, inclusive of unlicensed ones.

Interests of owners of vehicles licensed in Calcutta city have been represented since 1939 by the All-Bengal Rickshaw Union. The Rickshaw Owners' Association represents the interests of owners of vehicles licensed up to 1980 in South Dum Dum, Baranagar and Rajpur municipalities.

Rickshaw owners are often people with considerable influence, and interest in the trade is therefore heavily vested. Some examples are that the President of the All-Bengal Rickshaw Union (ABRU) is the Deputy Speaker of the West

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[1] The term 'cost per work-place' refers to the cost incurred to employ one person. One new rickshaw costs about Rs 600, and is usually used by two pullers on a shift basis; giving a figure of Rs 300.

In a country like ours, where labour is plentiful, finance relatively scarce (or at least concentrated and unavailable), and unemployment high, the need to provide employment ('work-places') at as low a cost as possible, is very acute. This need, to make this cost as low as possible, is now well recognised by economic planners throughout the world; in this sense, hand-rickshaws form a relatively 'efficient' trade — aside from their other contributions to life and society.

Bengal Assembly; we have also heard that many members of the Calcutta police force are owners of rickshaw fleets. The number of people owing the existing rickshaws, licensed or unlicensed, is however not yet known. (Why this information should be treated by the Government like an official secret is not clear.)

There are 35,000 rickshaws plying in the city, of which only 6,000 are allowed to be licensed by the Calcutta Corporation; an as yet undetermined number were licensed up to 1980 in some municipalities around Calcutta. The 6000 ceiling on licensed vehicles for Calcutta city was established over forty years ago (1939) and has not been updated since then, despite the enormous growth of the city.

There are four types of licences for the rickshaw trade: (i) Owner's licence (by the Hackney Carriage Department); (ii) Calcutta Corporation licence (Road Tax); (iii) Owner's Trade/Business licence (by the Calcutta Corporation); (iv) Puller's licence (Hackney Carriage Act).

The owner's licence is the most important, but new licences have ceased being issued after 1939. No new vehicles are legally allowed to be manufactured; meaning even old rickshaws are legally not allowed to be replaced by new ones. Vehicle renewal however takes place by gradual removal and replacement of parts.

By an earlier law, unlicensed vehicles were liable to be impounded by the police and a fine not exceeding Rs. 100 had to be paid (Section 16, Calcutta Hackney Carriage Act 1919). However, after the May 1980 amendment (insertion of a new Section 70A) of the Hackney Carriage Act, owners are liable to pay a fine of Rs 50 to Rs 500 or undergo three months' imprisonment; this penalty is being enforced more strictly. Owners of unlicensed vehicles claim that the fines they are being forced to pay against their vehicles which cost about Rs 600 each exceed the penalties which, for instance, minibus owners have to pay for traffic violations against their vehicles costing Rs 1 lakh each.

The Hackney Carriage Department is responsible for seeing to it that the vehicles are road-worthy, including having lamps and bells. Pullers should be competent and have sufficient knowledge of localities in Calcutta. They should not be less than 18 years of age.

Traffic control specifies that rickshaws should not ply between certain areas at specified times (such as Park Street, Chowringhee, Chittaranjan Avenue).

An informal understanding among rickshaw-pullers prevents customers from bargaining for lowest fares, since the pullers remain consistent about their price. On the other hand the customer, on reaching the destination, is in an advantageous position and may walk off without paying the demanded fare — leaving the puller protesting. This forms an important market control.

Of the average Rs 12.50 gross income earned per half-day shift by a rickshaw-puller, the owner takes Rs 2 as hire charges, and the puller retains Rs 10.50. A puller's annual income is around Rs 3,500. About one-third is kept for his subsistence in Calcutta; the rest is sent home to support dependants. Against an approximate vehicle cost of Rs 600, an owner typically retains about Rs 1000 per year, after licensing and maintenance expenses. The rickshaw trade is labour-intensive; the cost per work-place is around Rs 300. The annual in-take in fares in the hand-rickshaw trade is of the order of Rs 28 crores. Of this, about Rs 23.50 crores is the main income of the 75,000 pullers in the city.

Contrary to popular belief, hand-rickshaw pulling is not more 'barbaric' than mining, freight loading/unloading, etc. In fact, the even distribution of weight in a hand-rickshaw, coupled with the unusually large size of the wheels, makes rickshaw-pulling a relatively less strenuous occupation, since the wheels develop a momentum of their own.

While the cycle-rickshaw often seems to be less strenuous than the hand-rickshaw, reports from Madras and elsewhere suggest that cycle-rickshaw pulling constitutes a greater hazard to health for the puller, and that the incidence of chest disease, muscular strain and impotency is significantly higher among cycle-rickshaw pullers than among hand-rickshaw pullers.

The conventional argument against rickshaws is that they are "exploitative", because they have one man pulling another. The physical labour involved in pulling a rickshaw is less than in mining, freight loading/unloading, etc., which are also done by some men to serve and benefit other men. In fact, when moving, the rickshaw presents a relatively light load, because of the weight and nature of the wheels, and problems arise only when sudden braking or turning is required. Brakes on the vehicle would solve this problem, and similarly a number of simple technical improvements can be made to resolve other problems of safety and comfort.

Indeed, the cycle-rickshaw also has one man pulling another — but it is not usually looked at with the same distaste. Why? Is it because there is an apparent mechanical advantage? But does this argument still stand if it is known that rickshaw-cycling can cause much more severe health problems than pulling? Or is it just that the hand-rickshaw presents a dramatic image of what is wrong in society — and it is convenient to sweep such images away?

WHAT should be done?

The details of the rickshaw trade as given above obviously raise a complex of questions, questions which impinge on a wide area of civic experience. There is the question of the Government causing sudden and massive unemployment, in the name of improving traffic and protecting 'legal' activities. There are legal and constitutional questions, regarding the very imposition of limits to the number of people practising a given trade (by fixing the number of licences): and regarding the perpetuation of limits outdated now by over 40 years and designed by a colonial regime in vastly different urban circumstances.

There is the conflict of different modes and speeds of traffic on Calcutta's inadequate roads; to whom do the streets belong?

There is the problem of the rickshaw-pullers themselves, and their livelihood, which has to be seen both from a humanitarian angle and as well as from the angle of social, political and economic relations of so-called 'migrants' from another part of the country to the city. This is especially so when both the rickshaw-trade and the Bihar-Calcutta relationship are, albeit separately, over a hundred years old.

There is the issue of widespread disruption being caused by enforcement of the legislation, in patterns of civic services and in social and business networks in the city. These patterns have grown with the city's growth and are at one with its tissue and texture.

There is the severe concentration of ownership of the trade. There is the struggle between the situations of surplus and therefore exploitable labour on the one hand, and the perpetuation of exploitation by the keeping of services and trades as "illegal", on the other. There is the question of *how* decisions should be made in a situation like this — enmeshed, entangled, fraught with contradiction: is simple reliance on legality and legislation enough?

These questions are obviously not answered by a sweeping removal. What should be done, and who should do it?

From what we have learnt, it seems clear to us that there are no simple answers. Our purpose in preparing this paper is to admit just that — and to put this situation before as many people as care to listen. It does seem to us, however, that the minimum required is a policy-preparation and decision-making process very different from the one followed for the legislation. From the fact that the legislation does not begin to address the complexity of the situation, it should be clear that the interests of traffic management, or policing of legality, are not sufficient to address the demands of real life. In this context, our only suggestion is a wider, and public, debate, a plan-preparation process which is more sensitive to all the issues and interests involved. We are confident that sensible suggestions will arise from a democratic process such as this; some are already obvious such as separation of traffic by area and by roads, and change in ownership structure.

We believe that these questions involve every one of us: their answers, because they are true of any and every instance of change around us, and whether you and we give them or not, will change our world.

How do you think it should change?

The New 20-Point Programme
for
Accelerated Growth with Social Justice
Delhi Gives a Lead

Immediately after the Prime Minister presented the new 20-Point Programme, on January 14, the Delhi Administration was quick to constitute a high level Steering Committee under the Chairmanship of the Lt. Governor on January, 20. Since then it has identified the plans and projects under each sector of development which have a direct bearing on this national Programme and has taken steps to accelerate the pace of their implementation.

SOME SALIENT FEATURES

- * Irrigation to additional 3,500 hectares in Sixth Plan; 400 hectares this year. New scheme for exploitation of effluent water irrigation to 8,000 hectares launched.
- * 3,000 rural poor to get assistance every year for setting up ventures on self-reliance basis.
- * Minimum wages of agriculture and industrial labour raised by 25%; 8 lakh workers to benefit.
- * Special Component Plan to benefit 1,80,000 Harijan families (9,27,000 persons); Rs. 523 lakhs in Sixth Plan for Harijan Welfare.
- * Piped Water supply now available in 138 villages, 45 more villages to benefit this year. All villages to get the facility by next year.
- * 800 house sites for the landless in rural areas this year; 7,500 more being developed out of which development of 1,500 to be completed very shortly. Housing subsidy to 7,500 landless villages in Sixth Plan; 1,500 this year.
- * 1,150 tubewells energised in 1981-82 at a cost of Rs. 100 lakhs. Same amount to be spent next year. 36 Harijan Bastis electrified, decision to electrify all.
- * Target of 30,00 sterilisations for next year against 15,000 this year. Ten more Family Welfare Centres to be opened.
- * Comprehensive measures to fight T.B., Leprosy, Blindness and ill-health.
- * Public distribution system revamped and has now 2,860 F.P.S.'s, 1,730 K. Oil and 1,827 Coal Depots.
- * Outlay on Handicrafts increase from Rs. 1.50 lakhs in 1980-81 to Rs. 5 lakhs in 1981-82 and the assistance for handlooms increased from Rs. 16.44 lakhs to Rs. 23.37 lakhs.
- * For mother and child care, 4 Welfare Institutions and 38 work centres for Women, 146 maternity and Child Welfare centres, 14 children's institutions and 11 day care centres are functioning; under special nutrition programme 96,000 children and 17,000 women are being provided nutritious food besides more than one lakh school students in M.C.D. areas and all in N.D.M.C. areas are getting mid-day meals.
- * Almost all children in 6-11 age group are in Primary Schools; 80% of these in 12-14 age group are in middle schools, Part time schools set up for those who cannot afford regular schooling.

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Arms Race and NIEO

INGA THORSSON

IN broad terms, the present study has taken into account the current situation in the field of disarmament and the importance of disarmament for detente, international peace and security, economic and social development, the promotion of international cooperation and their reciprocal relationships. The study has been made in the context of how disarmament, when achieved, can contribute to the establishment of a New International Economic Order. Furthermore, the study was required to be forward-looking and policy-oriented, enabling it to serve as a basis for decisions on concrete actions to reallocate real resources through disarmament measures to economic and social development, particularly in Third World countries.

Common sense alone tells us that military preparations are an economic burden. The arms race and development are to be viewed in a competitive relationship, particularly in terms of resources. Or to put it another way: the arms race and under-development are not two problems; they are one. They must be solved together, or neither will ever be solved.

It is a historical fact that governments have, over the past 30 years, spent vast resources on armaments, resources which — on grounds of morality, on grounds of equal human justice, on grounds of enlightened self-interest — ought to have been directed to ending world poverty and building for human and material development. In this way world armaments are among the causes of poverty and under-development.

The 1972 United Nations study on this same theme concluded that disarmament and development "stand fundamentally apart". Taking their point of departure, this statement is still true. Ten years ago and, as duties of the industrialised countries went, development was simply equated with development assistance. But since then, the development discussion has been broadened to involve basic structural changes in all societies, within states and among states, including more equitable distribution of income, access to the means of production and greater participation by all groups in decision-making, and progress towards the establishment of a New International Economic order.

In the present study, we have introduced a new conceptual framework, defined in a dynamic triangular interrelation between disarmament, development and security. We have taken a broader approach to the problem of security. In our era, national security can no longer be equated with military might. Even less can international security, that is, security *for all,* do so. Also, we demonstrate that threats to security may be made and aggravated in many ways, including those that go far beyond purely military threats. It was recognised by the first UN General Assembly Special Session on Disarmament that the arms race itself has become a threat to the security of nations. Thus, disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, would directly enhance security, and, therefore, prospects for development.

National security is not a goal in itself. Its ultimate purpose must be to secure the independence and sovereignty of the national state, the freedom of its citizens, freedom and the means to develop economically, socially and culturally, which defines exactly what we mean by "development". In today's world this can never be achieved by any state at the expense of others. In a world of interdependence, only through global or international security will it be possible to reach the objective of national security — for the ultimate goal of freedom, well-being and human dignity for people throughout the world.

Today there is an array of intensifying non-military threats which aggravate the security problems of states. Such non-military threats can be described as

- ● widespread reductions in prospects for economic growth;
- ● existing or impending ecological stresses, resource scarcities — notably in the field of energy and certain non-renewable raw materials — and a growing world population. Today's stresses and constraints may translate into tomorrow's economic stresses and political conflicts;
- ● the morally unacceptable and politically hazardous polarisation of wealth and poverty.

The appalling dimensions of poverty, the destruction of the environment, the accelerating race for arms and the resulting global economic malaise are largely problems of our own making. The Group states that it is well within our collective capabilities and within the earth's carrying capacity to provide for basic needs for the world's entire population, and to make progress towards a more equitable economic order, at a pace politically acceptable to all. The Group reaffirms that the arms race is incompatible with the objectives of a New International Economic Order. Of course, also in the future, economic growth is possible even with a continuing arms race, but it would be relatively slow, and very unevenly distributed both among and within regions of the world. We show, on the other hand, that a cooperative management of inter-dependence can be in the economic and security interests of all states. But the adoption or rather the evolution of such an outlook is quite improbable if the arms race continues.

The author, a Swedish expert and Member, Executive Committee, International Foundation for Development Alternatives, was chairman of a group of 27 governmental experts which studied the relationship between disarmament and development. The report was presented by Inga Thorsson to the political and economic committees of the UN General Assembly. We reproduce here the essential part of the presentation to the economic committee, from *IFDA Dossier,* March-April 1982.

It is imperative that non-military challenges to security are treated as non-military. If this is not recognised, if states fail to accept and persevere in tackling these challenges through voluntary measures and cooperation, there is a grave risk that the situation will deteriorate to the point of crisis where, even with a low probability of success, the use of military force could be seen as a way to produce results sufficiently quickly. This is far from being a remote possibility. In recent times there has been a marked and increasing tendency in international relations actually to use or threaten to use military force in response to non-military challenges, not only to "security", but also to the secure supply of goods and the well-being of the nations facing these challenges.

The Study has documented that at least 50 million people are directly or indirectly engaged in military activities world-wide. This figure includes, *inter alia*, an estimated 500,000 qualified scientists and engineers engaged in research and development for military purposes.

Military research and development remains by far the largest single objective of scientific enquiry and technological development. Approximately 20 per cent of the world's qualified scientists and engineers were engaged in military work at a cost of around $ 35 billion in 1980, or approximately one-quarter of all expenditure on research and development. Virtually all this R & D takes place in the industrialised countries, 85 per cent in the USA and the USSR alone. Adding France and Britain would push this share above 90 per cent. It stands to reason that even a modest reallocation to development objectives of the current capacity for military R & D could be expected to produce dramatic results in fields like resource conservation and the promotion of new patterns of development, better adapted to meeting the basic needs of ordinary people. This is — evident from the fact, which is also among our findings, that, on an average, a military product requires 20 times as much R & D resources as a civilian product.

The 1972 report on the subject identified more than 70 possible alternative uses. Our present investigations suggest, in more elaborated and detailed ways, for instance, that production workers in the military sector could quite easily transfer their skills to the development, production and installation of solar energy devices. Environment, housing and urban renewal are other areas likely to gain from the possible rechannelling of military R & D. New transport systems, particularly in urban areas, are sorely needed and have long been regarded as a major civilian alternative for the high-technology industries in the military sector.

In purely financial terms, world-wide military expenditures by 1981 exceed the astounding level of 520 billion dollars, representing 6 per cent of world output. This amount is roughly equivalent to the value of all investible capital in all Third World countries combined. The effect on the economic and social spheres in our societies of the arms race extend far beyond the fact that 5 to 6 per cent of the world's resources are not available to help satisfy socially productive needs. The very fact that these resources are spent on armaments accentuates the inefficient allocation of the remaining 94 to 95 per cent, within and between nations. Three fundamental characteristics of the arms race reinforces this disallocation: first, the sheer magnitude of the volume of resources; second, the composition of expenditure, most particularly the stress on R & D, affecting investment and productivity in the civilian sector; and thirdly, the fact that this massive effort has now been sustained for over thirty years.

As an illustration of the contribution which can be made by disarmament measures, even limited, to world development, one study submitted to the Group projects global economic prospects under three types of hypothetical scenarios, namely, a continued arms race, an accelerated arms race, and modest disarmament measures involving the release of some resources for reallocation into the Third World. Utilising the United Nations input-output model of world economy, it is calculated that an acceleration of the arms race would adversely affect global economic well-being in all but one of the regions of the world. I will here highlight some general results. Besides the negative impact on per capita consumption, an accelerated arms race will also result in a decline of the world's stock of capital, reduce the value of non-military exports, and entail reductions in industrial employment in the poorest regions of the world.

In contrast, a scenario of even modest disarmament measures is shown to yield higher per capita consumption for different regions and in addition bring about a higher world GDP, a larger capital stock, a general increase in agricultural output, to mention only a few of the obvious economic gains. Besides these global economic gains, a scenario of modest disarmament would also yield significant benefits for the poorest regions of the world. This conclusion is by itself of considerable significance, what it is remembered that in many cases, increases in military outlays by industrial countries have been accompanied by a decline in their aid transfers, despite the repeated request for the fulfilment of the UN targets for official development assistance and despite the fact that existing volumes of assistance are grossly inadequate to meet the basic requirements of the poorer countries. The report shows that even a minor part of savings from modest disarmament has the potential of dramatically enhancing present levels of assistance.

We can make similar calculations for the past. For instance, if half the funds spent on armaments throughout the world from 1870 to 1975 had instead been invested in the civilian sector, it has been calculated that annual output at the end of that period would have been 200 billion dollars higher than it actually was — a figure in excess of the aggregate GNP of Southern Asia and the mid-African regions. And mark well, this growth would most likely have been achieved without any extra demand for investible resources.

Military outlays fall by definition into the category of consumption and not investment. As a consequence, steadily high or increasing military outlays tend to depress economic growth. This effect may be direct through displacement of investment, and indirect through constraints on productivity....

On the basis of the present report, and the research commissioned for it, we can confidently conclude that military budgets are dead-end expenditures in all kinds of economies, be they market, centrally planned, or mixed; be they industrialised or not. Military expenditures do not foster growth. Through their inflationary effects — thoroughly analysed in the study — and the general economic and political malaise to which they contribute, military spending inhibits the capital investment required for development. Through the drain on the most valuable research talents and funds, it restrains productivity gains and distorts growth in science and technology. The military sector is not a great provider of jobs, on the contrary. Military spending is one of the least efficient kinds of public spending. It drains away funds that could relieve poverty and distress. The very nature of military spending heightens tensions, reduces security and underpins the system which makes even more arms necessary.

The structural changes implied by the movement toward a New International Economic Order require a strong and sustained political commitment. Costs and benefits are difficult to compare in conventional ways. The costs tend to be felt sooner than the benefits. But there is little doubt that all societies would reap major benefits from a reduction in the economic burden of military activities and that there is a strong mutuality of interest between industrialised and developing countries in this respect. Therefore, the Group unanimously recommends that Governments urgently undertake studies to identify and to publicise the benefits that would be derived from the reallocation of military resources in a balanced and verifiable manner to address economic and social problems at the national level and to contribute toward reducing the gap in income that currently divides the industrialised nations from the developing world and establishing a New International Economic Order.

The Group has examined the technological feasibility and economic potentials of a process of conversion of resources from military to civilian purposes. The main object, in economic terms, is to devise short-and long-term policies designed to consolidate the goal of disarmament with economic goals of growth, monetary stability, full employment and foreign trade balance. While, as a matter of course, conversion itself will have to await some measure of disarmament, preparation and research for an economic conversion policy cannot be deferred until such time.

The defence industry everywhere is characterised *inter alia* by a high degree of geographical concentration. It also involves a considerable degree of specialisation of its work-force. This apparent exclusiveness should not prove to be an unsurmountable problem, because:

- conversion and redeployment are not phenomena uniquely associated with disarmament. Any form of economic and social change represents a continuous process of conversion;
- conversion is feasible as a significant part of military demand relates to goods and services essentially identical to civilian ones.

Primary responsibility for conversion, in an overall sense, inevitably falls on the central government, particularly as regards planning and initiation of preparations for such a process. The nature and extent of government involvement, following disarmament measures, in the process of conversion itself will vary from country to country, depending largely on the prevailing type of economic system. If transition is to be as smooth as possible and involve the minimum waste of finite resources, it is vital that every effort be made to anticipate the extent and the character of the conversion problems that will arise. It is therefore obvious to the Group, that preparations for conversion should be among the first steps on the road to disarmament. Hence, the Group recommends that Governments create the necessary prerequisites, including preparations and, where appropriate, planning, to facilitate the conversion of resources freed by disarmament measures to civilian purposes, especially to meet urgent economic and social needs, in particular in the Third World.

The General Assembly mandated the Study to indicate concrete actions to reallocate real resources released through disarmament measures to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the Third World. In doing so, the Group has also considered a French proposal presented at the Tenth Special Session on the establishment of an international disarmament fund for development.

Obviously, the achievement of disarmament measures which will release real resources will in the first instance most directly benefit those States which are affected by these measures. Practical ways by which disarmament may redound to the benefit of development in the South may take many forms. Beside changes in economic relations to the benefit of the Third World, it is widely recognised that increasing the magnitude and predictability of flows of capital to the Third World, as grants or on concessional terms, is of vital importance. One proposed way of fostering these flows would be to establish a special fund for development to be financed from budgetary savings through the implementation of disarmament measures, as well as a levy on armaments, or voluntary contributions. The Group is unanimous in its opinion that the disarmament dividend approach to financing a fund — by which savings won by concrete disarmament measures or a portion thereof would be allocated to development needs— is most in accord with the United Nations conception of disarmament and development as well as being the most feasible. The Group unanimously recommends that further consideration be given to establishing an international disarmament fund for development and that the administrative and technical modalities of such a fund be further investigated by the United Nations with due regard to the capabilities of the agencies and institutions presently responsible for the international transfer of resources. ...

No analysis of the socio-economic gains of disarmament can be complete without referring to its catalytic effects, which may eventually produce a global climate more conducive to further and cumulative measures in the same direction. This would be in contrast with the present situation where higher outlays on the military sector are often attributed to the continued threats emanating from an adverse strategic environment. An outstanding feature of the prevailing international climate is the uncertainty which is characterising the exercise in rearranging the North-South relationship within the framework of a NIEO, as well as the uncertainty of stabilising the East-West relationship within the framework of detente.

In both these respects, the catalytic effects of military restraint can considerably improve the results obtained so far because the politico-strategic considerations governing the arms race tend to interfere with the economic considerations demanding a cooperative management of global interdependence. Stabilisation of the international monetary system, rectification of trade imbalances, resolution of the existing balance of payment difficulties and a continuous flow of capital, finance and technology among the more and less industrialised, economies, constitute, as this committee is well aware, some of the basic prerequisites of a NIEO. Disarmament measures can improve the prospects of international cooperation in all these spheres because there are sufficient indications to suggest that the ongoing arms race has exacerbated the disruptive influences on the international monetary system, aggravated the balance of payment problems of the less industrialised economies and interrupted a continuous flow of capital and technology transfers among the more and the less industrialised economies.

Successive crises in the international monetary system imputable in part to the massive creation of international liquidity through the deficits of some reserve currency countries, have been significantly associated with galloping inflation and rapid increases in military expenditures. The growing international traffic in arms has also contributed to the balance of payment problems of the importing countries. Seventyfive per cent of arms traded internationally go to the Third World.

The disruptive influence of the arms race has become a matter of particular concern in the field of International trade. The increasing preoccupation of the market economies with their immediate problems of stagflation is seen to affect their role as the largest participants in the aid and trade relations of the Third World.

It is widely acknowledged that the true foundation of national security is a strong and healthy economy. The present study presents overwhelming evidence that the contemporary military establishments significantly distort and undermine the very basis of sustained economic and social development in all countries. Accordingly, the Group recommends that all Governments, but particularly those of the major military powers, should prepare assessments of the nature and magnitude of short — and long-term economic and social costs attributable to their military preparations so that the general public be informed of them.

This study has in my view strengthened the economic and social case for this disarmament-development relationship by identifying military spending as an impediment to economic growth and social development and the arms race as an obstacle to the establishment of a New International Economic Order.

The Group has indicated the political and economic potentials of rationally imperative alternatives in suggesting that policies aimed at implementing the disarmament-development relationship are likely to broaden the base of East-West detente and put the North-South dialogue in a mutually advantageous frame of reference.

Its report should not be considered an individual project. I should like to express a hope for an effective follow-up process, to the benefit, first of all, of the billions of human beings inhabiting this world of ours.☐

The Public Account Car

(*Contd. from page 6*)

period of two years has been Rs 45,000 minus Rs 20,000, or Rs 25,000.

During this period of two years, the official price of the new car went up to Rs 72,000. Due to the long waiting list of those registered for the purchase of a new car, it also commands a premium of Rs 10,000 in the open market. Compared to the open market price of Rs 82,000 for the new car, Seth was able to strike a deal for his two-year-old car at Rs 57,000. He took due precaution to get the payment partly by cheque and partly in cash. He took Rs 32,000 by cheque and cash was not arbitrarily decided. Since Seth took a course in Financial Management, he never takes any decisions arbitrarily. The amount of Rs 32,000 was exactly equal to the book value of his car at the time of disposal.

The amount of Rs 32,000 received by cheque was promptly paid to the bank against the outstanding loan. The balance of Rs 18,000 out of the total loan of Rs 50,000 for the purchase of car had already been returned from the depreciation allowance. So, the account of the car was completely closed.

Seth showed Rs 25,000 in the books as post-tax expenditure on this car during the two years. He also received back Rs. 25,000 in cash at the time of disposal of the car. So, the net out-of-pocket cost to him for the maintenance of the car for two years was *nil*. The economics of all his previous cars has been the same. He is quite confident that it will continue to be the same in future.

Seth is, however, not satisfied with maintenance of his car at no cost or at public cost. He would like to make some profit out of it. He has arguments in favour of an increase in the rate of depreciation allowance as well the volume of deficit financing. His favourite slogan is: "Long live Inflation! Long live Book Value Accounting!" ☐

We have accepted in India as our objective a socialist pattern of society. That means not only economic organisation but something deeper which involves a way of thinking and living. The acquisitive society, whose chief aim is profit-making, not only brings conflict in its train but is opposed to the basic urge of modern man for social justice. Socialism is based on the growth of material resources as well as social justice and a co-operative method of working.

Jawaharlal Nehru

LET US SHARE OUR GREAT LEADER'S CONCERN
AND ACT ACCORDING TO OUR CONSCIENCE

SAH BROTHERS

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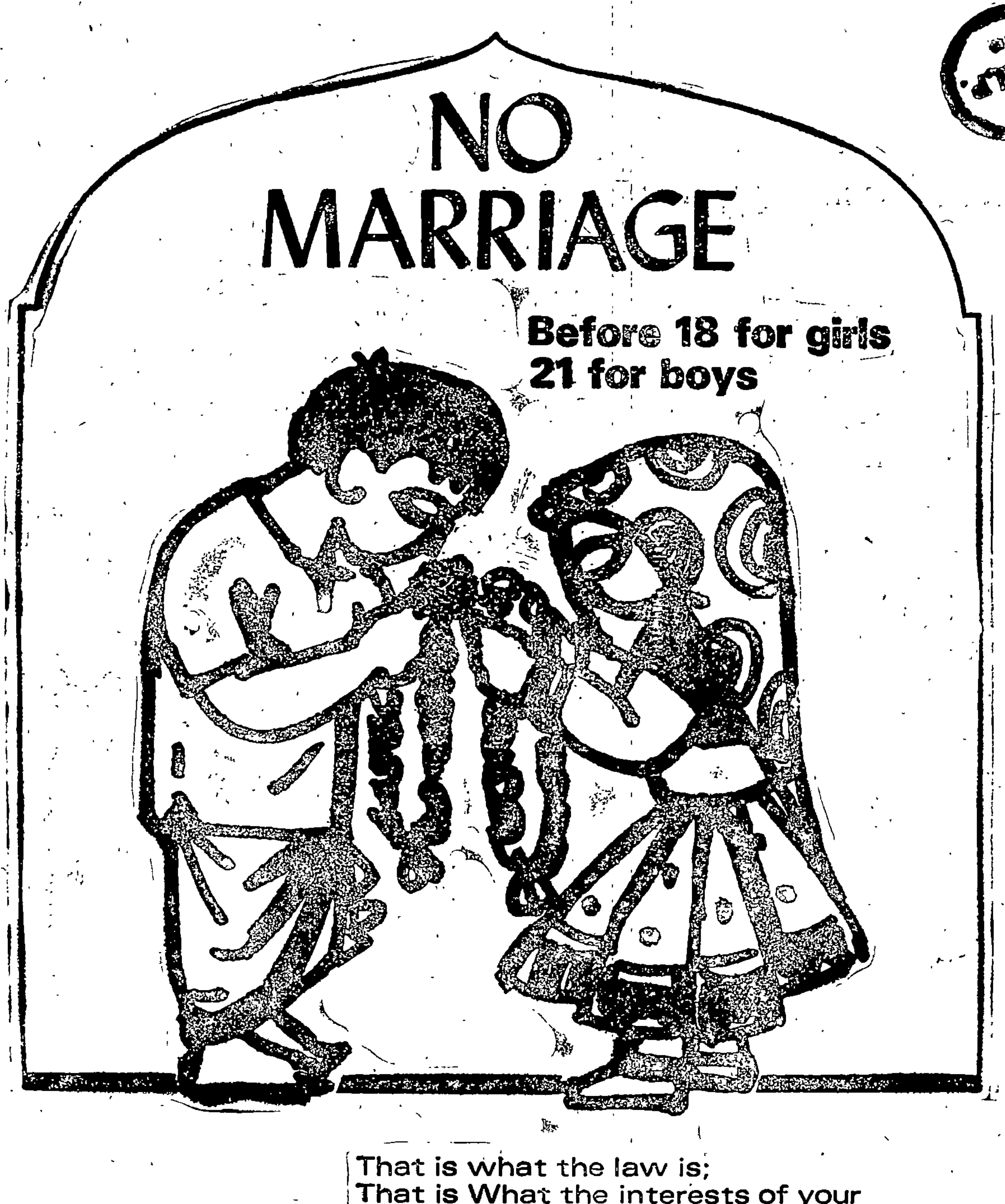
NO MARRIAGE
Before 18 for girls
21 for boys

That is what the law is;
That is What the interests of your
children demand, Let them
fully understand the responsibilities of
marriage, Before they enter matrimony.

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Heikal's View of Arab World

Mainstream

VOL XX NO 31 SATURDAY APRIL 3, 1982 Re 1

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Meaning of Maneka Politics

A bizarre exhibition of how to wash dirty linen in public has become the centre-piece of politics of this great country. One more instance of the frightening bankruptcy that has overtaken our national life.

Maneka Gandhi has always been a misfit in Indira Gandhi's household. There is therefore nothing surprising that mother-in-law — daughter-in-law tension, so familiar in India's middle-class houses, should have reached the precincts of the Prime Minister's residence. What is significant is that this tension should erupt in public in the form of a political issue, Maneka defying Indira and addressing a gathering of Sanjay-men led by his close and trusted lieutenant, Dumpy Ahmed. And the amusing point about it was that while Indira and the officials of the Congress-I lauding Sanjay Gandhi's memory were attacking the Dumpy group as not being true to the Sanjay ideals (whatever these might have been), Maneka and her associates were swearing allegiance to Indira Gandhi although engaged in a clear game of attacking her.

Such confusing semantics could be traced to the fact that Indira Gandhi's party has never tried to make any objective appraisal of the Sanjay phenomenon in Indian politics. One can understand — though not appreciate — Indira Gandhi's emotional attachment to her beloved son, tragically killed in a flying accident, but there is no reason for a political leader to overlook the fact that Sanjay Gandhi in his life-time represented an acutely negative force in Indian politics, trying to introduce into it the element of the mafia. Let it not be forgotten that Sanjay Gandhi stood for something more than just being the symbol of the Indira Congress resistance to Janata harassment as it is made out these days; for, his exploits could be counted long before the Janata was born — these started soon after Indira Gandhi's spectacular electoral victories of 1971-72 and contributed in no small measure to her decision to clamp down Emergency,

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which in its turn was exploited to the maximum for the promotion of Sanjay politics, almost outshining the Congress itself. Indira Gandhi, of course may overlook all this since political party leaders in India are not accustomed to do self-criticism and none of them can be accused of having admitted any serious mistakes in their career.

With this liability of not being able to boldly shrug off the ghost of Sanjay politics, it will not be easy for Indira Gandhi to get rid of the irritant posed by the present posture of Maneka Gandhi. Even to the unprejudiced it sounds hollow that Indira Gandhi's party should swear by the greatness of Sanjay in their crusade against his widow. If anything, it is Maneka Gandhi with the murky politics that she stands for, who represents the genuine brand of Sanjay politics.

Indira Gandhi's another difficulty is that the immediate tactics of the Maneka-Dumpy brigade is to make a target of Rajiv Gandhi. Since Rajiv is not of the Sanjay mould, one wonders if he would be able to stand up to the ruffian politics of his opponents who swear by his late brother's memory. In the process there is little doubt that Indira Gandhi's plans to groom Rajiv Gandhi as a political leader, if not her successor, would suffer a setback.

This is the point where politics with higher stakes enter this sordid drama. In fact, the curtain rose in this drama when Maneka's monthly magazine — which had been started in the heyday of Emergency as part of the Sanjay syndrome — was sold to RSS frontmen among whom the Rajmata of Gwalior and her henchman are conspicuous. The shrewdest of RSS politicians, Nanaji Deshmukh seems to be protesting too much that the deal was struck without his knowledge: there is nothing indeed to show that those who have become the open owners of the paper have earned his displeasure. Despite Maneka's rather exuberant denials about the forging of this RSS connection, all available signs point to a rather long-term understanding between her outfit — more precisely, her wily mother's outfit of which she is the mascot — and that of the RSS. It needs to be noted that in its bid to instal BJP as 'the national alternative' the RSS would maximise its operations to dig into every nook and corner of present-day politics. It is no small prize for this active contingent of the Right to burrow into Indira Gandhi's establishment, exploit its weak spots and play these up.

This novel form of destabilisation, unsuspected even six months ago, will unfold itself in many ways. Many a skeleton will be taken out of the overloaded cupboards. Dumpy's gratuitous disclosure about Haji Mastan's bounty being available for Sanjay's politics, is only the tip of the iceberg. More will come in the days to come — and in all this, there will be a cocktail of the plausible with a dash of blackmail.

Behind all these torments facing Indira Gandhi, the question naturally comes up: what sort of political edifice has Indira Gandhi so far sought to build up? To say that it is a pucca structure of authoritarianism will be a superficial view of things; had this been so, the logic of it should be for the parties pledged to fight authoritarianism to rally round Maneka Gandhi: hasn't this young widow bravely unmasked the Indira authoritarianism in its very den?! Political lines based on the superficialities of a situation often land in howling absurdities.

While this murky game centring round the goings-on within the country's first family has caught the headlines, the tragedy of the situation is that all elements with the promise and potentials of cleansing this low-level politics, are in a state of chronic debility. The latest example of this is provided by the CPI Congress concluded over the weekend at Varanasi. While it may be claimed that the CPI rent by political differences has been able to avert a further rift, the sum total of the labours of this party Congress is appallingly poor. CPI General Secretary Rajeswara Rao's line of going all along the line of CPI-M was obstructed by those who found it difficult to swallow the Marxists' anxiety to rope in the BJP in the crusade against Indira authoritarianism: added to this was the ideological divergence between the CPI's steadfast support to the Soviet Communist position in the world Communist disputations, and the CPI-M's touch-me-touch-me-not overtures to the Chinese Communists. The labours at Varanasi could produce a remarkable scissor-and-paste political resolution which has the merit of having bits of all trends without hammering out a firm political line. With Rajeswara Rao bringing in his own reinforcements into the leadership of this rather ramshackle party organisation, others are hanging on to him or being kept out in the cold. What the CPI leadership has brought out is a picturesque specimen of a quilt with bits and pieces of cloth of various colours stiched on to it. Such a quilt may be a testimony to their sweated handicraft but this cannot be a substitute for a powerful political line that can mobilise various patriotic trends and interests in one common national endeavour in the dark days ahead.

If the Congress-I flock of Indira Gandhi cannot see the nation beyond her image, the Left is obsessed with allergy for her to the point of missing the millions behind her. An ominously disturbing prospect before this great nation.

March 31 *N.C.*

COMMENTARY

Electoral Process and Courts

THE Supreme Court's dismissal of the writ petition challenging certain provisions of the election law and rules as well as the manner of preparation of electoral rolls in West Bengal, has cleared the way for the Assembly elections to be held in that State. But the significance of the verdict goes well beyond the limited matter raised before the Court. While the detailed reasoning to be given later in the full judgement must be awaited, the Constitution Bench has said enough to clarify some basic issues involved and the role of the judiciary in enforcing the electoral law, In this broad sense it is a valuable judgement.

It all started with allegations about the preparation of the electoral rolls and about a surfeit of errors in both procedure and consequence. A single judge of the Calcutta High Court had passed interim orders which had the effect of delaying indefinitely the whole process of Assembly elections in West Bengal. The Supreme Court's suggestion to the lower Court would appear to have been taken as some kind of personal criticism, and the reaction was predictably hasty. Even during the hearing of the writ petition and related appeals the Constitution Bench regretted such a reading of its advice. Now the Supreme Court has explained whatever happened in the context of the role of the judiciary in relation to election laws and rules and the functioning of the Election Commission. It emerges that the High Court judge was ill advised in giving directions on three occasions restraining the Election Commission from going ahead with the publication of the final electoral rolls, originally scheduled for March 1 this year. Consequently, the whole electoral process got stalled, causing much confusion and uncertainty in the public mind, as also unnecessary bitterness among political parties, a bitterness that was reflected in the wild allegations made by senior advocates with known political leanings and their subsequent apology to the Bench.

What is important about the order passed by the Constitution Bench on March 30 is the balanced and farsighted view taken of the role and limitations (even if self-imposed) of the courts vis-a-vis the electoral process.

The Supreme Court has held the Calcutta High Court to have "acted within its jurisdiction in entertaining the writ petition and in issuing a *rule nisi* upon it, since the petition questioned the vires of the laws of election". But the lower Court "was not justified" in passing two interim orders on February 12 and 19 and in confirming the same by its judgement of February 25. Reasons: The High Court had no material before it to warrant the passing of the orders mentioned, the allegations having been "of a vague and general nature, on the basis of which no relief could be granted." While there was no lack of jurisdiction to admit the petition and issue appropriate directions, no High Court exercising its powers under Article 226 "should pass any order ... which has the tendency or effect of postponing an election, which is reasonably imminent." The more imminent the electoral process, the greater should be the reluctance of the High Court to do anything or cause anything to be done "which will postpone the process indefinitely by creating a situation in which the government of a State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution."

India being "an oasis of democracy" a fact to which the Bench has referred, may not be strictly relevant to the issues raised in the writ petition or the related appeals, but what is meant has not been left in doubt. Wisdom and statesmanship in the exercise of the extraordinary powers conferred by the Constitution on the courts is what is called for. "The High Courts must observe a self-imposed limitation on their power to act under Article 226." The purpose of such restraint is to ensure that normal democratic processes are not interfered with except for unexceptionable and constitutionally valid reasons. While saying that this limitation should be observed irrespective of whether "the preparation and publication of electoral rolls are a part of the process of 'election' within the meaning of Article 329 (B)", the Supreme Court has left the logic of this stand to be explained in its forthcoming judgement.

We need not here go into the rejection of the complaints made against the Election Commission and its officers, but note must be taken of a valid point made by the Supreme Court about the importance of doing nothing that will erode public confidence in the electoral system and in constitutional institutions. It is rightly stated that it takes years to build up public confidence of this kind which is the very basis of the effective functioning of the democratic system and its institutions; also that a single court hearing may "perhaps...sully their image by casting aspersions upon them." It is not as if such institutions and processes cannot be misused. Everyone knows they can be. And there has to be some way of getting redressal. In dealing with this aspect the Supreme Court order says that "it is the duty of the courts to protect and preserve the integrity of all constitutional institutions which are devised to foster democracy" and it is open to the citizen to question their method of functioning and for courts to "examine the allegations with more than ordinary care." The presumption of bona fides is vital; unless this basic presumption is displaced, judicial interference would be unwarranted.

The Supreme Court's concern that skepticism should not develop among the electorate about the elections held over the last thirty years is obviously valid. Once faith in the democratic process itself is undermined, every democratic institution and apparatus in the country will become irrelevant. Such erosion of faith can take place in various ways, and no one can claim that there has not been such erosion because of the way our politicians, the bureaucracy, the police set-up, and to an extent even a section of the judiciary have been functioning over the years. But then this is a matter which has to be dealt with by the people themselves, who are supreme in a democratic structure, and not by mere judicial pronouncements, with due respect to our courts.

While reactions to the judgement are bound to be mixed, what is welcome is the fact that the Court has frowned on any attempt to disrupt the electoral process through the simple expedient of unjustified or vexatious litigation. To read much more than this in the order or to minimise the importance of what has been said would not be right. Courts too should keep in mind the ultimate purpose of the democratic system and of the Constitution as laid down in the Preamble and the Directive Principles chapter. That is what really can sustain faith.

March 31 *C.N.C.*

FOCUS

Sahitya Akademi Goings-on

ANJALI DESHPANDE

LITERATURE is a delicate matter. Being hypersensitive, litterateurs are prone to put up a fight for their ideas and ideals with tenacity and also to find in themselves a surge of gratitude to any institution that does them a good turn. Both these feelings are apt to influence a writer's works, and while the former can lend them greater force the latter is certain to lead to a mellowing. In a country like India where writing is not a paying profession, in terms of money or in terms of recognition, the Government, by offering a pittance as award plus the prestige associated with being recognised by a literary institution, can do nothing but harm to literature.

Allegations of racketeering in

the National Institute of Letters were last week a subject of lively light-hearted witticisms in the Rajya Sabha; but they have again brought to the fore the question whether and to what extent the Government should patronise literature. In any case the working of the Sahitya Akademi is certainly far from satisfactory.

The method adopted to select a book for the annual award in which the Akademi takes pride is designed to guarantee a high degree of secrecy and solemnity to the proceeding. Ten expert advisers of the Akademi are asked to secretly select and recommend the best books published the previous year. They are expressly barred from selecting books authored either by themselves or by their relations. The list thus obtained is circulated among twentyfive 'readers' chosen by the Akademi, who have to send in a list of five books adjudged to be the best. The readers are free to send in fresh recommendations in case any or some of the works already selected do not recevie their approval. To none of the readers is the identity of the other readers divulged. A final list of recomended books is then subjected to scrutiny by three renowned authors, and ultimately the works selected by them come up before the executive council which decides the awards. Now, the executive may also refuse the award to any language on the ground that no book has secured adequate votes. This long process is theoretically a secret one, but can the Akademi help it if the eminent readers divulge their identities to one another and allow themselves to be influenced by considerations other than strictly literary?

The heavy hand of the Government weighs down upon the Akademi via the executive council. The executive body, besides having two Government nominees and a financial adviser appointed by the Union Government, has one representative each of all languages recognised by the Government and the Akademi, elected from the general council made up of members appointed by the executive council on the recommendation of the State Governments. Autonomous body indeed!

Besides five nominees of the Union Government, and the large number of representatives chosen with the help of the State Governments, the general council includes twenty representatives of universities and a maximum of eight eminent litterateurs selected on the basis of their eminence. It is really a vicious circle, with everybody being handpicked, on the recommendation of the Governments, by the virtually omnipotent executive council, which is itself packed with people chosen by the previous executive on recommendation by the Governments and so on and on.

To make matters worse, the executive council — which not only decides the awards but selects "fellows", "honorary fellows" and "associate fellows", and effectively controls the institution by planning the annual budget, appointing most of the staff and the secretary, and executing the policies of the Akademi — has no genuine representatives of established litterateurs. University representatives are present as figureheads in the general council. More than half the finances of this body flow from the Government.

With the purse-strings in its hands and its nominees running the Akademi, the Government is assured that no non-conformist can ever be accorded the prestige of being a Sahitya Akademi award winner unless his or her talents show promise of withering away — as has been amply demonstrated in the case of many recent award-winners who have either lost the inspiration to write or author works without any literary merit. It is only when an extremely renowned litterateur can just not be ignored that he or she is accepted with reluctance.

What options are available to any author faced on the one hand by widespread illiteracy or an uninstructed, uninformed audience avidly licking up all the muck available on the footpaths, and on the other hand by the comparative prestige and publicity that can be had if one could only get an award even if it means only a pittance in monetary terms? The writer is more likely to opt for the latter and try to worm his way into the good books of the state. Lately there has been a crop of younger-generation authors who seem to write only for the sake of being called authors and whose works are poor imitations of Western literature, but who manage to occupy high seats in the field of literature exercising considerable power and even get hold of some awards. Mercifully, they have not yet figured on the Sahitya Akademi rolls.

It is significant that almost all Sahitya Akademi award winners are distinguished later on by becoming recipients of the highest literary distinction in the land, the Jnanpeeth Award. It is also significant that Mahashveta Devi, the Sahitya Akademi award winner who refused an American grant recently, is the only author not yet given the Jnanpeeth award.

The language policy of the Akademi is highly questionable. Since 1957 (three years after its inception) it started publication of an English bi-monthly *Indian Literature*. Two years later it deemed fit to publish a half-yearly journal in Sanskrit, a language dead for all practical purposes; this journal succeeded in appearing once a year, while the English journal came out regularly. That the Akademi should have struck upon English as the only possible link language in the fifties was bad enough — it betrayed the deep-rooted colonial inferiority complex of our intellectuals. Still the Akademi likes to keep up the pretence of setting high literary standards and raising the general critical outlook of the people by fostering a higher level of aesthetic sense, to which goal neither the ancient Sanskrit nor the alien English could have contributed. It was only after twenty-three years of publication of the English organ that a quarterly Hindi journal *Samkaleen Bharatiya Sahitya* was resolved upon in 1978.

Lastly, the books offered at

(*Continued on page 34*)

Heikal's View of Arab World

Interview with Dilip Hiro

Of the 1,539 arrests that President Sadat carried out a month before his assassination last October, the one which aroused most criticism abroad — both in the Arab world and outside — was that of Mohammed Hassanian Heikal. Journalist, author, and for long a confidant of Gamal Abdel Nasser, the 58-year-old Heikal today enjoys a unique position in the Arab and Islamic countries.

After his dismissal as editor of *Al Ahram* by Sadat in February 1974, his syndicated weekly column became the most widely published and discussed column in the Arabic language press from the Gulf to the Atlantic. It was his opposition to the Egyptian-Israeli disengagement agreement of January 1974 that caused an open rift with Sadat. He stuck to his view that by concluding that agreement with Tel Aviv, Sadat had taken a step which would culminate in a separate peace treaty between Egypt and Israel and result in Egypt's isolation from the Arab front. Events since then have proved him devastatingly right.

Having held to the philosophy and vision of Nasser, Heikal is now regarded by many as the roving ambassador of Arab nationalism. In this exclusive interview with Dilip Hiro, (published in the journal *8 Days*, March 20, 1982, and reproduced here with due acknowledgement), Heikal analyses the state of affairs in Egypt and elsewhere in the region.

In his view President Mubarak is already conducting dialogue with the rest of the Arab world in 'the language of shade and light, symbols and gestures'. He describes the period leading up to April 25 — the day Israel is scheduled to withdraw from the rest of Sinai — as crucially important: 'The shape of things to come after that day is being moulded now'.

Heikal argues that the US-Israeli alliance cannot be fully explained by the presence of a powerful Zionist lobby in Washington. 'All along the Americans have had two targets: to separate Arab oil from the Palestinian question and to isolate Egypt from the rest of the Arab world'. He pours scorn on the American Rapid Deployment Force. Such a force cannot in any way help the Gulf rulers to counter internal threats to their regimes. 'The Pentagon leaders ... simply want to spend more of their money on armaments'.

Aware of the strategic importance of Syria in the arc around Israel and the American designs against the Assad regime, he advises Damascus to 'expand its communications with the rest of the Arab countries and with all elements in the Arab world'.

He deplores the weakness that has afflicted the Arab front due to Egypt's defection, and the rise of acute differences among the Arab League members. The Arab nation has been compelled to entrench itself in a foxhole. It is time, he feels, that Saudi leaders realised the extent of power they possess and wielded it for the sake of the Arab nation during the current perilous period.

Dilip Hiro's questions and Heikal's answers are given below:

How different is President Mubarak from President Sadat in dealing with opposition, religious and secular, at home?

During his last days President Sadat would not listen to anything but his own inspiration. He closed the Egyptian doors to the rest of the Arab world, the Soviet Union, the non-aligned world and the Islamic world. So a new man came — Hosni Mubarak, with a fresh start. Even when he said he'd pursue the policies of his predecessor he went about it in a different way. He accepted the idea of dialogue with those holding views other than his own. Now he is trying to open dialogue with the Unionist Party and the Labour Party. He has already done so with some intellectuals. He is doing so now with the Muslim Brotherhood. He is trying to find a channel to the new fundamentalist groups like Al Jihad. Obviously it'll be very difficult for him to do so. But he has already released some of their members, and thus reduced the number of their members in jail.

What about the doors between Egypt and the rest of the Arab world?

There is already dialogue between Egypt and the Arab World; but it is being conducted like in the Japanese theatre—with the language of shade and light, symbols and gestures. Recently President Mubarak made a symbolic but important decision. After the Arab League had left Cairo (in October 1978) Sadat created something called the League of Islamic and Arab Peoples, and gave it the old headquarters of the Arab League. The other day Mubarak asked Sadat's creation, the LIAP, to get out of the Arab League building. That was an important sign which very few noticed.

Do you see Mubarak's refusal to visit Israel on Prime Minister Begin's terms in a similar light?

Yes, but that is much more complex. There were three factors involved in that. First, the psychological factor, the Israeli Government insisting that

Mubarak must visit Israel *before* the final Israeli evacuation of Sinai. Second, that Mubarak must go to Jerusalem. When Sadat first went to Jerusalem in November 1977, the city was not then 'an eternal, unified capital of the state of Israel' according to Israeli law. Finally, each day you have threats from Israel that they're going to move against South Lebanon and against the Palestinians. So the three factors together would have made anybody—leave aside a patient man like Mubarak—hesitate.

In your view, what is Israel's most basic objective with respect to Egypt?

The Israelis want to impose a stark choice on Egypt: either you choose us or the rest of the Arab world. But such a choice is simply unacceptable to Egypt.

Israel seems to be in a mood to impose its will on countries more powerful than Egypt.

Yes, the way the Israelis are talking about Caspar Weinberger, the American Defence Secretary. The way Begin told Mitterrand that France should mind its own business when the French President repeated his Foreign Minister's statement that Israel should one day talk to the Palestinians. Remember what Begin said about Lord Carrington? And to listen to Begin lecturing Chancellor Schmidt that he should get down on his knees and ask for forgiveness. I don't understand what it is about Israel that it is able to dictate to the whole world.

Recently Israel has been openly discussing the prospect of attacking South Lebanon. If this were to happen, how would Egypt react?

I think that will strain relations between Israel and Egypt very much. What practical shape or form that strain will take I cannot say. That will depend on so many factors which I don't know.

Do you think in his heart of hearts Begin wants to hold on to the last part of Sinai?

That part of Sinai has only a symbolic meaning to Begin. He knows that, in practical terms, American and Western forces would be stationed there in the form of the Multinational Force. I think what Begin wants is to return that part of Sinai to an Egypt which has completely isolated itself from the rest of the Arab world—now and for ever.

It looks as if the initiative, whether diplomatic or military, is very much with Israel.

The initiative is with Israel because everybody else is behaving passively. Unfortunately the rest of the Arab front is in a state of virtual disintegration.

Isn't Israel also helped by the fact that the American administration lacks a well-defined Middle East policy?

That is correct. But I am not one of those persons who say that Israel is leading the United States by its nose. There is a certain Israeli lobby, a certain influence for Israel in Washington, yes. But let us not forget that Israel is playing an important function on behalf of American designs in the area. All along the Americans have had two targets: to separate Arab oil from the Palestinian question and to isolate Egypt from the rest of the Arab world — and thus deprive the Arab world of its muscle and brain. In this general strategical concept, Israel is the final guardian of these two goals. Begin understands this. He knows that the Americans need him as much as he needs them.

While Egypt remains important, the Reagan Administration seems to have given priority to Saudi Arabia over Egypt. The recent formation of the joint Saudi-American military committee was a significant pointer in that direction.

Let us not forget that it was the Americans who chose Saudi Arabia over Egypt. They know that there is a treasure in the Gulf — oil — and that there has to be a guardian of the treasure. For them Israel is, in the last resort, the guardian of this treasure. When the Shah of Iran tried to be the policeman of the area he was doing so out of an inflated sense of self-importance and a false sense of identity. The same was also true of President Sadat. They forgot that during the past 30 years Israel had been the sole, and effective, policeman of the area on behalf of the West generally, and America specifically.

But once the American Rapid Deployment Force has been built up to 300,000 by 1985, won't the importance of Israel to the US lessen?

The idea of the Rapid Deployment Force is a fallacy. It is one of those inventions of the Pentagon. Either the Pentagon leaders don't look closely at the map, or don't understand the consequences of social and economic change in a country, or simply want to spend more of their money on armaments. I think the last.

Let's look at the map. There's the Soviet Union up there, and the United States and the West down here. There is an unseen demarcation line in between. The Americans won't allow anybody to threaten the Arab oil and the Soviets won't allow the other side to take one false step forward. There's no detents there.

Suppose the Americans were to march into Iran...

Then there is a possibility that the Soviets would move southwards. But I don't see that happening. The Soviets would think that they are free to move south, that it is an open option; but there is a chance that they won't actually use that option.

In any case, everybody knows that the danger in the Middle East is internal. After all, it was not the Soviet Union which destroyed the regime of the Shah. It was not the Soviet Union which changed the whole shape of Egyptian politics on October 6. The most important and drastic changes are coming from within — out of the changing social, economic and moral needs of the countries concerned.

And the American RDF is incapable of dealing with these changes?

Exactly. That is why the Saudis will have nothing to do with the RDF. They will sign agreements with America for coordinating or exchanging information, or buying arms, or building bases for them, which they will use themselves. But they will not allow the Americans either to station forces there or to do anything else on their soil.

Supposing the Saudis were to face the situation

(Continued on page 32)

Bangladesh: What Next?

PARTHA S. GHOSH

DEMOCRACY in Bangladesh, fragile as it was, has given way. On March 23, in a pre-dawn coup Lt-General Hossain Mohammad Ershad has taken over power.

The event as such was not unexpected. Those who have been watching the Dacca political scene for the last few months were almost sure that some such development would take place (see the author's article, *Mainstream*, March 27, 1982). What they probably did not expect was that it would be a completely bloodless coup. But then it is premature to draw comfortable conclusions. There is still room for violence, for everything would depend on what support Ershad musters not only among the people but also among the armed forces.

The coup has raised many questions all of which necessarily cluster around the central theme of political stability. Will the spell of military rule this time be longer? Will Ershad be able to command the loyalty of the majority in the army? Will Bangladeshis who are known for their love for democratic institutions be reconciled to the military regime, and even if they are, for how long? These are some of the questions. Besides, there are such fundamental questions as the role of Islam, which at present is not so pronounced but is not totally insignificant either, in Bangladesh politics. Which of the two trends — populism versus stability — that have been determining the course of events in almost all Islamic countries would be the dominant one in Bangladesh?

To put the matter in perspective, it would be better to discuss the last mentioned first. It is imperative in this regard to analyse the role of Islam in Muslim countries. The political use of religion in these countries has two broad discernible trends. The first represents a situation in which the people have the right of waging a crusade against inefficient and despotic rulers and replace them by an orderly Islamic state. This theory gets its sustenance from the fact that Prophet Muhammad had overthrown a tyrannical system and replaced it by a system which was neither kingship nor rule by aristocracy. In essence it advocates populism and is thus anti-status quo. Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran and Muammar Gaddafi of Libya are embodiments of this trend.

The second trend, which is pro-status quo and in essence a negation of populism, draws implicit inspiration from the Umaayad and Abbasid caliphates of the early Muslim era — the aim being to make social stability rather than social justice the linchpin of state policy. Saudi Arabia and Zia's Pakistan belong to this category.

Bangladesh does not belong to either category, but at the same time there is perceptible evidence of the existence of both trends. The liberation war was an anti-status quo phenomenon in which the freedom fighters had seen the beginning of socio-economic emancipation of the masses. Following independence, this trend was gradually replaced by a stability-oriented tendency which got its expression in the formation of the BAKSAL in early 1975. The BAKSAL (Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League), which was formed by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by merging the Awami League, the National Awami Party (Muzaffar) and the Communist Party of Bangladesh, was declared to be the only lawful party in the single-party presidential form of state.

The later experiments of Ziaur Rahman, during military rule as well as BNP rule, were also primarily stability-oriented. Despite their different backgrounds there was one common feature in the formation of the BAKSAL and the BNP. Both discouraged dissent while at the same time trying to make the government broadbased. This dichotomy of Bangladesh politics in which pro-status quo forces tend to enlist the support of anti-status quo forces makes it a unique case in the Muslim world and makes an analysis of the situation all the more difficult. The so-called conflict between the concepts of Bengali nationalism and Bangladeshi nationalism also in certain respects springs from the same dichotomy.

Against this background, Ershad probably would have no choice in the long run but to follow the beaten track. Like Ziaur Rahman he will probably have to legitimise his rule by the expedient of a new party. In this regard his relative obscurity will be an asset. It is possible to believe that Ershad will take maximum advantage of this situation, for he is a cool and calculating person. It may be recalled that although Ziaur Rahman was junior to him, Ershad did not mind working under him, probably because he had a larger vision of the shape of things to come. During Zia's time he was one of the few in the army whom the former could really trust. Again, following Zia's assassination, Ershad did not rush to seize power (which would have been easy), possibly because he needed, in the first place, a civilian cover for some time to organise his strategy; and secondly, an alibi which he was sure would be provided soon by a discredited civilian rule. That his strategy has passed the first test is clear from the fact that his takeover has so far gone unopposed. There are unconfirmed reports that he objected to Sattar Government backing out-and-out pro-Pak collaborationists: he disapproved, it is alleged, the release of Khondakar Mushtaq from prison; Khondakar was behind Mujib's killing. Life in Bangladesh in unusually normal. Bangladeshi newspapers have almost unanimously

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welcomed the takeover. They all have referred to the lamentable state of affairs arising out of inner squabbles in the BNP.

That Ershad wants to ensure popular support for his rule is already evident. He has said that "our ultimate aim is to reestablish democracy and to hold general elections as soon as possible'. But then, Zia-ul Haq of Pakistan had also said so. The comparison, however, is not valid. Zia-ul Haq and Ershad preside over two different kinds of political situations. In the context of Bangladesh politics one has reason to believe Ershad's commitment about elections from the angle of practical necessity.

In Bangladesh the forces of democracy have reasonably deep roots. It may be emphasised that the democratic movement in the pre-Bangladesh period was virtually an East Pakistani movement. In West Pakistan it was only with the emergence of Z. A. Bhutto that politics reached the masses, while in East Pakistan this was the case from the early fifties. Ershad will find it difficult to violate the democratic ethos of Bangladesh even if he so desires. In all probability Ershad will form his own political party and the lust for power (both the substance and the shadow of it) would make many climb on to the bandwagon.

The immediate task for Ershad, however, is consolidation of his position in the army. The latter in Bangladesh is faction-ridden and highly politicised. Ziaur Rahman was a victim of factional fight within the army. There is no reason to believe that Ershad's coming to power would mean an end to this phenomenon. Prior to the coup there were reports of defiance of his orders by senior army officers.

Laxity in discipline among junior officers in the army is another problem Ershad faces. The putsch of August 15, 1975, in which Mujib was assassinated, was a clear manifestation of this indiscipline. Following that event, the army commanders reportedly faced great difficulty in restoring discipline. During the early phase of Ziaur Rahman's rule several mutinies took place which were quelled with an iron hand and with heavy casualties.

Ershad is reportedly inclined to emulate the Indonesian model, a system largely controlled by generals. Probably he is inspired by the Indonesian army which has provided stability to that country for a reasonably long period. General Suharto's concept of a New Order has its prime focus on "stabilisation" and "development". It is a fact that there is a fundamental similarity between the armies of the two countries. Both have a long record of political involvement dating back to their role in the respective national freedom struggles. But how an imported model will work in Bangladesh is anybody's guess. Moreover, the Indonesian military rulers themselves are facing increasing opposition from the people, particularly the students, in respect of their socio-economic policies.

At the moment Ershad is in full control of the administration. He has dissolved Parliament and the Council of Ministers and suspended the Constitution indefinitely. In his capacity as Chief Martial Law Administrator he has nominated Abdul Mohammad Ahsamuddin Chowdhury, a retired judge of the Supreme Court, a President who will hold office during his pleasure. Following the logic of establishing effective military rule, he has divided the country into five administrative zones and put each under a senior army officer. It may be noted in this connection that one of the charges levelled against President Ayub Khan of Pakistan by his army colleagues was that he had appointed civilian governors to rule the provinces. Ershad does not seem to commit the same error. It is, however, again too early to reach any clear conclusions. On the economic front, Ershad will face the greatest challenge. The country's economy is in utter chaos. If Ershad does not prove effective in arresting the declining trend, even a civil war type of situation cannot be ruled out.

Ershad's Government is called upon to tackle two fronts simultaneously. On the one hand it has to withstand all challenges to its stability and on the other it has to give proper direction to the economy — which is heavily dependent on massive injections of aids and loans of different types — and raise the country from the rather dubious status of being regarded as an international "bread basket." Although the two are essentially interlinked, the latter would depend more on the former than the other way round.

Stability, the key problem of Bangladesh now, also involves the danger of foreign interference. Although there is no evidence of any outside involvement in the recent coup, a prolonged state of political instability might make the country susceptible to foreign interference. Ershad has to be anguard against these forces of destabilisation.

India is naturally worried about the situation in Bangladesh. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has expressed concern at the frequent convulsions in that country and has said that it is in India's interest that there should be stability and prosperity in Bangladesh. India expects to see a strong and stable Bangladesh under the leadership of Ershad. President Sanjiva Reddy in his message on the occasion of the National Day of Bangladesh greeted Ershad and said that "there has been a decade of close cooperation and friendly relations between India and Bangladesh and I am confident that these ties of friendship and cooperation would further strengthen".

There is no evidence that Ershad has any definite views about Indo-Bangladesh relations, though he has never been an India-baiter. At the moment his chief preoccupation is consolidating his position. Good relations with India will naturally make sense in this context.

Ershad seems to understand that. He has said: "We want to make special emphasis to establish good relations with our neighbouring nations." Recent reports about the Mizo National Front tend to show that he means what he says. It has been reported that about 700 MNF guerillas are shifting from their hideouts near Romabazar in Bangladesh to areas in north Burma fearing that Ershad will not encourage them. One hopes for a positive phase in Indo-Bangladesh relations. □

(*March 29*)

El Salvador: Myths and Realities

R. NARAYANAN

Nobody, including the US Administration, expects that any dramatic change would occur in the tragic course of events currently being witnessed in El Salvador following the national elections held on March 28. Nobody even remotely expects that the outcome of the elections will end either the fighting or the political and economic chaos which over the last thirty months has caused a human toll of thirty thousand Salvadorans. US ambassador Deane Hinton stationed in San Salvador has, more than once, publicly admitted that war will continue regardless of the outcome of the national elections. Predictions based on the counting of votes so far indicate unmistakably that the present junta leader Jose Napolean Duarte's Christian Democratic Party will not obtain a clear majority in the new Constituent Assembly to offer a viable and stable civilian government or avoid the continuing human carnage.

Almost a month ago, however, US President Ronald Reagan in a speech before the Organisation of American States, amid much fanfare, stated that he has "already expressed [his] support for the coming election in El Salvador". He even went further and admitted that "our own country and other American nations ... have urged such a course". There is no denying the fact that the Reagan Administration was very keen on holding the national elections at this juncture even if it was to produce no substantial breakthrough in the current Salvadoran impasse. Equally, the Reagan Administration was aware that the Left parties, including importantly the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR), would boycott the national elections. Voter turn-out too was expected to be much less than normal in elections.

Why then was the Reagan Administration, knowing full well that the Salvadoran elections would bring about no change for the better, committed to this otherwise farcical exercise? Aware as it was that the election would be no more than a zero-sum game, why did it opt for this course?

The Reagan Administration's support for a democratically elected government, at this moment, admittedly is a reflection of the near-poverty of imagination of its policy-makers. In a sense, however, it has been forced into playing that card now, obviously because the current struggle in El Salvador leaves open no other course of action for the US Administration.

Escalation to the point of direct military intervention is ill-advised, at least for the time being. As part of the Caribbean Basin Initiative programme, therefore, Reagan had announced massive economic and security assistance to El Salvador. The emergency military aid currently announced by him brings total US military assistance to El Salvador alone to 116 million dollars since January 1981, which, given the present mood of the US Congress, is unlikely to obtain authorisation. House Representative Clarence Long (Democrat; Maryland), head of the sub-committee in charge of foreign aid appropriations and one who led the three Congressional investigating groups to El Salvador, has only recently reiterated what he had said last April regarding a previous aid request: "El Salvador is becoming a bottomless pit for US aid, economic and military". Besides, only a few days ago, the House voted overwhelmingly for a non-binding resolution urging the Administration to push for an unconditional discussion among the major political factions in El Salvador.

Other Representatives, in the course of Congressional hearings, have observed that the Administration's claim of human rights improvements in El Salvador is "a fraud, pure and simple". Testimonies given by the Administration's officials, they claim, are not even convincing in respect of either Cuban or Nicaraguan involvement in the present Salvadoran struggle.

In sum, the Reagan Administration is clearly facing a credibility problem before Congress in regard to its Central American policy.

That apart, many of the United States' European allies, perhaps with the only exception of Britain, as well as the Latin American regimes favourably disposed toward the Reagan Administration, do not see eye to eye with it on its doings and postures in Central America. Categorically, most of them have expressed the imperative need to defuse the Central American crisis, and have indeed shown their willingness even to help negotiations among the different factions. Whatever may be their logic and reasons for disinterest and opposition, the Reagan Administration is doubtless placed in a peculiar bind in terms of stemming the high tide of guerrilla war spreading in Central America which it wants to resolve in the Cold War context.

Under these circumstances, it has become all the more necessary for the US Administration to seek some semblance of legitimacy for the leadership of Duarte. Over the months, the Reagan Administration has painstakingly been projecting Duarte as a "reformist" for whatever economic reforms he had implemented, and just a few days before the election, Reagan had even exonerated Duarte on his regime's human rights violations. The recently heightened rhetorical offensive, including hints of direct military intervention in Nicaragua, was meant not only to support Duarte but to convey discreetly the Administration's confidence in Duarte's leadership.

This is not to suggest that the Reagan Adminis-

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tration is keen on establishing a civilian government of the Christian Democrats in San Salvador. Far from it. It is unlikely, and the Reagan Administration knows this only too well, that the Christian Democrats would emerge with a clear, strong majority.

A coalition government that encompasses Duarte's Christian Democrats and the National Conciliation, supported by Defence Minister Garcia, along with the rest of the Right-wing moderates, and without Col Roberto d'Aubuisson's National Republican Alliance (ARENA) on the extreme Right, would ideally suit the Reagan administration under the present circumstances. However, his subordination to, if not sharing power with, Garcia who exercises the real control over the armed forces, would make Duarte sufficiently weak and pliable to US influence and manipulations.

At the same time, a diminished Duarte would enable the Salvadoran military to deal even more freely with the rural guerrilla forces whose zones of control now cover approximately one-quarter of the nation's territory. The ensuing fierce and heightened battle in the countryside will offer the Reagan Administration further justification for US military assistance and support, a justification it needs desperately in order to seek the support of Congress as well as the general public. In any event, it would delay further the possibility of a negotiated settlement which its allies in Europe and friends in Latin America are pressing for.

The Reagan Administration's effort so far at portraying the present crisis in Central America as deriving from the Nicaraguan revolution spearheaded and championed by the Soviet Union and Cuba, and as leading, 'domino' fashion, to similar politically destabilising changes in the other countries of the region, has not paid any dividends in the pursuit of its Cold War objectives. It threat-perception of an impending doom, essentially to justify military and economic assistance disproportionate to the actual needs of El Salvador, is not in the least convincing even to the US Congress and the American public.

The return of a civilian and a "reformist" government under these circumstances, admittedly, is welcome. With the elections past and a civilian regime installed, one more card is played. With whatever genuineness that card is played in upholding the democratic rights of the Salvadorans, intrinsically it is not going to resolve the more basic human rights problems of the Salvadorans. (*March 29*)

The Girl who was branded

Mainstream (November 22, 1980 carried an article by Vasudha Dhagamwar, captioned "A Girl called Nandi", a little eight year old girl, who had been branded by a police constable in Cuttack, Orissa. Both Nandi and the constable Nityanand Pande worked as domestics at the house of Reserve Inspector Arakhita Bhera. Nandi was a poor relative of the Inspector. In Behera's absence Mrs Dolly Behera had ordered the constable to brand Nandi as a punishment for playing truant. She was branded eleven times across the buttocks and thighs with the heated handle of an iron ladle.

After a few days, when the pain became unbearable, Nandi went to a doctor in the police lines. Although she pretended that she had slipped and fallen on a hot ladle, the doctor couldn't believe this improbable story — she could hardly have slipped eleven times! He mentioned the matter to Behera. Behera rebuked his wife for getting Nandi go to the doctor and Nandi was once again beaten that night by Dolly Behera.

Next morning the child ran away. She found shelter in the compound of a bungalow which happened to be the house of a High Court Judge K.B. Panda. He had the FIR recorded and saw that proceedings were instituted. All this required considerable perseverence as the IG of police Narsimha Swain, had virtually made it a 'Judge-vs-IG' issue.

For his own safety the Judge moved the girl to a Short Stay Home. Even from there it was not safe for her to go to school like other girls at the Home.

Nandi has been at the home for one and a half years now. She has grown taller, she is no longer as stunted as she used to be. She has learned to read and write and is "reading class three books": She enjoys studying and wants to be educated.

There was considerable police pressure on Nandi not to identify the constable in the dock. Without this identification there can be no case: some constable Pande may have branded her — it had to be proved that the man in the dock is that very person. But Nandi stuck to her guns and identified the Pande.

The Subdivisional Judicial Magistrate of Cuttack gave his judgement in the case in the first week of March 1982. Pande was found guilty of having inflicted simple hurt on the child, and sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment. The Beheras were not mentioned in the FIR. So there was no case against them.

Nandi calls herself Gouri now. Her old name means bald-pate, a nickname given because her head had been shaved, because of boils. She has bright-eyes and a confident look.

The SOS villages in Delhi have offered to take Gouri and look after her. This would give her the best possible chance of fulfilling her ambition to be educated.

Here's wishing good luck to this plucky girl, who has made it so far to safety, and education, unlike so many unknowns who surrender to their fates and with dull resigned eyes sink their lives in endless, hopeless drudgery.

Vasudha Dhagamwar

Terror Raj at Magarwara

AMIYA RAO

LATELY, killing of human beings has become almost a pastime. And, in course of time, all reports on such glory events will cease to have any news value; one would come to accept them as normal occurrences as one has accepted the thought of consuming the Australian wheat mixed with the deadly Fenito-therion.

Yet, what happened that freezing night of January 3 in the fertiliser factory of Rallis India in Magarwara, a village in Unnao district of UP, was killing with a difference. It was not quite like the torture and hunting down of politically conscious young men in the jungles or in the silence of jail-cells, or putting bullets through innocent citizens calling then dacoits or pouring centuries old venom on the lowliest of the low in distant villages or even setting ablaze young trusting wives in one-room tenements in the city slums.

This killing or 35 (or more) peaceful sit-in-strikers in Tata Industries was different in more ways than one. It was, first of all, not the doing of a few individuals but the concerted action of the entire State administration. The liquidation of the strikers had been quietly planned and activised by orders to "crush" them, executed with meticulous efficiency and unsurpassed zeal.

It stands out unique, for never before had any killing assumed the significance of a symbol, a pointer to things to come; and Magarwara has become just that — a clear warning to industrial labour that in a dispute between management and labour, labour must bend down to their capitalist masters; in case they go on strike wishing to exert their right to strike the, consequences will be clamping down of ESMA, and even then if the strike continues, Magarwara will be repeated.

Rallis India — one of a group of Tata Industries — had started as a fertiliser factory in 1962 but later converted itself to a chemical industry though its main production is still fertiliser. From all accounts it is a small factory having only 750 employees and producing perhaps an infinitesimal fraction of fertiliser needed by the country. The strike under these circumstances could never have invited the imposition of ESMA, specially when the strikers were peaceful. To use this measure would have been as absurd as to use a bomb to kill a mosquito, to quote a vernacular idiom; and actually it had not. The sit-in-strike had gone on for 15 days without an Ordinance.

The strike had begun on December 14, after proper notification to the management on November 28, that unless some of the demands were met by that date the employees would go on a strike from December 14. The demands included (1) abolition of contract labour system in the factory under which over 400 men out of 750 employees were classified as contract labour earning only Rs 6 a day like bonded labour; and (2) pay parity with other fertiliser workers in IEL in neighbouring Kanpur. Ever since the Unnao Chemical Employees Union had been formed, about nine years ago, unresolved disputes and disagreements with the management have constantly cropped up. In 1979 there were token strikes, hunger-strikes, agitations and demonstrations, and interestingly at that time the Congress(I) was with the Union.

Thus in 1982 it was really the continuation of the same discontent and the management being adamant the strike notice had been served in helpless anger. The Intelligence report refers to the inflexible attitude of Sri Ramachandran the Manager of Rallis India and it held "the management responsible for the conflict", the District Magistrate's efforts to negotiate also had failed because of this adamant attitude. Yet he had not sent any report to the State Government asking it to declare the strike illegal. Thus, when on December 29 the strike was declared illegal, — rather all of a sudden, and without any plausible reason — it became clear if any clarification was needed — who is running this country — the Government elected by the people or the powerful industrialists?

There are some other factors in this affair which add to the distinctiveness of Magarwara killing: first, the behaviour of the press and secondly, the behaviour of AITUC with which the Unnao Chemical Employees Union is affiliated.

Why is the National press completely silent? Why again, this massive black-out of news? Surely we are not going back to the Turkman Gate days even without the declaration of emergency: Could it have been unknown to our national press, who have correspondents in every State capital, that there was a masscre of sit-in-strikers in Rallis India on January 3, and the police atrocities that followed in the surrounding villages? And the place where this occurred was barely 20 km from Kanpur!

Information gathered from different sources confirmed that the SDM had swooped down on the strikers at about 5.30 pm with truck loads of policemen equipped with lathis and teargas and another 150 armed men from the PAC. To get the men out of the factory premises they were first beaten up mercilessly and then teargas shells were used; and when they rushed out they were shot down. Muneswar Singh the fitter fell dead on the spot; Ramnaresh Yadav died of bullet injuries in the hospital; Babulal, an old worker, was dragged out from where he was hiding, beaten up and then left for dead; Akbar, Tariq, Ali Omar, and Ramzan Ali were all pulled out of their homes in the labour colony and severely beaten; then Akbar and Ramzan Ali were thrown into the burning vehicles of the PAC; one eyewitness told us that he saw Akbar twice trying to jump out but he was pushed back to be burnt alive. According to a man at the canteen near the Ganga Bridge, dead bodies loaded in vans were dumped into the river late at night; and the Kanpur-Unnao Road was closed to traffic for several hours.

According to the villagers 100 men are still to be accounted for, it is likely the Ganga has swallowed them. The villages also were not spared; in Dayal Khera village, Chandra Deo a Kanpur college boy was beaten to death; Chhabilal Shukla a worker of Kanpur Ordnance Factory was fatally injured; one Mohan, who was taken for BK Pillai, 'an office bearer of the Union, was shot dead; an old woman, so far not identified, was also shot; to force a woman to tell them where the strikers were hiding themselves they fractured her infant's arm. In the villages 30 people are known to have been killed and 35 have been badly injured; finding huts empty, as many had fled, the police looted them clean.

For three days Magarwara was like an island — cut off from the world outside. The single road which leads to 50 small hamlets was blocked by the police. One can only guess what atrocities must have gone on there, those 48 hours of Police Raj: The entire area was cordoned off and an undeclared curfew was enforced. None was allowed to enter the village; a brief news item appearing in the *Blitz* had mentioned that even Rajeshwar Rao the CPI leader was turned away. George Fernandes of the Lok Dal had addressed a public meeting on January 11 condemning the firing; but not a word about the atrocities appeared in the national press — neither the shooting nor the looting nor the killing of the workers nor the harassment of women was found to have any news value. Obviously, for reasons of their own, these papers have maintained silence about this incident.

If this be the position of the press, what of the CPI? As far as one knows no Press statement was issued by Rajeshwar Rao after he had been denied entry into the village, nor any press conference called by him. The AITUC General Secretary Indrajit Gupta who, one should have thought, would show some concern, is also silent. Why this sphinx-like attitude? There is no report that he had raised the matter in the Lok Sabha. Even in the UP Vidhan Sabha the questions was asked by a Lok-Dal member. Not finding support from their local comrades, some of the union members came to Delhi hoping that the AITUC members would help; but they drew blank.

It is just a week ago, through the initiative of the MP from Dhanbad a memorandum has been sent to the Prime Minister signed by twenty other MPs from different Opposition parties, including the CPI. It is alleged that the trade union leaders are annoyed, because Unnao Union had held on even alter the strike had been declared illegal. But what for was that big to-do in Delhi's boat-club, with slogans and banners and party flags and high-sounding resolutions to fight ESMA and NSA if need be with blood? Magarwara has done just that.

Meanwhile the situation in Magarwara is appalling. Under various sections of the IPC, FIR has been filed against 52 men by name and another 400 unnamed—most of whom either study or work in Kanpur and have nothing whatsoever to do with Rallis India but are residents of Dayalkhera and round about villages. Haji Aslam Colony close to the factory has been burnt down, the Union office has been set on fire, over 200 cycles of the employees have been destroyed, electricity has been disconnected from every house in the village and kerosene being in short supply it is total darkness after night fall, a large contingent of PAC men, occupying about 8 Sq. km area has been posted there, just to terrorise the people. On February 26 there was another spate of arrests, this time of women as well. They had gathered for a condolence meeting for which previous permission had been taken from the ADM and the SP also had been informed. High officers including the ADM and the SP, followed by over 300 police men and immediately joined by another 100 armed police who came out of the factory building, gheraoed the gathering. Nobody can have any doubt now that the administration is with the management. Among the arrested are the General Secretary of the Unnao Union, K.P. Singh and those who had met the ADM and the SP. They were given bail only after six days.

The strike is still on. The fresh demands include (1) Enquiry by a High Court Judge. (2) Compensation to the families whose members have been killed. (3) Employment of the children of the dead. (4) Government take-over of the management of the factory. (5) Restoration of electricity. (6) Withdrawal of the PAC and Section 144 order so that normalcy could prevail.

If these demands are conceded by the UP Government it will be a political victory or the CPI. The UP Home Minister has told the Legislature that it was the strikers who had set fire to the vehicles and would have let out the sulphur dioxide gas to suffocate the police, so they had to open fire in self-defence, but only two were killed. Atleast 35 are known to have been killed, 100 men have not been traced, bodies have not been handed over not even of the 'two'. But Sreemati Swarup Rani Bakshi, the Home Minister of UP has asserted that only two were killed and that must be the truth of the year. □

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Locating Roots of Corruption

KAMAL NAYAN KABRA

IT is a part and parcel of our social practice that ideas do not count for their intrinsic worth alone. A substantial difference is made by who happens to uphold and propagate a particular set of ideas. In this context one must offer high appreciation for the seminal contribution made by B.K. Nehru (BKN hereafter) in his lecture: "Roots of Corruption: The All-pervading evil".

At the present juncture, when corruption is no longer a deviant, side phenomenon, but has become an organic part of the system — the biggest working anarchy — one needed a powerful and pointed analysis like the one made by BKN. Essentially his analysis seems to me to proceed as follows: Corruption is so widespread that not only a large number of politicians and ministers are corrupt, but hardly any section of public services is free of this cancer. This leads to abnegation of the rule of law to the disadvantage of the honest and the poor. The welfare measures meant for the poor have been frustrated and no law is enforced adequately.

Coming to the causes of this "all pervading evil", apart from the erosion of values inherent in the process of dynamic change and the ascendence of the power of wealth over everything else, the "principal reason" is stated to be "the political system which we have adopted". For, it "cannot exist without large-scale expenditure." A good many illustrations are given to drive home the point that since "no political party can afford to finance the entire expenditure" on elections, recourse has to be had to "larger political contributors". As a result, "the system has tended to degenerate into a more direct relationship between the money contributed and the favour granted". So firmly established has this "democratic culture" become that "not even *the most powerful leader* can stop the advance of corruption." (emphasis added).

The argument concerning the political system's principal place in the genesis and avalanching of corruption is followed by describing the details of how party contributions are turned into personal property and prerogative, and the new crop of politicians whose interests are anything but what is constitutionally expected of them. No wonder if "in one particular State no less than 30 per cent of the legislators are involved in criminal cases of one type or another". How the political system has degenerated into one of sharing spoils of power is described in detail. The impact of this system on the civil services is also pointed out, particularly in view of the fact that "the temptation to corruption is of course enormous" in view of the "ludicrous" level of salaries in real terms, particularly at higher levels.

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BKN dismisses the glib talk of "moral revolution" for dealing with rampant corruption as question-begging; hence "root-and-branch reform" in the political and constitutional structure is suggested. The essentials of the alternative democratic system suggested are: indirect proportional representation system through various electoral colleges from village, city, district, State upwards to Parliament. This will reduce the need for money, introduce greater personal acquaintance between the candidates and their electorate, and make elections centre on issues of policy.

The most far-reaching change suggested is "a total separation between the executive and the legislative powers", so that the latter "have no say either in electing or keeping in power the Chief Executive", with a fixed tenure of one term and thus making him (or her) impervious to unpopularity incurred while in office. Since direct elections bring in money power, the second best solution of indirect elections with a certain size of regional votes as imperative are recommended. One wonders how else one would define the presidential system.

Certain other reforms concerning civil services, like taking their promotion, suspension, transfers, etc., away from the Chief Executive and hefty pay rises, reforms in the sphere of the judiciary and implementation of controls according to well-settled norms have also been suggested in BKN's thesis. Finally, a thorough discussion of such issues is advocated.

Evidently, it is a serious exercise and must be considered very carefully. Indeed, BKN's thesis has received well-deserved widespread attention. Many a critique of it has already appeared. I propose to examine some of its basic propositions, because, given these basic premises concerning the phenomenon of corruption, one may well infer some of the suggestions advanced. However, it must also be admitted that the major thesis (that is, indirect elections and a chief executive independent of the legislature), does not necessarily follow, even if one is prepared to go along with the diagnosis of the nature and causes of corruption as given by BKN.

In identifying the political and public functionaries as the major elements of the corrupt system, to a certain extent the corrective suggestions are prepacked in the diagnosis itself. True, the processes of dynamic post-Independence changes and their unsettling impact on values have been mentioned. What is the character of this dynamic process of change? Is it not, in the so-called mixed economy dispensation, a powerful, state-sponsored and supported process of making the rich, the powerful and the organised the main agents and beneficiaries of growth? True, a number of correctives embedded in plans, policies, laws. etc., were visualised and initiated to ensure a definite directional flow of their trickle-down and spread effects. But these exercises were made purely technocratic and bottom-up ones, with no mass mobilisation politics and no chopping off of the dizzy heights in order to ensure weight and voice to the lower rungs.

BKN does not seem to be unaware of it all, when he recognises that "our admirable post-Independence record of legislation for the benefit of the common man has benefited him only peripherally for it has not been fully implemented."

Why this poor implementation? Given the size of the cake and the process of its growth, if the poor succeeded in getting their legislated due, who would have had to for go this portion? Certainly no society redistributes in favour of one set of people without depriving some other set of the portion earmarked for redistribution. If the failures in reaching the benefits to the poor and the *downtrodden* were managerial and administrative failures, arising out of incompetence and inadequacy of skills, they cannot certainly be attributed to corruption. But if these failures are attributed to corruption, as surely BKN does in mentioning it as a consequence of corruption, then obviously those who gained through plugging these redistributive channels had a motivation and a hand in causing this corruption.

Were politicians and civil servants the sole beneficiaries of the opening of the *flood gates* of corruption? BKN does not stop with the erosion of values arising in a dynamic society. He makes a pointed reference to the role of wealth. To quote: "Status and function today increasingly depend on the possession of wealth: whence the mad rush for money." Now, politicians and civil servants can only share wealth, they can only have a cut. But prior to that, wealth must be produced and must get concentrated in the hands of some groups and individuals who, through corruption, share it with the political and administrative authorities for the help and protection they seek and receive.

The basic constitutional and systemic choices left the processes of private aggrandisement intact. Planning and related policies had a dual role. Partly they lent support to these processes. But partly they sought to control and regulate, modify and moderate, these processes, so that stark poverty is reduced and some evening out takes place. It is mainly in response to this latter course that one finds the eruption of corruption as a major device for letting the market rates of return reign and line the pockets of those who had a head start. The politicians and civil servants played their part, but as minions bringing about a divorce between the real and the hidden power on the one hand and the apparent and the formal power on the other.

It is native to believe that those who bribed were the minor beneficiaries and those who received the bribes, cuts, commissions, on-money, hush-money, or donations and contributions, privately or publicly, (through trusts and souvenirs) were the major beneficiaries in any meaningful, quantitative sense.

Here let us go back to what the Monopolies Inquiry Commission and the Santhanam Committee on the prevention of corruption said. The former wrote, "The considerable assistance that some of the leading industrialists in the country had given to the ruling party from time to time has furnished ammunition for the attack that big business is hand-in-glove with the party in power." Further, "But people cannot be blamed if they believe that it is the hope of favours that induces such payments and after the election is over, businessmen try their best to see that the 'investment' made by them bring satisfactory results." If contribution to the ruling party is an 'investment' with handsome returns, the 'economic system' will go all out to make it. As the Santhanam Committee put it, "...Willingness and capacity to corrupt is found in a large measure in the industrial and commercial classes. The ranks of these classes have been swelled by the speculators of the War period. To these, corruption is not only an easy method to secure large unearned profits but also the necessary means to enable them to be in a position to pursue their vocations or retain their position among their competitors." That was the view in 1964. Since then, investment in the business of politics has been "perfected" and strengthened manifold.

Thus, in picking up the political system as the "principal reason" for the all-pervading evil of corruption, BKN either gives the term 'political system' such an all-embracing interpretation that the system of private, inherently centralising and concentrating, property ownership and enterprise is also a part of the political system (the latter permits and legitimises the former), or his emphasis is misplaced.

True, parliamentary and assembly elections are very expensive. But is it entirely owing to the sprawling size of the constituencies and the large number of voters? What about the content, form, levels and methods of articulation of the general and specific interests of the poor masses, the masses who are poor not only in terms of material well-being (the product, largely, of the economic system, in so far as one can speak of the 'economic' and the 'political' separately) but also in terms of consciousness and political mobilisation (the product, largely, of the political system with the same caveat as the preceding)?

It is not our contention that BKN is not aware of these considerations. He goes on to the question of financing elections and refers to the role of the "large political contributors". But the matter is left at such a polite and vague level of allusion. The remedies suggested by BKN have to bear the burden of this polite but significant omission. The corruptibility of the politicians is simply made a function of the need to finance elections, though it is recognised that the days of party-level contributions are almost over, as they are rapidly transformed into "contributions to one's own welfare." However, it

(*Continued on page 34*)

Perspective for Non-alignment

A.K. DAMODARAN

THE two decades since the Belgrade Conference have witnessed qualitative changes in the international system. These changes have been reflected in the relative status, importance and effectiveness of the non aligned countries. It is a mixed record as it is bound to be in a period of unprecedented complexity in strategic, economic and purely political issues in the relations between competing forces and pressure groups within the states and between the various institutional and semi-institutional groups of states which have come into existence on a functional, regional, ideological or conventional strategic basis during this period.

The Non-aligned Movement is only one of many such groups. Its membership coincides to a large extent with the total membership of the various regional organisations of the developing world. There are, also, non-conformist countries in either ideological group who have sought a certain identity in the Non-aligned Movement without giving up essential loyalties to their original ideological fraternities. The Organisation of African Unity, the Arab League and the ASEAN are examples of regional groups which find no contradiction in merging their regional interests in the larger expectations of the developing world.

In the case of Latin American countries, the position is more complicated. Individual countries are attracted by the concept of non-alignment which would give them a certain real or illusory defence against the influence of the United States. As a group, however, the Latin American countries who became formally independent long before the new era of decolonisation which led to the emergence of the contemporary Non-aligned Movement and which had enjoyed *de facto* sovereignty without very real control over their economic resources throughout the 19th century and in the first half of the 20th century, were anxious to have only a partial association with non-alignment; racial, cultural and religious links with Europe inhibited the need for cooperation with the newly independent countries.

This predicament is not limited to Latin America. Conceptually, the self-images of the Ethiopia of Haile Selassie's time, Thailand, Afghanistan before the Saur Revolution and even Nepal, are different from those of the more conventional newly independent countries like India and Indonesia, which had a total experience of colonialism for more than a century and also the experience of successfully waging an anti-colonial struggle. Countries like North Korea, Vietnam, Saudi Arabia, Iran before the fall of the Shah and Malawi would be examples of nation-states with strong ideological convictions who do not find any contradiction between the philosophies which govern their political organisation and their membership of the Non-aligned Movement.

All this has resulted in an enormous increase in membership between 1961 and 1981. Almost all the countries which have become independent since the Belgrade meeting have opted for membership of the Non-aligned Movement. In fact, there has been no country which has denied itself the advantages of such membership. Only one country has decided to withdraw formally from membership, Burma. This is, of course, a unique achievement and has led to justifiable self-questioning about the reality of the achievement. There is a feeling, for example, that this increase in membership has been at the expense of the rigid criteria laid down at Belgrade. There is also the feeling that the Non-aligned Movement has become more and more in effectual in bringing about minimum changes in the decision-making process which is controlled by the great powers on political, economic and security issues. It is suggested that while this may be true, it is also not exactly relevant. Never during its history before and after institutionalisation did non-alignment see itself or project itself as an alternative decision-making body. It has been functioning all along within the global institutions created after the end of the Second World War by the victor nations and thrown open later, as historical developments demanded, to the newly independent colonies and the countries defeated in the World War.

During this whole period, the Non-aligned Movement was mostly effective as a sustained campaigner for disarmament, decolonisation and the creation of a more just international economic arrangement. This campaign was waged within the limits of the United Nations and its specialised agencies, within the accepted norms of general International Law which give a vast area of manoeuvre to the nation-states and within the framework of the antagonism between the ideological-cum-strategic blocs across the North Atlantic and North Pacific which emerged in the immediate aftermath of the war. The story of decolonisation is the story of the United Nations slowly going along with the political realities within the old empires which had outlived their utility in their limited forms. The campaign has different tempos, accelerated paces sometimes, total stagnation sometimes and a generally steady pace in the case of British decolonisation during the last 35 years.

The Non-aligned Movement was a prime catalyst in precipitating this process, but it did not cause it; the causes were in the minds of men in the different

The author is a former diplomat. This contribution is based on a paper he presented at an India-Indonesia seminar (January 26-29, 1982) organised in New Delhi by the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses in collaboration with its counterpart in Jakarta.

colonies. We should not, therefore, exaggerate the historical strength of non-alignment even in the earlier period. It has been the intelligent and sophisticated use of limited power with the skills acquired from the experience of anti-colonial struggle that enabled countries like India, Indonesia, Yugoslavia, Egypt and Ghana to lead the campaign for universal decolonisation. When compared with this achievement in the early years, the achievements of our times appear to be not so clear or concrete; but they are equally important. The important thing is that the methodology and the environmental realities accepted by the opponents of the establishment continue to be the same.

Also, at no time did the Non-aligned Movement have a total solidarity of outlook or ideology. In the first 25 countries which met in Belgrade, there was a variety in internal ideology and external attitudes, ranging from Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Ethiopia to Congo (Leopoldville), Cambodia and Cuba. This variety did not prevent many agreed decisions from emerging. At the same time, the proceedings of the Belgrade Conference brought out formally wide differences on problems like the relative importance of decolonisation and prevention of nuclear war even amongst the original founder members — India, Indonesia, Yugoslavia and Egypt.

This look backwards is not intended to minimise the seriousness of the differences within a much larger membership today. It would be undesirable as well as unwise to ignore them. There is, however, no reason to exaggerate them out of all proportion. Over twenty years, we have learnt to co-exist with these differences and managed to keep on functioning with a certain amount of effectiveness.

II

THE motivation and the power to influence world developments of the Non-aligned Movement is, however, only marginal. As a group and as individual countries, they are only reacting to major developments in the relations between the great powers. The last five years have seen a gradual increase of tension, first political and later strategic, between East and West, which has had its origins in their perception of their respective strategic interests. In the more important sectors of the area of divergence, the differences originate in the [redacted] profoundly influenced their economies, their political stability and their strategic vulnerability.

Within the Non-aligned Movement itself, there have been two developments, which have led to intensification of the East-West conflict with its essentially European origin. Firstly, there has been the Arab-Israeli problem which is unique since it is the result of the intrusion into Asia, into the developing world, into the newly independent countries, of a European historical tragedy, which has inevitably assumed the shape of a contemporary neo-colonialist phenomenon. Developing its own momentum because of the geological accident of the concentration of such a large portion of the world's hydrocarbons in this area, the Arab-Israeli dispute gave an opportunity to some non-aligned countries to use the classic instruments of imperialist persuasion or coercion against the "industrial democracies". This is the story of the energy crisis. Here, we get an intersection of two active, powerful, and entirely separate influences wrestling with each other.

The second development is equally significant. In Africa and in Latin America, during the last five years, new tensions have been created by the problems of delayed decolonisation by Portugal and intervention and counter-intervention by the great ideological groupings. It is the same need to protect one's own ideology or influence by either side that has been responsible for the unfortunate developments in some non-aligned countries in Asia. Afghanistan and Kampuchea have very specific objective, domestic reasons for their "present discontents": but what has given stamina to the protagonists in the two struggles, stiffened their determination to fight and prolonged the agony, is the linkage between these local conflicts and great-power antagonism.

Whatever might be the precise origin of various conflicts, central or peripheral, between the two great ideological and strategic systems, the most relevant fact for us in the non-aligned world is that we have to learn to function in a much more inclement atmosphere than even a mere decade ago. There was, quite recently, a rather fashionable idea that detente between the big powers meant less initiative and less capacity for initiating action for the non-aligned countries. It is a rather populist version of the older Chinese picture of the two world powers alternatively contending and colluding. In such a two decades. A new era of tensions was unwelcome to poor societies trying to get immediate support for their developmental programmes from the richer countries.

During the last two years, the situation has deteriorated dramatically. We are now in the midst of a new cold war. Old tensions are being revived in different parts of the world and the more recent tensions like the ones in South-East Asia, South-West Asia and Central America are being kept alive and intensified. There seems to be no realistic prospect, today, of the non-aligned countries profiting from all this, no likelihood, say, for an 'honest broker' role between gigantic adversaries or their surrogates. More than anyone else, we have a stake in detente.

III

A BRIEF survey of global developments in the last five years would illustrate these conclusions. The problem of decolonisation in its purely political aspect has now been almost completely solved. Apart from Namibia and freakish cases like Hongkong, the process of national liberation and self-determination has been almost completed. The central role played by the Non-aligned Movement within the United Nations and outside in speeding up decolonisation was clearly demonstrated in Zimbabwe.

The actual liberation of the former colony was the result of negotiations with the ruling power as had happened in earlier British instances. The difference in this case was that for a long period the members of the Non-aligned Movement took an active interest in the Southern Rhodesian problem and contributed in an ever-increasing measure to the liberation process both politically and in material support to the liberation struggle. In fact, the sixties and the seventies saw the emergence of a new alliance being forged between the newly independent countries, the progressive elements in the capitalist world ranging from liberals to socialists or from militant Marxists to clerical activists and the socialist countries. This alliance sustained and encouraged the physical struggle waged on the ground in Zimbabwe itself with support from the frontline states. It would be recalled that the previous phase of decolonisation in the middle seventies which had followed a domestic change in Portugal had also been assisted by the national liberation struggles in Mozambique and Angola. More specifically, the Organisation of African Unity took a leading role in canvassing support for the struggle in Zimbabwe which was actually waged by militant nationalists with logistical support from Tanzania and Zambia.

Apart from Namibia in Africa, where also this mix of conference diplomacy and guerilla warfare seems to be working towards a similar conclusion, the other purely colonial problems are limited to a few French settlements and colonies overseas, which have survived because of the peculiarities of France's constitutional arrangements, like Cayenne in Latin America, Reunion in the Indian Ocean and some Pacific and Caribbean Islands. Their size or significance, however, does not detract from the general conclusion that the age of the older political-cum-military colonialism is ended.

As someone said, every solution has its own problem. The newly liberated countries have now to face the problems of neo-colonialism in all its aspects, facing the bitter choice between conformity to big-power interests or economic stagnation or even retrogression and consequent political instability. The role of the Non-aligned Movement in its second twenty years will necessarily be more concerned with the identification of these new dangers and the devising of new methods to counter them.

There are some countries which necessarily do not fit into this analysis. Any investigation of colonialism in its contemporary phase has also to take into account the exceptional cases of Israel, South Africa and Taiwan. We have already discussed the specific problem of Israel but what has to be noted is its continuing and increasing aggressiveness. Because of the absolutely predictable, passive reaction from the United States and the absence of any reprisals of any kind from the other powerful nations of the world belonging to either ideological bloc, Israel has consistently flouted canons of International Law in general and specific modern agreements including the UN Charter in particular. It has proceeded on the assumption that safety or survival for it in its immediate strategic environment can only be ensured from a position of total military superiority over its unfriendly neighbours. The Israeli problem is thus one of the surviving links of the old imperialist pattern and the non-aligned countries have today fewer dilemmas than in the past in opposing it. In the sixties, there were many African non-aligned countries which were neutral in this conflict. Today there are very few. After the Golan Heights annexation, it is the non-aligned countries in the Security Council that have taken the initiative in demanding sanctions against Israel.

Equally unambiguous is the position of South Africa with its doctrine of racial superiority and permanent minority rule. Resolutions on apartheid and racial discrimination in South Africa have been some of the most widely accepted and non-controversial items in non-aligned conferences. Today, a new danger has been added to the role of South Africa by a clear change of attitude on the part of the new US Administration which sees in this Southern Indian Ocean and South Atlantic power, a possible ally in a new round of naval competition with the Soviet Union. Taiwan is a much simpler matter. Most non-aligned countries endorse Beijing's claim. Some few, who recognise Taiwan, would also endorse the concept that there is only one China. Here again, it is the new US Administration which has made a fairly conventional issue a live one.

The problem of old-fashioned colonialism is, therefore, important only in these exceptional cases. The role of the Non-aligned Movement will always be there as a vigilant guardian of the autonomy and sovereignty of the smaller and weaker countries, but it would not be unfair to conclude that the problem is not one of the future but one of the past. It is to the more contemporary version of colonialism in its subtler forms, political, economic and cultural, that we should address ourselves to appreciate the relevance of the Non-aligned Movement in today's world.

IV

THE most important and urgent of the problems which face individual non-aligned countries today are those concerning security. Any threat to the security of a nation-state in the developing world can be the result of linkage with incipient or actual conflicts between the super-powers or some big powers, or on the more familiar pattern of inter-state conflicts due to conventional causes like territorial disputes, border infringements, blurred ethnic loyalties, etc. All three types of insecurity can logically give rise to various forms of intervention by one state in another. The Non-aligned Movement has a role to play in containing and limiting the extent of these conflicts; it has not the capacity to solve them, but it can do a great deal in a negative fashion by refusing encouragement to the aggressor and mustering support in the world for the weak against the misdeeds of the strong.

Patterns of insecurity are, however, not limited to external danger. Because of the special circumstances obtaining in developing societies, because of the transitional problems involved in the incomplete change from feudalism to a modern industrial society, and from tribalism to an integrated nationstate, there are several internal problems produced by inadequate change or insufficient tempo of change. These also lead to changes of regime and to violent upheavals which spill over traditional borders. One near-universal phenomenon in the post-colonial age is the unsatisfactory nature of state borders. International Law, derived as it is from the age of imperialism, sanctified territorial changes by conquest. The arrangements after the Second World War are predicated on the assumption that no further changes would be allowed in a nation system controlled by the UN Security Council. Many of these arbitrary conventions have no real meaning for shepherds and cattle-herds who continue to move about with their livestock across modern frontiers. They would have to be carefully observed and imaginatively interpreted if unnecessary conflicts are to be avoided. These are much more complex problems than the easier colonial problems like Goa, West Irian, etc.

There are numerous examples today of conflicts of all the three types mentioned earlier. The continuing difficulties in Angola due to Namibia-based mercenaries, the trouble in the Horn of Africa between Somalia and Ethiopia, the difficulties between different groups in Chad and their patron states, the complex situation in Western Sahara and the residuary problem of Mayotte in the Comoros are examples of conflicts on the territories of non-aligned countries and between them, which are supported and encouraged by super-powers or the big powers. Specific examples of intervention by the super-powers can be noticed in Latin America and most recently in Afghanistan. The Chinese "punishment" of Vietnam is also linked with these instances in all of which a 'major' power is involved.

A specific example of a more direct bilateral conflict between non-aligned countries in which super-power interest is absent or at the most implicit can be found in the Iran Iraq conflict. The "intervention" by Tanzania in Uganda and by Vietnam in Kampuchea are analytically interesting because of the divergent reaction they produced in the world outside. The African episode was permitted to sort itself out not without a great deal of suffering because there were no specific great-power interests on either side. The Kampuchean problem is kept alive because not only are the regional states interested but also China and the great powers.

In all these cases, the non-aligned countries have a mediatory role which they can perform if the circumstances are congenial They can do it most naturally through existing regional organisations or ideological groupings like the Islamic Conference. They certainly cannot achieve anything by excluding them. Following a pattern established by the UN in the major conflicts of the last thirty years, it should be possible more and more for the Non-aligned Movement to take an activist role by forming peace forces as the OAU is trying to do in Chad or by a major diplomatic effort to find a compromise solution as they are attempting to do in the Iran-Iraq conflict. Even in difficult problems like Afghanistan and Kampuchea; the non-aligned nations have to go on plugging away at a political solution in preference to a military one.

All this is satisfactory enough, but neither the world system as a whole nor its non-aligned members have as yet found a solution to help the evolution of existing nation-states into more progressive, just and egalitarian models. This problem can be tackled more by crisis prevention than by crisis management. This means a much more intensive role for the Movement in the diplomacy of peaceful co-existence and economic co-operation among the non-aligned countries themselves and also in the multi-faceted co-operation between the developed and the developing countries.

V

THE campaign for the new economic order began on a formal basis with a programme of action launched at Lusaka in 1970. The next decade saw a certain maturity and sophistication in forming the campaign; results were, however, inevitably postponed by the energy crisis and the consequent disarray in domestic markets and in the international system. As the crisis developed, it became clear that the worst sufferers had been the most vulnerable, that is, the developing nations. It also made clear that apart from the earlier regional and national differences in the movement, there had now emerged a marked distinction between the direct beneficiaries of the petroleum scarcity and the most affected, least developed, oil importing countries. In between, there was a whole range of countries succeeding in somehow meeting the problem by economic developments over which they had no control, but which were useful to them, like the price increase in many cash crops and the new major factor of the remittances coming into the exchequers of labour-exporting countries. The developed countries were, after the first shock, not very much affected, mainly because of the recycling process.

The energy crisis came at the end of a 10-year-old campaign within the UN for more equitable terms of trade. The UNCTAD conferences and the sustained campaign in all UNCTAD subsidiary agencies by the Group of 77, represented the actual political power of non-alignment expressed institutionally. Outside the UN, in the crisis years after 1973, there came into being the independent North-South dialogue, which after the first semi-success at Paris has now gone on to a fresh start after the Brandt Report and the Cancun Summit. This is the area in which non-alignment has been most vociferous as a movement; however, we should realise our limitations. Much of the lobbying has to be done in existing institutions, like the Commonwealth, the Lome Convention meetings, and the UN Economic Conferences, both ordinary and special. More important, speeches at non aligned meetings should not become a rhetorical substitute for effective action through continuous diplomacy in New York and Geneva. It is also useful to remember that, as far as the crucial problem of collective self-reliance is concerned, the "non-aligned countries" are indistinguishable from the "Third World" or "developing countries". Earlier in the seventies, there was still some political sense in emphasising this distinction, depending upon which side a country belonged to. With the entry of countries like Pakistan into the non-aligned world, this distinction has lost all its significance.

Collective self-reliance in practice means increased cooperation, technical as well as administrative, between developing countries. The idea is to arrive at the maximum possible commonality of interest between the various countries, making allowances for special cases. Collective self-reliance is based upon the idea that our countries are fully functioning and responsible members of the existing systems, trying to change them by sophisticated diplomacy, if possible, and collective strength derived from the solidarity of the weak, if necessary, There is no unrealistic or confrontationist programme envisaged.

The economic independence of our countries is linked with cultural and intellectual independence. The links which elites in our countries continue to have with the old metropolitan powers have to be slackened, if not severed, and replaced by new links based on natural geographical factors. This is what is meant by the fight against neo-colonialism, It cannot be done on too simplistic a basis. Multinationals do perform a function in our imperfect society. They transfer technology in an efficient and rapid manner through tried institutions. Things can go wrong when the recipient country does not have the administrative experience, technological expertise or high political traditions of personal integrity in leadership, to ensure the maximum benefit of such a transfer of technology. It is necessary to fill this vacuum most appropriately by representatives and experts from similarly situated countries which are familiar with failures at home and who can appreciate the relevance of appropriate technology. Interventionist activity by the aid-giving power based on idealistic notions of social justice, anti-elitism and the attempt to incorporate a "basic needs" approach are suspect in the Third World as refined neo-colonialism either directly by the government concerned or through the transnationals.

Technical cooperation between developing countries should begin by supplementing existing links and, as the process becomes successful, take up a commanding position. It is not intended to be a substitute for useful relationships with developed countries or with efficient, self-reliant technology within the country concerned.

The same principles would apply, with equal relevance, to the exchange of technology, information and culture. In all these cases, it is the non-aligned countries which can help each other much more than the developed world. They would be less biased and more acceptable as partners to the weaker countries in the movement.

The immediate prospects of economic progress for our countries are bleak. The great Western nations are passing through a period of deep self-questioning and doubt. Economic theories accepted for the last four decades are being thrown out and replaced by dangerous doctrines which are most unkind to the most feeble. The Cancun Summit was institutionally anything but a success, but it did succeed in making President Reagan with his definite ideas of monetarism and supply side economics understand a little better the realities of the Third World. It is also meant that several of the other leaders of the industrialised West became more aware than before about our problems. It would be necessary during the next decade to convert these vague sentiments into hard economic action to benefit the poorer countries.

A connected problem is the role which can and should be played by the Socialist countries in the North-South dialogue. On the great political and strategic questions of our time, the Socialist countries have on the whole been on the side of the non-aligned world, though there have been some exceptions. They have been for decolonisation and against the neo-colonialist danger. For some time, however, they have become marginal or irrelevant to the North-South dialogue by their own choice. Their help is there but only on a limited bilateral basis. It would be one of the major tasks of the Non-aligned Movement to persuade the Soviet Union and its Socialist allies to take up a more active role in the negotiations between the rich and the poor.

In this particular context, China has also to play an important role. It has begun by asserting its identity as a Third World country. It has also behaved differently from the European Socialist countries by seeking membership and the available facilities in the world monetary institutions. In future discussions on a global level, China could play a positive role on the side of the non-aligned countries.

VI

DURING the next two decades not merely the Third World but the First and Second Worlds also will face economic and political challenges requiring organised effort on the part of individual nations as well as international organisations and movements. The concept of non-alignment arose from the feeling of newly-independent countries that without complete autonomy in economic activity and freedom from external intervention, it would not be possible for them to rediscover their lost identity as peoples. It was only gradually that these countries became aware of the need for acting as a movement within the framework of the international system with its hierarchy, with its definite apportionment of rights and duties and with its concentration of the decision-making power in a small number of countries. The effectiveness of united action in moments of crisis and peril was very early demonstrated during the Dutch Indonesian crisis in 1949. There have been many such experiences since them, the most recent being in Zimbabwe.

Today, there is no uncertainty at all about the *need* or the *role* of the Non-aligned Movement. It is necessary for supplementing, and amending also, the existing international order. Its function should be to educate first its own members and then the great countries of the world to the dangers inherent in an unequally organised world, for all countries, rich and small. Inter-dependence is a basic fact of international affairs today and, as the organised expression of the aspirations of a very large group among the countries of the world, the Non-aligned Movement has a specific role. The agenda of the Non-aligned Movement during the last years of the century derives from this role and begins inevitably with the linked programmes of disarmament and development. Resistance to such a programme is bound to come from vested interests in the powerful countries. It would, therefore, be necessary to carry on a campaign for this purpose within the existing security system of the United Nations in which the Security Council and the General Assembly play differentiated and supplementary roles. One of the objects of the campaign should be to democratise the world structure in a form acceptable to the custodians of authority. Parallel to this campaign for a more democratic international security system should be a campaign for a new economic order which also will have to function within the system.

For both these aims, what is essential is discussion, dialogue, and intelligent co-operation among the non-aligned countries. This is the essence of what is now beginning to be known as the South-South dialogue. The North-South dialogue is at the heart of the modern economic problem. The South-South discussions should be considered an essential element in our preparation for conducting that dialogue on a more equal basis. Another item of equal importance on the agenda of the Movement during the coming years would be a new look at the possibility of a South-East dialogue. The Socialist countries should be persuaded to play a more active part in the decision-making process in the world monetary system and help the developing countries from within rather than assume an attitude of detachment.

These are the major global issues of our time in which the Non-aligned Movement has a decisive contribution to make. An intelligent awareness of these great global issues should, however, not make us forget the more urgent role of non-alignment as a defusing instrument in the immediate security crisis of the day. In the Arab-Israeli dispute, in the unresolved crises in South-West Asia and South-East Asia, the Non-aligned Movement can exercise a positive, but not necessarily decisive, influence. As a movement, it has to be realistic and not be tempted into taking extreme rhetorical positions. For example, we have to build upon the reality of the Israeli state as well as the Palestine people's right to have a sovereign state of their own, in prescribing an optimal solution for the problem in the Middle East. In Southern Africa, the economic dependence of eight African countries on South Africa is also a fact which cannot be wished away, while we exercise all possible pressures, legal, moral,

Arms Race and Poverty

WORLD TODAY

- World's annual military expenditure=$ 500 billion =Rs. 4500,000,000,000 ($ 1.3 billion per day.)
- Number of under-nourished and hungry: 1000 million.
- Number of destitutes: 800 million.
- People who have no access to medicine: 1500 million.
- UNICEF estimate: 12 million children below the age of 5 died of hunger in 1978.
- Population of poverty belt areas: 1215 million. Fifty per cent of them live in absolute poverty.
- Children who do not go to school: 250 million.
- Number of illiterates: 800 million.
- India, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Pakistan contain two-thirds of the poor.
- Absolute poor in Latin America: 100 million.

INDIA

- Military expenditure 1982-83. Rs 5100 crores; Rs. 70.50 per head per year.
- Largest arms importing country in South Asia. Arms import from USSR amounted 70 per cent in 1970-74 and about 57 per cent in 1975-79. Rs. 4000 crores have been kept abroad for purchase of defence equipment.
- People living below poverty line: 35 crores.
- People at marginal level of poverty: 20 crores.
- 50 lakh people are drawn below poverty line every year.
- 43 per cent of the absolute poor of 36 countries live in India.
- Unemployment is highest; about 2 crores working man-years.
- Growth index is lowest.

—*Released by India Library Institute, Calcutta.*

political and economic, on the Republic of South Africa to give up its undemocratic, uncivilised and irrational principles of political organisation. Only the Non-aligned Movement can, by utilising its very diversity and the existence of widely divergent approaches, come out with a solution which could bring about immediate redress to the victims of apartheid in South Africa and at the same time be acceptable to the Western nations which are friendly to the Pretoria regime. Such dilemmas are present in most of the other crises also. It should be possible for non-alignment to attempt to solve these problems, or at least, when that does not appear to be feasible in the foreseeable future, at least mitigate them. It is only when all attempts through conference diplomacy, bilateral discussions and public campaigns fail, should the small nations take to the path of confrontation. In doing so, they will be able to depend not only upon themselves but also upon progressive elements in other parts of the world.

These elements include the uncommitted neutral nations of the developed world like the Scandinavian nations, and powerful liberal groups within the Western military alliance. On many issues, it would also be possible to count on the co-operation of the Socialist countries. The recent unilateral disarmament movement in Western Europe and the developments in Poland indicate that the opinions of the large majority of the populations in a country need not necessarily follow the pressure groups and the narrow interests represented in the ruling elites. This is, of course, true of the members of the Non-aligned Movement also. It is only by taking into account all such possible allies in our campaign for political independence, guaranteed national security and economic justice that we can succeed in the realisation of our aims.

VII

THE above survey shows that the Non-aligned Movement, in spite of some of its difficulties and problems, has an important political and significant economic role in the world today. It provides security and a substitute for defence for the very weak in a world where strength is unfortunately decisive. It also provides through time-tested instruments of solidarity and self-reliance, an opportunity for the newly-independent countries to claim a greater share in decision-making, at the global level. It also provides through summit conferences, the meetings of the foreign ministers in between summits and at meetings of the Bureau, a certain continuity of action on issues important to our countries. Still greater continuity is provided by the regular meetings in the UN capitals and by the groups of non-aligned representatives attached to the functional bodies in the UN framework. All this makes the existence of a secretariat perhaps unnecessary. In political and strategic matters a secretariat would really be something of a nuisance because it could be used by the incumbent leadership to influence policy more than to a fair extent. The hard inevitable work necessary in economic and connected negotiations could perhaps be better performed by the institutes or organisations of non-aligned experts who could provide the smaller countries with the necessary negotiating skills, factual information and expertise in advocacy which they themselves may lack. It is in these rather prosaic areas of detailed functioning that the Non-aligned Movement would be able to be more inventive in the immediate future so that it can carry out its role more effectively and meaningfully than it is doing today. □

Sikhs in Secular India

K.S. DUGGAL

SECULARISM is defined variously by various people. However, it is certainly not "rejection of all forms of religious faith". As understood by us in secular India, it consists in equal respect for all religions.

Mahatma Gandhi, father of the nation, was a staunch Hindu and yet he studied and venerated other religions whose hymns were regularly recited at his prayer meetings. These included Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism and Sikhism. Jawaharlal Nehru professed himself a non-believer and yet he visited places of worship with the apparent devotion of his countrymen. He was invested with the sacred thread as a child and Vedic ceremonials were duly observed at his cremation. Indira Gandhi's spiritual thirst carries her to wherever she can find peace of mind whether it is a Hindu, Muslim, Sikh or any other place of pilgrimage or even to holy men or women.

As a people, we are wedded to secularism notwithstanding any faith we may subscribe to personally.

Sikhism is the most modern, the most recent and the most scientific faith amongst the great religions of the world. Its founder, Guru Nanak, had the advantage of having drunk deep at the founts of all the sacred religious lore. A life-long pilgrim, he visited the ancient Hindu temple at Puri in the east, Holy Mecca in the west, the ascetics at Manasarovar deep into the Himalayas in the north and Buddhist shrines in Sri Lanka. Venerated equally by the Hindus and the Muslims in the Punjab, he is still remembered as *Baba Nanak Shah Faqir Hindu da guru Mussalman da pir*. Guru Nanak's times had the harrowing experience of an invasion of the

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Punjab by Babar, who indulged in murder and rape and destruction of property most recklessly. The poet in Guru Nanak condemned the barbarities committed by the Mughal forces fearlessly. For a moment, it seems, he revolted even against divine justice. Said he:

Aiti mar pai kurlanen
Tainki dard no aiya?
(Such suffering and such wailing!
Did it not hurt you?)

And yet never, never in his voluminous writings did Guru Nanak utter a word against Islam. He decried the Turks and the Pathans who attacked his country but never the Muslims who were as much his countrymen as Hindus and others On the other hand, while undertaking a pilgrimage to Mecca, he is said to have donned the blue robes of the Muslim pilgrims:

Neel bastar lai kapde pehre
Turk Pathani amal kiya
(He wore the blue robes
The way a Turk or a Pathan does.) *(Asa di var)*

Born a Hindu, communal harmony was a creed with him. All his life he propagated it vigorously.

Guru Gobind Singh, creator of the Khalsa, had the unique distinction of combining in himself the guru and the disciple. He baptised the Sikhs and then sat at their feet to be baptised by them. A democrat to the core of his heart, many a time he declared that he owed all his glory to his people (*Inhi ki kripa se saje ham hain*). At the close of his ministry, he invested his authority of a guru, both temporal and secular, in the Panth, the five elected representatives — *the Panj Piaras.*

The current tension amongst Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab, though unfortunate in the extreme, is no new phenomenon. It raises its head periodically when the mischievous elements have the better of it. A few decades ago, the Sikhs had to shout from the house-tops "We are not Hindus!" (*Ham Hindu nahin hain*). It was to ward off a real or imaginary attack on their identity. At that time so great a poet and patriot as Puran Singh said.

"The great Hindu culture and its innate influence on Sikh culture cannot be denied.

"The Sikh is in no sense an alien; he is born in India; he has the glorious heritage of Indian culture; he cannot be without Prahlad and Mira. Guru Gobind Singh sent his Sikhs to Banaras to study Sanskrit. He is said to have translated *Krishna Lila* himself.

"Our mother-country is India, our language is derived from Sanskrit, but we are modern in outlook, though also ancient as Prahlad and Krishna.

"In view of the political solidarity of India, it is mischievous for any to suggest that we are not Hindus, and not equally Muslims. It is mischievous to multiply the points of difference with the Hindus, which are not fundamental."

What seems to bother the Sikhs currently is again the question of their identity. There are not a few front-rank intellectuals in the community who fear that with the onslaught of modernism the Sikhs may be swept off their feet and lose their identity. Nothing could be farther from the truth. If the gatherings of the devotees at the Sikh Gurdwaras is any indication, faith in the Sikh way of life is growing every day. We have amongst the Sikhs today people who would be willing to make any sacrifice for the preservation of the Sikh tradition. Gurdwara Bangla Saheb in Delhi, which used to be a quiet shrine a few decades ago, is crowded these days with devotees at all hours. And this is true of other Sikh shrines in any part of the country.

The Sikhs have for the first time in history a State in which they are in a majority with Punjabi as its language, something which even the great Maharaja Ranjit Singh could not claim for the community. It is time to make the best of it rather than fritter away the fund of the community's energies in vain pursuits. It is a happy augury that the opinion-makers in the community have helped curb the mounting tension in Punjab starting with the Akalis' clash with the Nirankaris at Amritsar which then spread taking a communal shape on the familiar old pattern.

The Sikhs are a "spirit born people" belonging to a heritage of which any community can be proud. They are hard-working and enterprising. They are friendly and forward-looking, imbued with rare spirit of self-sacrifice. It is their endeavour mainly that has helped the country turn the corner in food production. Guarding a sensitive border, they are the virtual sword-arm of India. Their contribution in the freedom struggle was unique. Their sacrifices in various conflicts with the intruders in independent India, whether they were from the north-east or the north-west, are legendary. They are always in the forefront of every national endeavour. It hardly becomes a people with their great past and no less glorious present to tarnish their image with narrow parochial considerations. ☐

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Higher Education : A Critical Look

ASHA RAM

HIGHER education in our country today faces the crisis of declining standards and increasing tensions in campuses. The usual reasons advanced — paucity of funds, proliferation of university education, dereliction of duty by teachers, neglect of studies by students, interference by Opposition parties in the affairs of universities — are only superficial explanations. These do not explain why the colonial features in our system of education persist. These deter the universities from making their own original contribution to knowledge (and helping society). If the universities are to discharge their functions properly, the old habit of copying from Western syllabi, teaching through a foreign language medium with the help of foreign text-books, and increasing bureaucratisation leading to alienation of the university community will have to be ended. Also, the relatively autonomous and democratic functioning of universities which has been undermined since Independence will have to be restored.

'Standards of education' is a relative term. Our national leaders aspired to achieve international standards but this has not happened. Under the system introduced by the British, this was not possible. However, the tragedy is that whatever limited standards had been attained under colonial rule are, with rare exceptions, on the decline.

The question of standards is closely linked to the objectives of university education and the methods employed to achieve those ends. The British who introduced the modern system of education in India had limited aims, namely, maintaining their imperial rule and continuing the process of exploitation. They were not interested in the spread of literacy, much less in the expansion of university education which could produce their grave-diggers. They encouraged the introduction of syllabi which were adaptations of their own: Indian subjects received little attention. A pro-British outlook was sought to be inculcated through different disciplines. Since they were not interested in the socio-economic, political or cultural development of the country, such subjects as science and technology, Indian art, literature and culture were not encouraged. Introduction of English as the medium of education not only discouraged the growth of indigenous literature and culture, but put Indian candidates for various elite services at a serious disadvantage against their European counterparts (who went on to occupy practically all important positions in administration, trade and commerce).

Our national leaders realised the weakness of this system. They asked for the introduction of industrial, technical and scientific education. The need for teaching Indian subjects, and above all, teaching through the mother-tongue so as to develop Indian languages, literature and culture, was stressed. It was the key to better and quicker understanding of subjects. They asked for the expansion of university education not only because it provided an opportunity for better jobs and satisfied the aspirations of the growing new middle class but also because this had become a political question. When our leaders asked for political reforms, they were told that India did not have enough graduates to work them, but when they stressed the need for the expansion of university education to produce graduates they were denied this on the ground that that would lower the standards; an argument which is often repeated even today.

The system introduced by the British led to a number of distortions. For one thing, instead of developing disciplines to suit our requirements and creating our own literature, we cultivated the habit of copying British syllabi and borrowing their literature, mainly text-books. Thus, we were only transmitting the existing fund of knowledge, and not extending its frontiers. With a foreign language as the medium, all that the teacher could do in most cases was to memorise the lecture and deliver it in the class As for the student, all that was required was to cram the lesson and reproduce it at the examination.

To overcome the difficulty caused by the foreign medium and the shortage of text-books, the number of lectures was increased, and occasionally, notes were dictated to serve as a substitute for books. Thus, most of the time which could be utilised profitably in self-study by the teacher and the taught, or in exchange of opinion through seminars and tutorials, was lost in lecture work. The habit of borrowing syllabi persists, and even those universities which have adopted the mother-tongue as the medium follow the text-book method. An unfortunate consequence of this method is that in most of the universities and colleges, the only point of contact between the teacher and the taught is in the class which may have as many as hundred students. The teacher fails to establish close relationship with the student, and thus loses the opportunity to communicate directly so as to influence him morally and intellectualy and to help in the resolution of his difficulties. Lack of personal touch is not conducive to discipline and promotion of understanding. This leads to bureaucratisation of the system.

English medium is responsible for another serious distortion. An impression has been created that all the knowledge of the world can be obtained through this single source. English is an important language and we have built up the tradition of learning it. This advantage should be preserved; however, sole dependence on it is not only inade-

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quate but even obstructive of independent thinking. No country, howsoever resourceful, can translate all the important world literature into its language. Most often, it translates only that part of it which it needs. Scholars go to originals, they do not depend on translations. In our admiration for English we tend to close all other windows to the external world — something no self-respecting country would do.

The function of higher education is not mere preservation of the existing fund of knowledge and its transmission to the coming generations. The test of a university does not lie in how many graduates it produces, or how many of them succeed in competitive examinations, although this is certainly important. Universities are known by the original works they produce, the new ideas they develop. This implies research, a tradition which we could not possibly develop in the given system of education which inculcated the habit of copying and not of original and critical thinking.

Such has been the ignorance of the research function of higher education that even some of the prominent academics of the old and established universities thought that it was to be carried on only in the specialised institutes, though every university has in its statutes provision for the award of the highest research degrees. Some scholars did go abroad for research and came back with degrees — to cash in on them at the appropriate time and then forget about it. This can be verified from a casual glance at the libraries of even some of the oldest and established universities. Barring a few exceptions, these will be found to be no better than store-houses of text-books and secondary material. The authorities concerned often did not think it necessary even to have qualified librarians.

Many senior teachers did not do any research but tried to acquire this qualification by guiding research. Even the method of research was not always known. Thus, research became a leap in the dark. Scholars landed themselves in difficulties and ended either without achieving anything or by producing cheap compilations of secondary or archival material. Research, being search for truth and service to society, is a moral pursuit which should have an ennobling effect on the scholar and his guide. In our country the result may be the opposite, since degrees are often obtainable through manipulation.

Research did not thrive in the country because it was not functional: it was not organically connected with the process of teaching and promotion of social well-being. Of late, corrective steps to promote research on subjects relevant for the country have been attempted. Institutions have been established which impart training in research methods, offer liberal fellowships and other facilities for research. However, no dent seems to have been made in the method of teaching which remains dependent on text-books.

Wrong system of teaching is reinforced by the traditional system of examination which is based on distrust of the teacher concerned and his virtual isolation from the process of examination of his students. A correct system of examination is not only to assess the merit of the taught; it is also, in a way, a test of the capacity of the teacher to impart knowledge and develop the capacity for independent thinking in his student. Indeed, the teacher concerned can make self-assessment and improve his method. Our system hardly achieves these ends. On the contrary, its unpredictable nature makes it akin to a game of chance.

The system of examination, made up mostly of written examination occasionally supplemented by orals, has also been borrowed from Britain. On the continent, oral examination is predominant. In Britain the teacher in charge is associated with the process of examination at every step. The external examiner is associated only for the sake of objectivity and mutual exchange of experience. However, in India the teacher in charge is generally ignored unless he happens to be a senior one. It is true that a few institutions have adopted the semester system in which the teacher is also the examiner of his students. There are other institutions where up to two-thirds of the total number of examiners in a subject may be internal, but this does not necessarily mean that the teacher in charge will be one of these. The trend is to send more and more question papers and answer books to external examiners and to get back as many in exchange for the senior staff. In a third category of institutions neither the paper-setter nor the moderator is internal.

The traditional system of examination prevalent in India has many flaws. Often neither the paper-setter nor the moderator is an expert in the particular branch and is not always actively associated with the teaching of the concerned branch. Sometimes, the paper-setter does not have the time or the patience to go through the syllabus and includes out of-course questions which escape detection by the supposedly eagle-eyed moderators. Such mistakes cause additional strain to the already nervous examinees who stage walkouts or create disturbance. Generally the problem is solved by putting set questions which are repeated in alternate years with few variations. This system promotes little understanding of the subject and encourages cramming. Examination of scripts by one who does not teach the students concerned is of limited value to him. He is accustomed to set answers and has little time to search for any residual originality which may be there. The speed at which the voluminous and boring job of script-examination is carried out leaves a great deal to be desired. Mistakes occur leading to a demand for review of the result or a re-examination. A system based on distrust of the teacher undermines trust in the system itself.

The practice of set answers to set questions encourages the production of guess papers, cheap bazar notes, and cramming. To overcome the strain of unintelligent cramming the students resort to unfair means which is at times even claimed as a right by certain groups of students. The invigilators tend to overlook the practice in order to escape the wrath of the examinees, or at times even connive at it. Unable to cope with the situation, the authorities are increasingly inviting the police to help.

invigilate. This is the absurd position to which the system has reduced itself in the name of anonymity, impartiality and responsibility.

ATTEMPTS at reform have had only marginal effect. Reform is not popular not because it does not ensure impartiality but because it does not suit the establishment. It implies continuous work, periodical assessment, independence of the teacher in assessment and participation of the student in the process as a check. It undermines the importance of the senior teachers who act as paper-setters, moderstors, script examiners, tabulators, collators and scrutinisers and acquire influence in the process besides making some money. It implies loss of unnecessary and unacademic routine work which keeps them busy the year round.

Shorn of continuous research or genuine research guidance and with a minimum of teaching load, the seniors have ample time for petty politicking and doing petty jobs. It is they who man the various university bodies. Such as the faculty committee, academic council, court, executive council, and standing or ad hoc committees. They are also the external members of similar bodies of other universities. Most often, it is they who go to attend national and international seminars and conferences.

Many of these duties and jobs can be shared so that unnecessary and routine work load can be reduced to enable the seniors to do useful academic work; but this perspective is absent. It will deprive them of power and self which they prize. Lest it reduce their own importance in the department, they seldom like to appoint additional professors. Cases are not unknown of Professors retiring without leaving even Readers in the departments. They prefer to carry on with junior, temporary and ad hoc teachers who are likely to remain subservient. That academic work will suffer and the department will be paralysed does not bother them. Naturally, they promote incompetence and discourage talent. This does not mean that there are no exceptions.

Even during British days, the universities came to have some of the desirable features. They had fairly representative bodies — the courts or the senates to act as their supreme legislatures, enacting laws, receiving reports and passing annual budgets; the elective executive councils/syndicates to act as their cabinet, and broadbased bodies to discharge academic functions. The Vice-Chancellors were elected by the courts/senates which were dominated by the body of teachers, and so they were responsible to the university community. The Government gave them grants and left them free to manage their own affairs within the limits of the relevant Acts.

Since Independence, the universities have lost much of their autonomy: democracy in the campus is in peril. The Vice-Chancellors, whose powers have been increased, are no more the representatives of the university community (though in some cases they may belong to them) and are not responsible to them. The procedure for the appointment of Vice-Chancellors is such as to virtually ensure the selection of the nominee of the Government. Naturally, he looks to it for guidance and not to the university community. Finance officers are deputed by the Governments to look into the utilisation of funds. The Government nominees and officers such as the Directors of Education or even Ministers sit in their executives, senates/courts and selection and finance commitees to promote or protect their own interests. Some Governments have begun to appoint Registrars and even made them transferable. Thus, universities have become a section of the Ministries of Education whose approval is sought almost in all important matters. There are cases where Governments have been found to replace inconvenient Vice-Chancellors by administrators from the Civil Service.

Increased powers of Vice-Chancellors unresponsive to the university community and active participation of Government representatives in university bodies, besides making a mockery of university autonomy, determines their democratic functioning. There are some universities in which the heads, deans and most other members of the executive are appointed on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor. This reduce the university bodies to mere advisory status. In any case, such changes in the structure of the universities make them oligarchic.

The reason given for the vital changes is that autonomy and democracy had been misused; but the changes have only worsened the situation. In fact, misuse of power has become more blatant in the matter of appointments, promotions and award of various positions and favours. In the absence of moral support and rule in accordance with law, these are the only methods left to the authorities to administer the universities. They become authoritarian and bureaucratic, which makes it difficult to resolve conflicts in a rational and democratic manner through discussion and persuasion. In the absence of autonomy, the authorities, acting at the bidding of their Governments, tend to adopt an unbending attitude to even the most reasonable demands of the community, leaving the latter with no alternative but conflict, which spoils the academic atmosphere.

For all the evils of the educational system, it is the teacher who is usually held responsible. The public does not distinguish between the authority, the senior teachers who are in control of the system and the Government which acts through the Vice-Chancellors and its representatives on the university bodies, and an average teacher whose voice does not count and who is as much a victim of the system as others. It is not always merit which counts in appointments. Not even the most meritorious can claim appointment as a matter of right. All kinds of principles such as class record, research, experience, good teaching, usefulness for the administration, etc., have been evolved on the basis of any of which appointments can be made. Ultimately, it is the discretion of the authority which matters in appointments, promotions and award of lucrative offices. Therefore the aspirants have to try to remain on the right side of the authorities. This leads to sycophancy and positively discourages good work. There are even places where appointments are secured through bribes. However, the teaching profession is not altogether blameless. The attitude of the teacher to his job has changed. By and large, devotion to work is not what it used to be. There are reasons for it: financial constraint is one and the social climate another.

In the pre-Independence days also teachers were not as well paid as men in other services, yet the payment was adequate to meet their needs. Moreover, what they lost in terms of money was more than made up by the prestige they enjoyed in society as *gurus*. Today their emoluments, except in prestigious institutions, are inadequate. Remuneration is lower in the States and much lower in the private institutions run on commercial lines. The teacher is forced to save his energy from his duties and to resort to odd jobs including tuition, writing cheap notes, examining scripts of different examinations including those of the Secondary Board, and even undertaking business and contract work on the quiet. Earlier, a university teacher was freely available for consultation and considered it below his dignity to accept paid tuition work. Resort to any other business except academic was looked down upon. With the expansion of business and Government activity, the largest number of talented students go to join these services leaving the less talented for the educational field.

Today the only value which seemingly dominates society is money, whatever its source — profiteering, black-marketing, smuggling or bribe. The wealthy enjoy life and exercise influence.

Lack of promotional opportunities makes the situation worse. In Government service a person goes to the top by seniority, but most of the teachers in colleges and universities retire as lecturers or Readers. Degree-level teachers rarely get the opportunity to teach post-graduate courses or guide research. There is little incentive to improvement.

To attract talent to the profession it is necessary to improve the service conditions of the teachers and to the make them free from various institutional pressures. However, basic change in the system of university education alone will enable teachers to discharge their real function — development of the faculty of creative thinking.

BUREAUCRATISATION of the system leads to conflicts in the campuses which are often attributed to interference in their affairs by political parties, mainly the Opposition. The allegation allows the authorities to pass the buck and disown responsibility. This suits the Government in power, for it is not completely free from blame for the acts of omission and commission of the acedemic authorities who have to look to it for guidance. Out of ignorance a section of the academic community and the public agree with this charge, and a feeling is created that the educational institutions should be free not only from political interference but from politics as such. This creates confusion, making the resolution of conflicts even more difficult. We have already seen that educational institutions are not sufficiently autonomous and their authorities are not free from Government and thus political influence. Further, no party is likely to unilaterally give up its right to recruit its cadre from educational institutions and to influence the campuses. The huge sums which political parties, including the one in power, spend on student body elections and the interest which top political leaders take in their affairs is an index of their eagerness to use student power. Parties employ students, teachers and other sections of the academic community not only to acquire a hold on the campuses but to utilise this hold to influence the public and even the political apparatus.

Students in higher educational institutions are adults, more conscious and politically alert than the average citizen. They have not only the right but even the duty to take interest in politics. This is the practice in the advanced countries and this has been the tradition in India. Even during British days, teachers and students took part in politics. In our country teachers and graduates have special representation in the upper houses of the State legislatures, which implies their participation in politics. Teachers have held important political positions in different countries including ours. President Wilson and Henry Kissinger in the USA, Professor Laski in the UK and Professors K.T. Shah and Mukut Behari Lal in India are some instances.

Participation in politics becomes harmful when the teachers, students and other employees begin to neglect their duties. Authoritarianism bureaucratism, nepotism, favouritism and corruption of various kinds, coupled with lack of even the minimum necessary facilities for proper education such as libraries, laboratories, hostels, canteens and class-rooms, and administrative inefficiency, are ammunition enough in any campus for explosions. Any leadership, can exploit it at any time.

However, the conflicts are as yet few and far between because the university community is conscious neither of its rights nor of its duties. It is a victim of the idea of political neutrality and ivory-tower attitude which keeps it isolated from the public. As the community becomes more conscious, more activity should be anticipated. The solution lies not in headlong confrontation leading to strikes and violence but in the democratic method of permitting legitimate expression, discussion, persuasion and acceptance of reasonable claims.

Other solutions such as banning of students' unions and other such activities have been tried but have failed; indeed they had the contrary effect of uniting the student community against authority. The experiment was tried by Chancellor K.M. Munshi, the then Governor of UP, at very heavy cost to himself and to the Government.

When the students find the administration to be corrupt, inefficient and arrogant, completely indifferent to their problems, they naturally agitate. This is to be welcomed; for such agitation is for the improvement of standards, not for their lowering. Nor can the student remain indifferent to social and national problems. The university authorities should leave socio-economic and political

(Continued on page 34)

NUCLEAR SCENARIO

The Black Briefcase

A massive movement against nuclear weapons is sweeping the United States now — embracing a wide cross-section of public opinion — a loud and clear echo of the anti-nuclear demonstrations that have rocked Western Europe in recent times. The growing fear that humanity is facing total annihilation is real, and is not without basis. Talk of 'deterrence' — euphemism for escalation of nuclear stockpiling and sophistication by the two superpowers — has ceased to impress anyone. The first-strike syndrome and a slight mistake by the hand on the nuclear trigger — and, "the earth would momentarily flicker back at the distant stars, and then perhaps go out, the very life of the planet extinguished", to quote a grim report in *Time* newsmagazine of America (March 29, 1982).

The report, despite the inevitably distorted view of Soviet intentions vis-a-vis US global purpose, brings out sharply how precariously the world and its peoples are perched at the edge of the nuclear precipice. How much of the responsibility for the current human predicament lies with the USA is clearly brought out. With the present paranoiac President of America on the rampage the danger that faces the human race, as brought out in the *Time* report, is grave.

THE report says that Reagan's retinue constantly includes "a field-grade officer carrying a thick black leather briefcase," "staying near the President everywhere he goes, every moment of the day and night." There are four such officers working in shifts. "They are keepers of the keys to the US arsenal of last resort. Inside the briefcase are 'sealed authenticators', envelopes containing a variety of alphabetical codes called release messages. A series of a dozen or so code words, like TANGO ECHO BRAVO ROMEO NOVEMBER, once transmitted by the President ... to the Pentagon, would constitute an order to fire some combination of the nation's 9,480 strategic warheads, with a cumulative destructive force equivalent to 3,505 megatons (1 megaton = 1 million tons of TNT) at a pre-selected set of targets inside the USSR".

The order for destruction would be relayed, instantly to crews manning ICBMs in underground silos or to the fifteen or so nuclearpowered ballistic missile submarines or to the trategics air command bases, or to all three and other points. The report notes that "Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev does not have a briefcasetoting aide continually at his side. When he leaves the country, war-making authority remains with his comrades in the collective leadership ...:" But, says the report, in the case of the USA it is not as if there are no precautions against possible mistakes. "The procedures for authorising a nuclear attack are designed to involve as many high officials as possible, partly as a safeguard against the danger that any single madman, including a President, could start a war on his own."

The report notes that "compared with the US arsenal, the intercontinental warheads at the Kremlin's disposal are less numerous (8,040) but considerably larger, with more than twice the power of destruction — 7,868 megatons." Understandably, the *Time* report tends to make light of Soviet efforts to get the arms control talks going purposefully, and talks of "highly self-serving, largely spurious proposals for a moratorium on new missiles in Europe."

Fortunately, the report is not all prejudice: "But the blame for the decline in East-West relations does not lie entirely with the Soviets," it says, and adds that "the inconsistency and ineptitude of the Carter Administration made a bad situation worse" and then came "the Reagan Administration....with stubborn, simple-minded prejudices against arms control, unrealistic ambitions for massive rearmament, and a propensity for bellicose rhetoric that has frightened its allies and its own citizens more than it has restrained its adversaries." It refers to numerouss tatements by officials "suggesting a policy shift from the traditional imperative of deterring nuclear war to a new, or at least more explicit, preparedness to wage such a war if necessary." From deterrence to preparedness; and then?

What is happening now is clear in the report. "There is unquestionably a need to improve the nation's defences, but some of the weapons programmes in Reagan's new military budget suggest that the Administration is on a buying binge....This kind of warhead inflation, seemingly far in excess of what the US should need to deter the Soviets, tends to justify the question asked by those who want a weapons freeze: 'How much is enough?' Too often the Administration's answer seems to be simply: 'More, much more, as much as possible'." The difference between the US and Soviet attitudes to the questions of detente and arms reduction and peace — whatever the propaganda aspects—is too obvious to be missed.

"Now the fear of holocaust has taken root in the US, as exemplified in the numerous initiatives of the nuclear-freeze movement. It is as though the spotlight of public attention — and public anxiety —had finally focussed" on the briefcase accompanying the President of the USA all the time. "More intensely and skeptically than before, people are wondering about the briefcase, not so much what it contains as what it represents. Under what circumstances would the President call for it to be unlocked? And what would happen if the codes inside were unsealed and transmitted? And what then? And then?" West Europe, with NATO missiles all over the place, is totally vulnerable in the event of a crazy American President tampering with that briefcase. Is it surprising then that Europeans should have been the first to protest, long before American public opinion realised and became articulate about what Reagan and his fellow-hawks are doing? West Germany's Social Democratic Party leader Erhard Eppler is quoted as saying: "There is the feeling that the US is a greater menace to peace and stability in Europe than the Soviet Union".

After discussing the compulsions — like the proximity of US allies to the Soviet Union and America's own safe distance — that lead to the US Aministration doing everything to seem credible and to convince everyone that its nuclear deterrence is dependable, the *Time* magazine report does not see much ground for confidence that a nuclear war would "follow the scenarios developed by the planners and rehearsed many times by computers....Many fear that the detonation of even one nuclear weapon in a conflict (would lead to) a chain reaction of chaos and cataclysm, warheads flying back and forth with increasing recklessness and ultimately random, total destruction." Nothing can be predicted one way or the other, says the report; and "mirror-image uncertainties apply on the Soviet side."

Of course there are many in the United States, at the top, who would harp on the danger of a Soviet first strike either by design or by miscalculation; there was a reference even to a "nuclear Pearl Harbour". All this is "in keeping with the Reaganauts' generally demonological view of the Soviets". But "Raymond Garthoff, a leading expert on Soviet military strategy, ... believes that the Soviets would consider trying to get the drop on the US with nuclear weapons only if they were convinced that the US was about to reach for its own holster."

That reminds, one of cowboys and of Reagan: what price peace? The *Time* report quotes Harvard University's Michael Mandelbaum, author of a major work on the effect of nuclear weapons on international politics, as saying that "in order to get out of a nuclear war we would have to negotiate. In order to negotiate successfully, the national governments involved would probably have to be intact, and would have to have some means of communicating among themselves and with the other side ... The conclusion to which one comes is that the best way to prevent a holocaust is to prevent any kind of nuclear war in the first place."

Will the groundswell against nuclear warfare have a sobering effect on those closest to the trigger? "The Reaganauts, in their overreaction to the perceived naivete of their Carterite predecessors, have concentrated in their rhetoric and military programmes on war fighting at the expense of deterrence, rearmament at the expense of arms control ... If America's conventional defences were stronger, they would constitute a more credible deterrent ... thereby reducing US reliance on a nuclear last resort.... Some of Reagan's advisers acknowledge, grudgingly, that what they call 'real' arms control is as indispensable to national security as improvements in defence, programmes, since arms control can set rules of the road for both sides and thus lessen the chances of a collision ... The SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) process contributed modestly, marginally, but still significantly to the avoidance of nuclear war. Reagan has in effect suspended that process."

The report ends on a half-hearted optimistic note, expressing the hope that "the volatile human forces at work on the planet earth may be able to maintain their dynamic equilibrium indefinitely" though this would "require ever-increasing wisdom and skilful management, as well as luck." That however leaves the two most crucial questions facing the world unanswered. First, who will take the initiative for maintaining that equilibrium? Second, who will be able to stop the massive waste of resources on weapons of destruction that either cannot be used at all or can be used only to wipe out all life on this planet, at a stage of world development when vast millions are malnourished, poverty-stricken, dying of starvation while rich nations indulge in the luxury of nuclear weapons proliferation and encourage their satellites — Israel, South Africa, Pakistan for example — to manufacture and/or stockpile nuclear weapons?☐ *Press watcher*

CALL OF HIROSHIMA

The setting could hardly have been more appropriate for the purpose: last week, more than 100,000 Japanese converged on Hiroshima, the first city ever subjected to atomic attack, to demand the abolition of all nuclear arms. Even by relatively conservative police estimates, it was the largest anti-nuclear demonstration ever held in Japan. The country's anti-nuclear movement, it seemed, after years of political infighting which greatly weakened its' effectiveness, was determined to make itself heard.

The "1982 Hiroshima for Peace" rally was the culmination of three months of hectic activity by an ad hoc conference formed by Sohyo, Japan's largest labour organisation, the Chifu-Ren, a league of regional women's associations, and some thirteen other groups. The alliance has been waging anti-nuclear campaigns and collecting signatures for an anti-nuclear appeal to be presented to the United Nations disarmament meetings to be held this summer.

The conference has already collected some 10 million signatures, and other groups are forming to help the cause along. Writers, novelists and journalists have organised one "no-nuke" group, while more than 100 musicians ranging from classical composers to jazzmen formed another. The Hiroshima rally called on the US, the Soviet Union and other nuclear powers to end the "production, possession and introduction" of nuclear weapons throughout the world.

While recent anti-nuclear demonstrations in the West have undoubtedly helped stimulate the re-emergence of Japan's no-nuke sentiments, much of the support is coming from people with a seemingly spontaneous anti-nuclear drive. That, in the only nation that has experienced the horror of nuclear warfare, is hardly surprising.

—*Asiaweek*, April 2, 1982.

This is a moving but remarkably restrained appeal by a son to the friends of his father. Tariq Ali, the well-known Left-wing figure in British Politics, has written this about the plight under Pakistan's martial law regime of Mazhar Ali Khan, the renowned editor of the fearless Lahore Weekly, Viewpoint. This is reproduced here from Sunday (March 28-April 3, 1982) as the readers of Mainstream are sure to respond warmly,in defence of this intrepid fighter. He stands like a beacon in a land which has for too long been plunged into darkness but is sure to reach a new dawn of freedom thanks to men and women of the calibre that Mazhar Ali Khan represents.— *Editor*

The General and the Editor

TARIQ ALI

THIS is not an easy thing to write about for it involves a close relation: my father. Knowing him as I do, I know that he will not be happy that I have chosen to go into print. He is a very modest man, dislikes any fuss being created about him and treasures his privacy: So I know that he will be cross, but my patience has run out. I can no longer remain silent. My father's name is Mazhar Ali Khan and he edits a liberal-democratic weekly in Lahore called, *Viewpoint*. He suffered a mild heart attack in 1978 and has not been well since that time. In addition he has been in prison for two brief spells, which did not improve matters. His doctor suggested that he go abroad for heart surgery and he applied for permission to do so in 1979. The martial law authorities dillied and dallied. He applied again and the response was to ask him to submit himself for inspection before an army medical board. He complied. The army doctors were unanimously of the opinion that he should be allowed to travel abroad for an operation. The longer the delay the greater the chance of deterioration. The regime ignored the advice of its own doctors. Permission was not granted. Repeated requests and letters to civil servants, cabinet ministers and the chief martial law administrator himself were, in the main, unanswered. It is now nearly four years since the day that permission was first requested. As many others have been permitted to travel abroad (including active political opponents of the regime) I am beginning to think that the General has embarked on a personal vendetta against the *Viewpoint* editor.

If this is the case then I wonder at the reasons for such a vendetta. *Viewpoint* is vetted every week by the censor, who deletes all passages which are not acceptable. In any event, Mazhar Ali Khan is not the sort of journalist who lards his prose with vituperative personal abuse. That has never been his style. It could be that he is being punished for my political views, but surely a regime so intensively based on a hierarchy of competing intelligence agencies must know that though we are father and son and feel close to each other our political views are very different. Friends sometimes tell me: "You are naive; for that gang you're all the same. You're Reds." This is probably true of the Jamaat-e-Islami, but I cannot believe that military intelligence operatives are as stupid. For one thing they have been trained by people who have been educated in the United States. Philip Agee's expose of the CIA does not reveal a bunch of fools. Knaves, certainly, but not fools. So General Zia must be aware that our politics are not the same. It is true that my father has been a long-standing member of the World Peace Council, the Pak-Soviet Friendship Association and has visited Moscow many times. If Islamabad is worried that he might visit Moscow they could easily be reassured that he will undertake to have the surgery in New York or London. That is all he is interested in at the moment.

My father is now approaching his 66th year. I have not seen him since 1977, though sometimes we talk briefly on the phone. He has not had an intellectually stimulating relationship with military regimes. I recall vividly one morning many years ago in April 1959. My father was then the editor of the *Pakistan Times*, then owned by Mian Iftikharudin and, as *Time* magazine sourly noted, "the best-edited leftwing daily in Asia." The *Pakistan Times* was part of a chain of newspapers (Progressive Papers Limited) and excercised a progressive and enlightened influence on the country. Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi edited the Urdu daily, *Imroze*, and Sibte Hassan the weekly, *Lail-o-Nahar*. But I mustn't digress too much. In October 1958, General Ayub took over Pakistan. His advisers soon reported that all was well, except for the existence of Progressive Papers Ltd. When every other daily had published editorials welcoming martial law, Mazhar Ali Khan had written the main leader on "soil erosion." There was no way in which the *Pakistan Times* was going to welcome a military regime. Which brings me to that pleasant April morning in 1959. It was about 6.30 am and I was getting ready for school, when a large limousine drove up, flying a flag and bearing a cabinet minister. It was Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, Ayub's Minister for Commerce. He asked for my father, was shown in and disappeared into his room. I left for school. When I returned, my mother told me that Bhutto had dropped in out of courtesy to tell my father that the military government was taking over Progressive Papers Ltd. The police had surrounded the offices on Nisbet Road and CID men were removing letters and files. They appeared particularly triumphant when they uncovered a letter from Mr Dula Sarabhai as it had an Indian postmark. The next day the *Pakistan Times* carried an editorial written by a bureaucrat, Qudrutullah Shahab, entitled, "The new leaf." The hack proclaimed that the newspapers had become "strangers in the house" and were the recipients of Moscow gold. The same issue of the newspaper carried a brief report announcing that the editor had resigned. Bhutto and other emissaries of the military regime had persuaded my father to stay as chief editor of all the publications. He had not even considered the idea for a minute before rejecting the offer with contempt. The once proud stable of newspapers became the tame voice of any government in power. Mian Iftikharudin died of a broken heart in 1962. Journalism in Pakistan became a hazardous occupation. "At least prostitutes sell only their bodies," people used to say, "but our journalists have sold their souls."

For the next ten years my father lingered in an intellectual limbo. He missed writing his editorials and he never got over the loss of the *Pakistan Times*. Not that he used to say much, but one could tell. For a brief period during 1972-73, he edited the Karachi daily *Dawn*, but Bhutto (now in command of a truncated Pakistan) was never happy with him. Mazhar Ali Khan argued in *Dawn* for a rapproachement between Bhutto's PPP and the National Awami Party (NAP) of Wali Khan and Bizenjo, Neither side liked him for it, but he was aware that if the PPP and the NAP fell out the beneficiaries would be those who disliked all forms of representative government. He accompanied Bhutto to Simla as editor of *Dawn*. It was his first visit to India since Mahatma Gandhi's funeral and he was delighted to meet old friends. Most of his friends had migrated after partition. Bhutto did not like the fact that my father had so many friends in India. He ensured that his days in the *Dawn* were numbered, but as a concession he allowed him to produce a new weekly, *Viewpoint*. During the Bhutto years *Viewpoint* became a critical, but constructive voice and was read avidly in Islamabad. He opposed Bhutto's execution as vigorously as circumstances allowed, though *Viewpoint* was muffled by an increasingly strict censorship.

I don't know about him, but my patience has run out. Since the military regime has so far ignored all requests from within to allow him to travel for medical treatment, I think the time has come to do all that one can from outside. I hope the editor of SUNDAY will not regard it as misuse of this column if I appeal to many of my father's friends in India and others, to mount a campaign in order to pressurise the regime to allow an old man to travel abroad before it is too late.

Survivors of Genocide in Americas

MARIO DE CAUTIN

SOME 600 million people inhabit the American continents. Thirty million of them are native to this land, survivors of what has been characterised as 'the worst genocide in human history'.

There are few detailed statistics concerning the problems of native peoples in the Americas. Some Latin American countries proudly proclaim their racially mixed heritage but for the most part, there is a general reticence when it comes to racial minorities.

To discuss the situation and needs of indigenous people would open the subject of their annihilation and the expropriation of their lands, not to mention contemporary racial discrimination and cultural subjugation.

It would also be difficult to do more than estimate the native population of four and a half centuries ago, when the European conquerors began to arrive.

The Europeans came first to Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, later to South America and finally to North America.

Archeologists today are astounded by the accomplishments of, for example, the Maya people of Southern Mexico and Northern Central America in the fields of architecture, mathematics, astronomy, irrigation, etc.

In what is now the valley of Mexico, home of one of the largest metropolises of the modern world, the Aztec people lived before Colombus came. They maintained a high order of social organisation and were masters of metal working, jewelry and trade.

The Inca civilisation of what is now the countries of Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and part of Chile built 5,000 kilometres of highways seven metres wide which were better and longer-lasting than those built in Europe a century later.

During the conquest and colonisation of America, native people were hung as 'heretics', worked in Mexican and South American silver mines until they died, and in North America they were simply massacred in large numbers and steadily backed into the most remote and often least desirable land. But, virulent European diseases, to which the native Americans had no immunity and for which they had no medicine, took the largest toll.

There were at least 13 million native Americans in what is now the United States and Canada when the white man came. Now there are about a million left in the United States and 175,000 in Canada. The Mapuche people of Chile were never fully conquered, although they are now beginning to mix with the European descendants. Of the over one million native people in Chile, there are some 450,000 left. In Brazil, native people today are legally considered as 'minors', and they can take no part in legal or contractual proceedings without being represented by a government-approved counsel. Four centuries ago, there were at least a million native people in Brazil, today there are scarcely 150,000, most of them hidden deep in the Amazon. The United Nations Human Rights Commission in 1979 admonished Brazil for the frequent massacres of indigenous people carried out by plantation owners' private armies and government forces.

In the past the usual reasons for killing the natives were gold, silver and fertile land. Now most of the gold and silver is gone, but on reservations set aside for indigenous people, if the land is fertile it must be fought for. Today, uranium, oil, copper and lumber are frequently the background of clashes between native people and business or state interests. The seventh US cavalry massacred almost a whole tribe of Sioux people at Wounded Knee, South Dakota in 1980. Gold was at stake then. In 1980, the US army returned to Wounded Knee, again to attack the Sioux people, this time over uranium in South Dakota's Black Hills.

The Auca people of the Ecuadorean Amazon area were forced off their land when a Texaco-Gulf consortium discovered oil there. The land of the Campa people in the Peruvian Amazon is now being sold off in lots to European descendants, after the Campas were chased away.

When gold and tin were discovered in the Uraricaa valley, on the border between Venezuela and Brazil, the Yanomami people began to die from bubonic plague and food poisoning; both, say investigators, the result of chemicals sprayed from helicopters by the white men.

Of the 15,000 Nambiquara people living in the Brazilian Mato Grosso forests at the turn of the century, only 200 survive today. Reports in the 1960's indicated that 'someone' had dropped candy bars from planes into Nambiquara lands. Once the native people had decided the candy was safe to eat, the planes began to drop poisoned candy bars to them.

Quiche Maya people went to Mexico last year to testify at the Bertrand Russell Tribunal, where they would only appear with their faces covered. The jails of neighbouring Guatemala, where they live are filled with Quiches, they explained. Sixty per cent of Guatemala's population are indigenous people. According to the Quiches' testimony, the Guatemalan army has begun regularly to raid their communities 'in search of guerrilas'. The real reason, the Quiche people say, is that they live on top of the largest oil deposit in Central America. Since its discovery, the Quiches have been interminably harassed, they testified.

In Bolivia, where 3.3 million Quechua and Aymara people make up 60 per cent of the population, tin is the backbone of the nation's economy, and almost all the miners are indigenous people. The mines are the focus of civilian opposition to the military government and consequently the focus of government repression. The Ayamara and Quechua people live high in the mountains, and the mines are at a high altitude as well. A frequent punishment for native people who have transgressed the white man's law is banishment to the tropical lowlands of Eastern Bolivia. Physically unaccustomed to living in the lowlands, the highland people contract pneumonia and other respiratory ailments, often dying in that unfamiliar land.

But there are still 30 million native people in the western hemisphere, five per cent of the population. In five Latin American countries, they are the majority: Guatemala, Bolivia, Paraguay, Peru, and Ecuador.

In Mexico there are some seven million Nahuatls (descendants of the Aztecs), Mayas, Otomies, Zapotecs, Mixtecs, Tzoltziles and other native peoples. In Venezuela, a million. In Honduras, over 350,000, and an undetermined number in other Central American countries. In Argentina, there are a few indigenous people in the North and East. In Uruguay, the indigenous people were either wiped out or assimilated into the mainstream society.

But this genocide was not carried out without cost to the dominant culture. The revolts led by Lautaro (Mapuche), Caupolican (Araucanian), Tupac Amaru (Inca), Cuahutemoc (Aztec), Hatuey, Sitting Bull, Geronimo and Red Cloud from the United States plains region, Wovoka, Cajeme and countless others are a symbol of native Americans' continuing resistance.

As the Russell Tribunal said in its final statement, 'the Indians of America confront the machinery of economic exploitation and cultural castration with the civilising message of an ancient, unvanquished people'. — *IPS Feature*

Indian Business Community and Capitalism

V.I. PAVLOV

THE Indian business community came to be predominantly composed of the traditional business sections — Marwaris, Chettiars, Gujaratis and others. Colonialism hampered and retarded the development of capitalism in India, but could not stop it entirely. During the First World War, when imports from Europe dried up, the Indian business community got an opportunity to make money. However, after the war they found few avenues for investment. This led to a sharpening of the contradiction between the Indian bourgeoisie and imperialism and to the eventual transformation of the business bourgeoisie into the national bourgeoisie.

The transformation of the business bourgeoisie into the national bourgeoisie during India's freedom struggle gave it a representative character as also an identification with the whole country. Therefore the imperative impulses for the evolution of a capitalist bourgeoisie were removed or at any rate moderated, and the need was not felt to transform the traditional world-view, behavioural norms and moral values. In any case, the creative potentialities of class self-creation are fully developed only when the bourgeoisie participates in administering a sovereign state. This is also necessary for establishing contacts with the external environment.

In Western societies, colonial expansion and protection at home accelerated the development of capitalism and the upper strata of bourgeoisie and brought to them higher culture, social and national horizons, hierarchical claims and prestige. The Indian business bourgeoisie skipped the pre-bourgeois stage, but limitation of sovereignty retarded the process of its growth, especially in universalising itself.

One of the results of the European advent in India was the destruction of the traditional unity of "production - distribution-exchange - consumption". This happened due to the introduction of foreign capital into all four spheres. However, even before the advent of the British, the Indian social system was under heavy strain, for, unlike Europe, India (and most of the East) produced more of the economically parasitic class.

Development of Indian feudalism was interrupted by the colonial conquest at the early stages of its historical formation and the confrontation of the feudal and peasant elements did not take place on a radical basis, with sharp divisions. The caste system too not only did not substitute the estate structure but was historically opposed to it. Without breaking down the caste system and overcoming caste pluralism in the religious consciousness of the Hindus an estate society of mature feudalism could not form, and what is more, the business community could not transform itself into proto-bourgeoisie class. The traditional city as it existed in the West, did not exist in India — that could have provided a favourable medium for the formation of the bourgeoisie. Religious separation undermined national and state unity and impaired the consolidation of business sections. When class delimitation appeared later it could not overcome religious, communal, caste, ethnic and other archaic barriers.

Technology became the object of wide trade relations between town and countryside in Europe, but not in the East. Up to the 18th-19th centuries the wealthy strata of Asian society had no need for orderly and precise measuring of time, a precondition for the capitalist mode of production.

Long existence of business communities in mediaeval feudal societies is itself a phenomenon common to both East and West. Even in Western Europe, when merchant capital claimed relatively greater independence, the merchant, as Engels put it, "did not act as a conscious revolutionary but, on the contrary, as the flesh and blood of this world. A mediaeval merchant was by no means an individualist, he was in essence a community member, like all his contemporaries." Thus European merchant community had to go through the revolutionary stage in the *group aspect* and the stage of associative communalism in the *personal aspect* to come on to the "launching pad" of the bourgeois.

Reflecting on the role of the Reformation in recapturing the mass consciousness of the people of Europe, one can say that Indian reforms merely created philosophical systems without capturing the consciousness of the masses. The only exception was Sikhism. Others created religious and philosophical schools or educational trends of the elite without capturing the consciousness of the masses. But even Sikhism did not have a consistent anti-feudal programme, while the European Reformation was fully anti-feudal, paving the way for bourgeois culture. In fact, what developed in India were conservative trends of religious reformism in the bourgeois nationalist movements. Another reason for retardation in the development of the bourgeois class in India was lack of national consciousness.

An important precondition for social consciousness is the separation from theology of ideological forms such as jurisprudence, philosophy and politics which were joined to it at the early stage of feudalism (as in Europe) or were not separated from it at all (as in Asia). Concepts like "God's judgement" are examples of these prevalent feudal forms. The singling out of jurisprudence from theology as an independent branch of mundane science was of

Prof. Pavlov of Moscow University is a well-known Indologist who has done pioneering work on the genesis of capitalist development in India. This contribution is a summary of the paper he presented at a seminar organised by the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. (March 4-7, 1982).

great importance also because it influenced both the elite and the common people. Civil legal proceedings caused considerable changes in the system of behavioural norms and evaluations — the emergence of a system which would be parallel to the religious-ethical system. The pre-colonial East experienced nothing of the kind.

With the establishment of the British administration in India, the norms of British law and legal proceedings began gradually to be applied. But up to the end of British rule they failed to become universal or systematic either in practice or, what is most important, in the consciousness of society in which a reformed religious, or even more, a secular world outlook had not become predominant. A sort of dualism formed in the legal being and consciousness of the common man: on the one hand, institutions of family, caste, clan, village or business community sanctified by religion, and on the other, norms of the bourgeois secular law in property, business dealings, etc.

If we include the history of the Indian bourgeoisie in the general historical framework of the ascendancy of the capitalist class, we have to single out three or four independent stages of this process:

First stage: Features of the pre-class existence of the Indian bourgeoisie as a totality of business communities; at this stage there were both general and particular features of its social being. In my opinion, the social status of some groups of European bankers, merchants and even artisans in the 11th-16th centuries was close to the status of the Indian mediaeval business community in such an indicator as ethnic or religious estrangement. The European business community was as opposed to a merger with the social environment as the Indian communities and castes were. However, by the Middle Ages the process of absorption and assimilation of the ethnic business groups of Europe by the surrounding feudal structure had begun. In India no similar process can be observed.

Second stage: The Indian boureoisie's pre-class existence was not marked by the convergence and merger of proto-bourgeois communities, groups and sections into a citizen's proto-bourgeois class-social estate with its special rights, privileges and normatives; the dialectics of this process lay in a simultaneous formation of individualistic consciousness of a bourgeois personality and its awarenese of membership of an estate-class and nation-wide unity, which was coming to replace communal isolation and seclusion. Understandably in Western Europe these processes of consolidation of the proto-bourgeoisie into a class-social estate ran against the adherence of some of its groups to local and corporative privileges. In any case, in the sovereign absolutist states of Europe the first elements of the bourgeoisie, consolidating on the basis of expanding capitalist production, united in national business estates, the initial material for forming the bourgeoisie as a class.

Third and concluding stage: Formation of the bourgeoisie as a class presupposes, in its classical variant, its full and comprehensive experience of the two preceding stages and especially consolidation as a class-social estate of late feudal society. Full or partial skipping of this important process resulted in the bourgeoisie appearing without completing its "gestation period" with some functional capacities, both individual and group, impaired. Such inadequacies marked, for instance, the "late" bourgeoisie of Russia and Japan, which had not accumulated historical experience and culture at the stage of class-estate.

Thus, even in today's India the process of maturing and consolidation of the national bourgeoisie is not complete in several important respects, above all in the socio-psychological and world-view ones. India's historical development provides further confirmation of the fact that capitalist production is the initial premise but not the final condition for business groups being transformed into the dominant class. This process can be complete only when a systematic and comprehensive character is acquired encompassing not only economic, but also institutional, world-view, legal, behavioural and cultural shifts.

Such shifts have taken place in history when the bourgeoisie had to advance from its midst or attract to its side greater thinkers, reformist heretics; artists and writers, military commanders and administrators, martyrs and heroes, in order to accomplish the historical process. ☐

Heikal's View of Arab World

(Continued from page 6)

like the one they did when some people took over the Grand Mosque in Mecca, what would the Americans do? Lend their troops to fight in Mecca? Supposing something similar happened in Riyadh, what could the Americans do then? Go and occupy Saudi Arabia?

But all the oil is in Hasa province, in a small area. The Americans could easily occupy it.

Why should the Americans move in if they are already there — as the employees of Vinnell Corporation which has security contracts with the Saudis, there are already about 12,000 armed in the oil region. They are there, and the oil wells are well protected. I don't think the danger lies in the oil-producing area; it lies in the cities with large populations: Riyadh, Jeddah.

Does the recent signing of bilateral security agreements between Saudi Arabia and its neighbours signify fresh awareness by the rulers of internal threats to their regimes?

Yes. The stress in the Gulf cooperation concept is on domestic matters. One of them is about the movement of nomadic tribes, the problem of passports and identity cards. The other is about contraband, smuggling. But the most important problem is internal security. The only external factor in the cooperation concept is the wish to try to unify arms purchases. In this don't think the Gulf rulers will succeed. There are lots of personal interests and international interests involved. In this sphere there are elements of conflict and coordination.

Is the Fahd peace plan dead and buried, or is it likely to be revived?

I think the Fahd peace plan may be — can be — revived after April. What happens from now until April 26 is important. The shape of things to come after that day is being moulded now. I think Israel will try until the last moment to make it impossible for Egypt to return to the Arab fold, so that Egypt would be left to deal only with Israel on the basis of a long-cherised Israeli proposition.

What is that?

To divide up the spheres of influence: Egypt can do what it likes in the African Middle East while Israel will do what it likes in the Asian Middle East. The most dangerous period is up to April 26, not afterwards. I know that Mubarak is not going to change after April 26 what he signs with Israel before that date. I don't know what's going to happen.

Seven weeks is a long time.

So many things can happen. After all, the decision to annex the Golan Heights was taken by the Israeli Cabinet in one hour.

How do you see the position of Syria today?

Syria is in the most important strategic position in the arc around Israel. There is no doubt about that. Yet one is left wondering about the Syrian policies. For example, I didn't understand why the Syrians did not go to Fez. The Israelis were not going to accept the Fahd plan. It was difficult to see even the Americans accepting it. Yet it was a very important chance for the Arab world to put the Saudis in charge of the plan they had themselves produced.

Some people argue that the Syrians are being made to pay for their refusal to attend the Fez summit.

No. I don't think so. To understand what is happening in Syria today one has to go to the roots, to the nature of some elements in the regime. Nonetheless it is the duty of every Arab to try to protect Syria, because it is in a most important position now. It is really heart-breaking to see that Syria's internal politics are not making it easy for all the Arabs to rally round Syria. The regime in Damascus should try to expand its communications with the rest of the Arab countries and with all the elements in the Arab world.

It seems the Americans want to destroy the Assad regime.

Correct. But if the Syrian regime feels that, it should not (inadvertently) help the American designs. If it thinks (rightly, in my view) that it is the cornerstone of resistance to Israel, then it should not allow itself to be isolated — either internally or on the Arab front.

Before the Fez summit there were reports that Yasser Arafat was carrying messages between Moscow and Riyadh. Do you think diplomatic dialogue is continuing between these capitals, and is it likely to lead to formal relations being established in the near future?

To be frank, I don't accept at face value the Saudi declaration that they don't want relations with an athiest regime — because the Soviet Union was the first country to establish relations with Saudi Arabia in 1926. Saudi Arabia accepted aid from Stalin. The Saudis got money and wheat from the Soviet Union. They sent an official delegation headed by Prince Faisal (later to become king) to Moscow in 1932. But I must confess that I don't understand exactly what is their point of view in this matter.

Could it be that the Saudis raise the possibility of relations with Moscow to put pressure on America and the West?

That won't do. It's time the Saudis realised that they have got power. They need not blackmail the Americans nor be blackmailed by them. If only they would exercise their will and build their bases well inside their country, there would be no need to threaten the Americans with relations with Moscow. In any case, the Americans know very well the limits of the Saudi regime.

The Saudis have more power than they imagine, and yet they are not choosing to exercise it. Maybe they used it once, during the October 1973 war. That was a practical effort along with the rest of Arab world. Maybe, with the Fahd initiative. That was a political attempt too. I think at Fez the Saudis could have induced the Syrians to go. But there was somehow not enough persistence on the part of the Saudis.

Doesn't the prime weakness of the Saudi royal family in its lack of experience in statecraft?

I think first of all you should have a concept. A country is not a concept. A country like Saudi Arabia should have a strategy and a concept, even one based on simple geography. It is a pity to see Saudi Arabia flounder without a concept, waste its natural resources, allow itself for several reasons to be blackmailed, and feel inhibited from exercising its power and fulfilling its role.

We are living in a Saudi era in so far as revolutionary ideas are receding in the Arab World, and in their place is advancing the petro-dollar. Yet Saudi Arabia is unable to play its role in an era which is Saudi by definition.

But petrodollars are no substitute for the kind of history and experience in statecraft that countries like Egypt possess.

Given its financial resources, Saudi Arabia can mobilise practically the whole Arab world. I think many Arabs loyal to the Arab national cause would be ready to give what they have to Saudi Arabia if they know that by so doing they have a chance of protecting and preserving the Arab national dream. We Arabs are going through a difficult period: the Arab nation is now forced to entrench itself inside a foxhole. The Saudis ought to be asked to protect the Arab nation while it is in this state.

Now that President Mubarak has opened certain doors at home and abroad, is there a possibility of rapprochement between Egypt and Libya?

I hope so. Libya is a neighbour. It has a regime which was in line with the Egyptian experience and thought. The inspiration of the Libyan people was Nasser. It was a pity to see misunderstanding arise between Egypt and Libya and lead to that unnecessary clash in July 1977. Unfortunately I have not seen Qaddafi since 1973; I haven't been to Libya since then. I wish and pray that relations between the two countries return to normal.

For Qaddafi, Nasser was the hero.

Obviously. ▫

Sahitya Akademi

(from p. 4)

subsidised rates by the Akademi are sold in its regional offices and in the show-rooms of some publishers who condescend to sell them for the paltry commission that the Akademi is in a position to offer. There can be no two opinions about the high quality of these publications but for them to secure a place in popular places like the railway platform is well-nigh impossible, what with oppressively high rentals and the reluctance of established book-vendors to accord these unprofitable books a place among the fast-moving glossies. However hard the Akademi may try, it cannot act as an independent entity unless the state has a cogent cultural policy. □

Locating Roots of Corruption

(from page 14)

is not recognised that this transformation into contributions for one's welfare is not, beyond a certain point, meant to satisfy one's own creature comforts or for fulfilling one's industrial and/or commercial empire-building aspirations. Not that there are no instances of successful or unsuccessful attempts of the latter type. But basically, a politician remains one throughout and with this money converts himself into a political entrepreneur.

The returns the political entrepreneur obtains have to come, of necessity, from businessmen and private economic entrepreneurs. Even if indirect elections and a political Chief Executive independent for his tenure of the mercies of the electoral college, do not have heavy and pressing need for political uses for money and wealth, will the need of the large industrial, trading agricultural and service sector entrepreneurs and businessmen to twist and turn economic and social regulations cease to exist? If they remain intact, will they not find ways of worming into the system and help initiate processes of perversion of the 'reformed' political system?

To say that "not even the most powerful leader can stop the advance of corruption" after describing in detail the new "demonatic culture" of money power as the basis of all political power appears incongruous. The power of the most powerful is not independent of the system which is presided over. Hence it will not do to point out the inability of the most powerful to stop the advance of the system which has produced this power.

To win elections in an indirect electoral college, money power can be and has been used with far greater effectiveness and more frequently. Not only the stories of tycoons getting into Upper Chambers, but the experience of indirect elections of zila parishad chiefs and panchayat samiti pradhans is well known. Even at such an innocuous level as elections of the Delhi University Students' union, it is well known how the system of indirect elections led to wild abuses of plutocracy.

Corruption is a phenomenon of the political economy. Business seeks returns which are feasible and attractive. So long as ways are not found to curb this fundamental trait, constitutional and narrowly political moves cannot go far. What Bagehot said of the late 19th century British businessmen is no less true of India of today: "The English capital runs as surely and instantly where it is most wanted, and where there is most to be made of it, as water runs to find its level." Either one has to give up the hope of combining social goals with private enterprise, or one has to organise, articulate, mobilise and radicalise the masses in order to intervene for their rights.

An indirect, presidential form of governance cannot give rise to such radical, mass politics. On the contrary, it is more likely to lead to palace politics; it would make politics all the more exclusive and elitist. But radical mass politics will change the form, content and modus operandi of the arena in which the 'large political contributors' — local or alien — operate more directly, and clip their wings. Naturally, the present political structure cannot be left untouched and it has to be modified. But I am afraid not the BKN way — at least not in its essentials.

The roots of corruption are embedded in the political economy of betting on the strong with a view, paradoxically, to benefit the masses and build up an independent, national economy. These roots can also be found in purely electoral politics which demobilises the masses. They can also be seen in a culture which debunks traditionality in the pursuit of imitative modernity and piles up layers upon layers of false consciousness. One ends reading the well-thought out account of B.K. Nehru with a feeling that the battle for a truer consciousness has to be fought on many fronts. □

Higher Education

(*Contd. from 26*)

agitations to be dealt with by the Governments at the political level. They should not become partisan.

But it is difficult to prevent the spread of university education so long as university degrees remain a passport for easy and better paid white-collar jobs, and a status symbol for the class which has grown since Independence and which is politically powerful. Backward regions will also continue to demand more and better facilities nearer home: this demand cannot be considered unjust.

Problems which face the universities are not unknown, particularly to those who are in control of the system at higher levels. Commissions have gone into them and have produced voluminous reports making elaborate recommendations for improvement, but barring some marginal changes nothing tangible has been done to overcome the colonial features of the system, namely, looking to the West for guidance, copying of their syllabi, use of foreign medium, borrowing text-books, communication of only the existing fund of knowledge and not adding to it for the benefit of society, and following a wrong system of examination which reinforces the present system of education. Attempts at overhauling the system face resistance from vested interests. The tensions which the system generates are attributed wrongly to autonomy and democracy in the universities which have been seriously curtailed. But only a radical change in the system can ensure standards and stability in the campuses. □

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Should India Go Nuclear ?

Mainstream

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Gilbert & Sullivan in Town

A Gilbert & Sullivan opera is always an enjoyable treat, but when politics resembles one, it becomes rather disconcerting for the future of the country.

The Maneka affair has become a first-class issue, and there is no sign of Indira Gandhi's aides playing it down: rather every move from the Prime Minister's camp brings grist to her truculent daughter-in-law's mill. Right from the beginning of this unseemly controversy, the Indira camp has been behaving in a manner which hardly enhances her stature: if anything it has helped to provide the widest possible publicity for Sanjay Gandhi's widow.

The entire controversy has shown up that the Prime Minister's establishment prefers to wallow in the trivialities of a family squabble instead of keeping out of it. That the mother-in-law's letter addressed to the daughter-in-law should find its way to the press through the official channel bears testimony to the fact that ridiculous, personal issues are being treated on par with affairs of state. The resort to the so-called "informed sources" to sell a story to rebut Maneka through the UNI has only boomeranged, because it was not difficult for any observer in the Capital to identify these "informed sources", while it has strengthened the suspicion that the Prime Minister's side is not averse to playing this game of mutual mudslinging, projecting domestic bickerings into the political arena. It has become an ugly squabble in which Indira Gandhi's establishment has been shown up as being no better — nor more dignified — than Maneka Gandhi's backers.

This episode has brought out that instead of egg-heads and think-tanks, Indira Gandhi's present establishment is composed of third-class footmen. What has come to replace the Sanjay mafia is a bunch of good-for-nothing busybodies for whom politics is nothing more than an endless series of pettifogging intrigues. Amidst all this sits the Prime Minister's eldest son, fondly meant by his mother to be groomed for leadership, but is found, from week to week, as being eminently eligible to be entitled Unready.

The Prime Minister's Secretariat has long

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in this issue

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COMMUNICATION

ceased to be the hub of governmental and political activities. Today, its two major preoccupations are how to deal with Maneka, and, how to enable the Congress-I to fight the coming poll in the four States of Kerala, West Bengal, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. From the Principal Secretary downward, they all seem to be het up over Maneka Gandhi's movements and the spectre of Opposition ganging up for the election.

A pathetic spectacle of an emasculated establishment.

Can any country be governed in this fashion? Policy issues are shelved except for occasional dusting. Major decisions are deferred, crucial appointments are delayed for months: there has been delay even in naming the nominated members for the Rajya Sabha, as if this is a back-breaking exercise. If the Government has not yet cracked up, it is mainly due to the fact that the civil servants run it on their own momentum.

If the Maneka episode has shown up the shocking weakness of the Indira establishment, the Opposition is in no better state. The devaluation and fragmentation of political parties continue. The latest to crack up is the Lok Dal. Its President, Chaudhry Charan Singh has announced his retirement but this has come only when he has been faced with the virtual revolt of his two State-level satraps, Devilal of Haryana and Biju Patnaik of Orissa. What is intriguing is that the Chaudhry has made it clear that he is retiring only from "active politics" leaving the door open for speculations and alluring offers. One story is that he may have established his hot line with Indira Gandhi to try for the Presidential election later in the summer. After all, it was the Congress-I support in 1979 which had enabled him to become the Prime Minister, however short-lived the tenure might have been.

With elections to four State Assemblies only six weeks hence, neither the Congress-I nor the Opposition presents a picture of bouncing self-confidence. The measure of the Congress-I morale could be gauged from the UP Ministry's scandalous suggestion that the Garhwal Lok Sabha poll — where the Congress-I has to face Bahuguna — be deferred till December, a suggestion which has fortunately been vetoed by the Chief Election Commissioner.

While it is generally taken for granted that CPI-M with its allies would come back with a stable majority in West Bengal, no such hope is discernible in the Left camp about the likely outcome of the Kerala poll. In Haryana and Himachal, the tug-of-war will be between the Congress-I on one side and the projected three-party unity (comprising Janata, Congress-S and the Devi Lal-Biju Patnaik contingent of Lok Dal) which is expected to emerge after their joint rally on April 15. If this three-in-one Opposition conglomerate actually emerges, it will no doubt be a formidable challenge for Indira Gandhi's party. However, there can be no certainty of such an Opposition unity until it actually materialises, because the Indira establishment is known for its infinite capacity at keeping its opponents apart: it has its conduits in practically every party.

It is worth noting that there is no overture from the three-party unity sponsors to BJP which claims to be emerging as the national alternative to the Congress-I. With all the sophistication at his command, Vajpayee could not but feel the isolation of his party from the mainstream of the Opposition. From all this move for Opposition unity, the Communists have kept away. Despite CPM's exchange of polemics with CPI on the question of BJP's role, there is no perceptible move for any open electoral understanding between CPM and BJP.

All this however does not mean that BJP is kept in the cold throughout: the Rajya Sabha polls have shown that the Opposition parties were having quiet adjustments and understanding not only with BJP but at places even with the Congress-I; and this is true as much of the Left as of the Centre and the Right. The logic of election politics is inexorable.

Meanwhile, a comic-opera situation is developing in Punjab. While Indira Gandhi is having rounds of plainspeaking with the Akali leaders, her Home Minister has no compunction in placating the more menacing Akali leader, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, whose blessings for the separatist Khalistan move led to a veritable storm in Punjab politics. The Punjab Chief Minister Darbara Singh has not hesitated to condemn Bhindranwale's depredations as "criminal", but Gyani Zail Singh was reported to have touched Bhindranwale's feet during his last visit to the Capital. During his current visit, Bhindranwale's followers are claiming to have established rapport with the Congress-I. Whether this is correct or no, his militant followers have been found to be roaming the streets with unlicensed firearms without being touched by the police which in this Union Territory of Delhi is directly under the charge of the Gyani as the Home Minister of India.

A disconcertingly Gilbertian scenario.

N.C.

April 7

FOCUS

Opposition Unity Moves

ANALYST

THE move for unity of non-Communist Opposition parties minus Charan Singh and the BJP has been initiated, in the immediate context of the forthcoming Assembly elections in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh.

A number of leaders of the Janata Party, Congress-S and Lok Dal dissidents met at breakfast at Janata Party General Secretary Ramkrishna Hegde's residence on April 6, to work out a common strategy. They decided to hold a joint convention in Chandigarh on April 15 and 16.

This move was primarily initiated at the instance of Janata leaders and Lok Dal dissidents. The understanding was that no Opposition unity could be brought about without a split in the Lok Dal. This in essence means that no such unity is possible as long as Charan Singh is is at the head of the Lok Dal; neither Janata nor Congress-S is prepared to accept Charan's control over a united party.

The dimension of the split in the Lok Dal is not clear at the time these lines are being written, for the weight of the dissident Lok Dal leaders like Devi Lal, in Haryana and Kanwar Durga Chand in Himachal has never been tested among the Jats and other backward caste peasantry.

Moreover, nobody believes that Charan Singh would long stick to his declaration of retiring from active politics. It appears that he would allow the pressure to be built on him to lead the Lok Dal, and then rescind his declaration. But, the fact that a Jat leader Devi Lal is openly challenging Charan Singh in the Jat belt assumes significance. This is bound to influence the type of electoral combination Charan Singh has been trying to build for Haryana elections. Charan Singh has been for an understanding with the BJP on one side and Jagjivan Ram on the other.

The BJP has been anxious to have rapprochement with Charan Singh. On the other hand, keeping in view the friction between Charan Singh and Devilal, BJP has also been trying to keep Devi Lal on the right side. Haryana BJP leader Mangal Sen negotiated with Devi Lal while Vajpayee at the central level kept contact with Charan Singh. Immediately after Charan Singh's announcement that he would retire from politics, Delhi BJP leaders Vijay Kumar Malhotra met Charan Singh to persuade him not to retire from politics. A tentative understanding was reported to have been reached between the BJP and Lok Dal leaders that in Haryana the BJP would contest 25 seats. This understanding was reached by keeping both the Janata Party and Congress-S out of the picture.

The split in the Lok Dal and three-party decision to hold a joint covention at Chandigarh would create a new situation, if their present plans go through successfully.

First, Charan Singh-Jagjivan Ram accord will be under added strain. Secondly, the BJP will have to choose between the three-party combination and Charan Singh's Lok Dal and will not be able to quietly negotiate with both Charan Singh and Devi Lal separately. Thirdly, this sudden development, just on the eve of the announcement of the election schedule would create confusion in Opposition ranks.

This development has also to be seen in the light of the fact that the Janata Party and the BJP have been at loggerheads in Karnataka and Gujarat — the two important States of Janata's influence. The BJP had outwitted the Janata in Gujarat Assembly byelections last year. The Rajya Sabha biennial elections have created further estrangement between the two parties. The Janata leaders privately accuse the BJP of having deliberately defeated the Janata candidate Indubhai Patel in Rajya Sabha election from Gujarat, and Janata leaders saw to it that the BJP leader Sunder Singh Bhandari was defeated in the Rajya Sabha biennial election from Rajasthan. It is also a fact that the RSS-wing of the BJP is unhappy with the Janata Party as well as the Congress-S because of the anti-RSS stance of some of their leaders.

In this context, the BJP is likely to go further close to the Lok Dal split; Charan Singh would be more amenable to accept BJP conditions. The Janata Party and dissident Lok Dal leaders are all for merger. This is putting Sharad Pawar in a quandary.

In the April 6 meeting, all leaders agreed to contest the forthcoming Assembly elections on a common symbol. With Charan Singh staying out, the Lok Dal Symbol will now not be available. The Congress-S symbol will be of no use in Haryana and Himachal, for it has no base. Adoption of Janata's election symbol is the only feasible proposition. This would mean merger of identities in practice even if a formal decision is not taken to merge.

The immediate problem facing Pawar, therefore, is what the Congress-S would do in Kerala and West Bengal. Neither Unnikrishnan of Kerala nor Priya Ranjan Das Munshi of West Bengal favour merger with Janata and Lok Dal. (*April 6*).

Next Week

Articles commenting on Report of the Press Commission just released.

Reagan and Third World: Blinkered View

M. SHANKAR

Two ideological streams combine to make up the wellspring of the Weltanschauung of Reagan's America—(i) a commitment to 'the mystique of the free market' and (ii) a global anti-Sovietism, derivative of the primitive anti-communism that imbued American politics at the time when Reagan was cutting his political teeth on Hollywood unions. The validity or logical consistency of the two ideological categories is not our concern here. Flawed they may be, but they determine how the present administration shapes its domestic and foreign policies.

Internally, Reagan's avowed commitment to minimising government, the alacrity with which he has dismantled the social welfare apparatus to balance the budget, his tax cuts to stimulate growth — in short, the combination of monetarism and supply-side economics—are based, as Galbraith has pointed out, on a vision of the pristine market unsullied by corporate manipulation. And in foreign affairs, Reagan's panacea of restoring American superiority and dealing with the Soviets from a position of strength presumes that the growth of Soviet power accounts for the relative shrinkage of American power: if America can turn back the tide of Soviet power, unquestioned global primacy would be America's. That the world is no longer bipolar, politically or economically, is forgotten. In American perception, the world exists for the two superpowers. The other countries are merely a theatre for the contest between the two giants and all developments are read in black and white: they are either a gain for America and loss for the Soviet Union or vice versa.

This wellspring of current American ideology — a simple belief in free market and anti-Sovietism — expectedly circumscribes its world outlook. Impinging on this, more specifically in the context of America in international institutions since the mid-sixties, is the growth of what a truculent Moynihan described as the "brute majority". The growing UN membership — concomitant of hastened decolonisation — has made it increasingly difficult for the United States to presume UN support for its policies. Add to this Third-World attempts to use the UN and its agencies as forums to articulate demands for fundamental restructuring of the global system, and the picture of an America chafing under the new conditions is complete. Tension is bound to occur when a global system intended to subserve American interests is sought by the majority to be remoulded and made more responsive to their concerns.

Between the fifties and end-seventies, for example, America has clearly lost out to the world. Fifty per cent of the world's financial reserves, two-thirds of the world industrial output and 50 per cent of world military spending were America's in 1950. Politically, leaving aside a few non-aligned countries such as India, Egypt, Yugoslavia, Indonesia and Burma and of course the Soviet bloc and China the rest of the world was unmistakably with the West. The Nato, Cento, Seato and Anzus pacts embraced Europe, Asia and Australia; the Rio Pact and OAS covered South America. Africa was yet to be decolonised from western control. No wonder that the US could muster an overwhelming majority in the United Nations and could gain international legitimacy for its policies — the uniting-for-peace resolution on Korea, stationing of the Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan Straits, denying China a seat in the UN, landing troops in Lebanon and preventing Soviet intervention in the Congo crisis.

Compare this with the picture in the end-seventies, when the USA accounted for less than seven per cent of the world's monetary reserves, less than one-third of the global industrial output and only 25 per cent of world military spending. The pacts to contain communism in Asia — Seato and Cento — had collapsed and most of the Asian and African countries, choosing not to align themselves with either superpower, had joined the non-aligned movement whose ranks had swelled to over 90. Closer home, Latin America witnessed the birth of radical movements in response to socio-economic conditions as well as the espousal of non-alignment by some countries there.

The shift of the majority in the United Nations, decisively, was in favour of developing nations. The increasing US impatience with this change found expression in Moynihan's petulant accusations of anti-Americanism and in threats of a return to Fortress America. The dominant mood was self-righteous indignation — if the UN could brush aside American sensitivities then America had no use for the UN. For a while, the tone changed somewhat under Carter, and his representative at the UN, Andrew Young, symbolised (while he lasted) America's attempt to come to terms with Third World nationalism. But this experiment proved shortlived and towards the end of his tenure Carter himself increasingly gave short shrift to the liberal stance initially projected by his administration. Under Reagan the pendulum has completed its swing away from the global humanitarianism espoused by Carter, albeit tentatively and for a brief while. "Hard-nosed pragmatism" rates much higher and America's representative today, Jeane Kirk-

The author is a Research Fellow at the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi. This contribution is reproduced from *World Focus*, Monthly Discussion Journal, (Editor: Hari Sharan Chhabra) No 26 (February 1982), on the theme, "One Year of Reagan".

patrick, is a professor of politics, a Democrat turned latter-day conservative with an avowed preference for authoritarian (read right-wing, anti-communist) regimes to totalitarian (read left-wing) ones.

CIRCUMSPECTION is a stranger to American policy, more so to the current administration. A deliberate choice has been made to project a more "muscular" international profile; a brazen insensitivity to Third World concerns is its badge of honour, amply displayed in its stand on baby foods. At the 33rd and 34th World Health Assemblies in May 1981, agreement was reached on adopting a code relating to the sale of baby foods. The code was non-binding but merely recommended, inter alia, a ban on advertisements claiming superiority for artificial foods over natural milk and the use of samples and gifts to promote sales. The USA alone opposed the code — because it interfered with the manufacturers' right to free commercial activity! Nothing was to interfere with private enterprise, not even the lives of infants in the Third World who were victims of their mothers' illiteracy. That the American vote was out of tune with public opinion inside America itself is another matter. (The US House of Representatives, on June 16, approved, by 100 to 30 votes, a motion condemning the government position. Two days later the Senate also voted, by 89 to 2 votes to urge Reagan and American infant food manufacturers to adhere to the new code.)

Similar is the Reagan Administration's attitude towards evolving an international regime for the seas. The agreement, which had been almost finalised under the Carter Administration, is once again in suspense. The complex negotiations of the UN Conference on the Law of the Sea, which began in 1967 with more than 150 nations attending, were successfully concluded by the end of 1980. The signing of the convention was scheduled for September 1981, in Caracas. But the new US Administration abruptly announced, in March 1981, that it wanted to thoroughly review the draft convention including the compromises agreed to, in August 1980, by Carter's government. Later the leader of the US delegation to the Conference, James L. Malone, rejected major portions of the draft as being incompatible with US interests. US opposition was particularly to provisions relating to the International Seabed Authority, which were characterised as stumbling blocks to treaty ratification. The fact is that the proposed provisions for decision-making in the Authority and rules on mining metal-bearing seabed nodules beyond national boundaries do not allow scope for America or other western countries to dominate the Authority or influence its decisions. The USA has also passed domestic legislation to the effect that it would set its own terms and conditions to assure the protection of US miners, going against the principle of 'common heritage of mankind', which treats the riches of the oceans as a universal resource, and which has been accepted by the Law of the Sea Conference.

As things stand the Conference will hold a final bargaining round in March-April this year and hopes to have a document ready for signature by September. Whether the US in view of the strategic gains it has made in the conference, such as the right of transit through international straits for submarines and warships, will moderate its stance and forgo marginal profits the mining consortia may make in the absence of a treaty, remains to be seen. Failure of the Conference forebodes anarchy in the oceans with developing countries seeking to restrict the use of ocean space and plunder of the oceans by a few who have the technology and resources to do so, an era of unilateral claims and gunboat diplomacy. Surely the American definition of its interests cannot be so narrow; or is the development of an interventionary capability through the Rapid Deployment Force intended to prepare for such a possibility?

Reagan's approach to what is popularly known as the New International Economic Order, again, is hardly any cause for enthusiasm. American reluctance to entertain Third World demands for a radical restructuring of the global economic system is not new. What is new is the missionary spirit with which the Reagan Administration is preaching its domestic economic policies as the economic salvation of the Third World: keep a tight check on money supply, encourage private investment, thrift and hard work and do not hark about redistributing global income through an increased transfer of resources from the developed world. The Third World must pull itself up by its own bootstraps using Reagan's remedies, which have already sent Britain on a downward slide and which are adversely telling within the USA itself. Reagan's policy thus contrasts with the pleas now being made by influential sections of western opinion for a Marshall Plan for the Third World which would aid not only development of the latter but open for developed economies a way out of recession by generating fresh demand for their products. Initial policy statements by the Reagan Administration indicated a tough stance towards global negotiations, and in May 1981 the US official delegate told a committee meeting of the General Assembly that his country would like to defer consultations till October as it was reviewing the whole question of US economic relations with developing countries. Repeated prodding from western countries such as Canada and France brought about a slight shift in the US position and Reagan, at the Cancun Summit, detailed the conditions under which his government would agree to global negotiations on the issue. But a specific structure for talks could not be agreed upon at Cancun mainly because the US wanted existing western-controlled institutions such as the World Bank and IMF to be responsible for negotiations while the developing countries wanted the UN to be the main forum.

With its penchant for making its entire foreign policy hinge upon its rivalry with the Soviet Union, American attitude on a host of related economic issues affecting the Third World has become far more inflexible. Thus aid through multilateral organisations gets low priority and bilateral aid, which

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COMMUNICATION

Doctors in the Dock

MANJULIKA DUBEY has let the AIIMS and its doctors off the hook by plugging for basic health care: "the question raised by the AIIMS affair is not fundamentally whether Doctor X or Y is a good guy or a rotten egg, but how we intend to develop health services in the country" (*Mainstream*, March 27, 1982). This is too charitable. She has probably never been a patient at the AIIMS or been privileged enough to hear about the intrigues that the politician-doctors revel in at that hallowed institution

First, the subject at hand. The Gopinath-Venugopal affair has certainly not ended yet. A huge wall poster in the lobby of the AIIMS declares: "Flashback One: Jan 81 — An extra MCh seat was created for a particular student (he however chose to go to Bombay). July 81 — Two MCh seats were advertised but later cancelled. When approached by RDA the Director expressed his inability to do anything thanks to Professor Gopinath.

"Flashback Two: 6th December 81, ward AB7 — A senior resident was kicked by Dr Venugopal. His stethescope was thrown out of the ward. Next day he had to pick it up from the roof of the hospital kitchen. 24th March 82 — Director asks Residents of Cardio-Thoracic and Vascular Surgery Department to issue a statement and deny the fact they are maltreated. They sign it. Because if they don't they will be further maltreated, threatened, abused and kicked."

Who's telling the truth? No one seems to know. However all are certain that almost everyone is lying — at least partly. Dr Gopinath may be an excellent surgeon but what has happened in the Institute could not be just due to his 'tyrannical insistence on standards'. Most studies in the area of education show that strictness in instructors cannot in isolation cause problems for them. The infamous M.P. from Bihar is alleged to have called Gopinath 'blind' and Venugopal 'an epileptic'. The Institute has bent over backwards to deny these allegations. But the rumours persist and the MP's allegations are believed to contain a grain of truth. If this is so, then AIIMS's official denials are unfair and unprofessional. If Professor Gopinath has had an operation for a detached retina and Venugopal is an epileptic, then the AIIMS should admit it and support the doctors at the same time.

There is nothing wrong in Dr Gopinath operating if his eyesight is alright now. There is nothing wrong in being an epileptic provided proper medication is taken regularly. The AIIMS could have used this opportunity to educate the public and remove the stigma against epileptics. But it chose not to do so. Why? Because the malaise is deep and the AIIMS as sick as the patients that flock to it.

We should realise that the attack on the AIIMS could not be just the result of a single MP's wrath. After all, he must be receiving information from within the AIIMS. So it is a battle between different factions in the Institute being fought in the halls of Parliament. And this is not the first time either. It is also not the only unsavoury happening in the AIIMS in the last few years. The animosities between various groups within the institute are well known. Each group has its own ringleader. Whether a doctor supports a colleague or not depends very largely on which groups the two belong to. Merit is seldom important. After all why are there two facilities for physical therapy at the AIIMS? In spite of the fact that both of them offer similar treatment, some doctors send their patients routinely to one facility and other doctors to the second one. If you thought the choice was made on medical grounds, you would be wrong.

This time the AIIMS community wants its honour upheld. What happened to that honour when the last Director's services were unceremoniously terminated at a Governing Council meeting, even though the item was not on the agenda? A new Director has still not been appointed. Everyone believes that Dr Gopinath was one of those involved in the sordid proceedings. There was not too much of an outcry — not even on the violation of the dignity of the Director's office. It was one clique against another. One does not have to be a supporter of the last Director to admit that the means used to remove him were very unfair.

This brings us to the crux of the matter. All senior doctors in the AIIMS have a few MPs and Ministers in tow. And they use extra-institutional means to achieve their institutional ends. It's an accepted game, professional ethics be damned. So if AIIMS doctors can play medicine with politicians, what is wrong with politicians playing politics with doctors.

This is not all. There is more wrong with elite institutions like the AIIMS than meets the layman's eye. The cockroaches and monkeys, the rudeness and filth, the carelessness and callousness are just some of the more visible annoyances. What about the deaths due to negligence? The stories are legion. What about secondary infections? They are never admitted. What about *iatrogenesis?* No one seems to know the word. So what is this research institution about?

It was supposed to have been a trail-blazer in evolving new and unique methods for teaching medicine in India. What happened? It got a fancy new workshop from Australia and was supposed to be the model for inhouse equipment maintenance and development. The number of instruments out of order is anyone's guess and the number of instruments imported everyone's

(*Continued on page 34*)

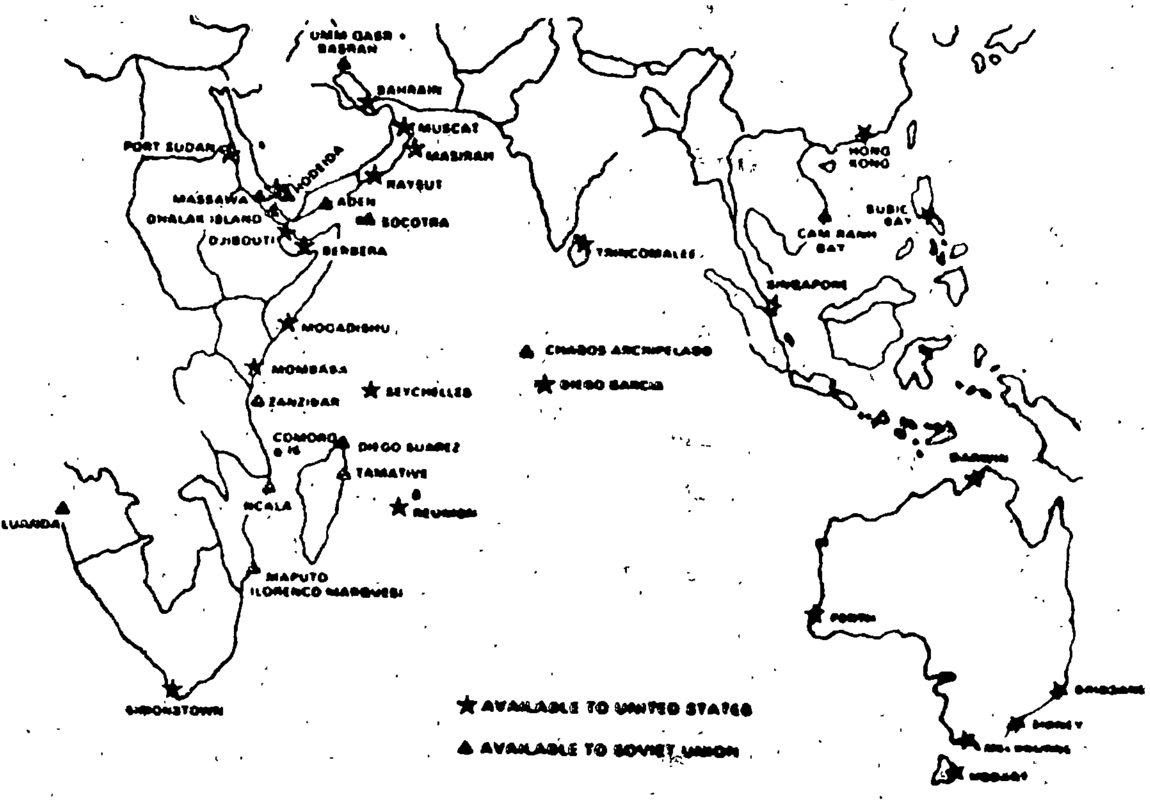
Indian Ocean : Who Dominates ?

INDIAN *Ocean is very much in the news. The naval presence of the two superpowers, USA and USSR, has a direct bearing on the security and sovereignty of the littoral states. In a document prepared by the Organisation of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff for the year 1982, captioned "United States Military Posture" a map is attached showing the location of "Facilities Available to US and Soviet Navies —1980". According to this map which is reproduced below, while the Soviet Navy commands 12 points, the US Navy has just double that number, namely 24. Thus while the element of super-power rivalry is not to be ignored, the preponderance of US naval facilities in this region is emphatic, and that is why the Reagan Administration's obstinate refusal to agree to a conference on the Indian Ocean under UN auspices assumes ominous significance.*

This map also shows that notwithstanding official Sri Lanka denials, there is no doubt in the American perception, that Trincomalee offers facilities to the US Navy.

In view of the growing importance of the Indian Ocean region for the security of India and her neighbours, **Mainstream** *is reproducing this map prepared by the highest official agency in the United States.* — Editor

FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO U.S. AND SOVIET NAVIES - 1980


UMM QASR • BASRAH
BAHRAIN
MUSCAT
MASIRAH
RAYSUT
PORT SUDAN
HODEIDA
MASSAWA
DAHLAK ISLAND
ADEN
SOCOTRA
DJIBOUTI
BERBERA
TRINCOMALEE
HONG KONG
SUBIC BAY
CAM RANH BAY
SINGAPORE
MOGADISHU
MOMBASA
ZANZIBAR
SEYCHELLES
CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO
DIEGO GARCIA
COMORO IS
DIEGO SUAREZ
TAMATAVE
REUNION
NACALA
LUANDA
MAPUTO (LORENCO MARQUES)
SIMONSTOWN
DARWIN
PERTH
BRISBANE
SYDNEY
MELBOURNE
HOBART
★ AVAILABLE TO UNITED STATES
▲ AVAILABLE TO SOVIET UNION

A CIA Forgery

PATRICK JONAS

WERE the American public taken for a ride as far as America's involvement in the Vietnam war was concerned and will El Salvador go the Vietnam way? Well, if a former CIA officer Philip Liechty is to be believed the Johnson Administration faked evidence to prove that the Viet Congs were receiving large-scale arms supplies from Communist countries thus making it necessary for the United States to intervene in Vietnam.

Way back in 1963 according to *Washington Post*, Liechty joined the CIA and was put in charge of searching "personality files" of individuals for other branches of the Government. It was by sheer accident that he chanced upon a misplaced file that contained the documents relating to Vietnam. It included an operating plan for a new agency proposal to fabricate evidence of outside support to the Viet Congs. Since the document was a carbon copy it must have been a reply in response to a directive from White House.

The CIA had in possession a large number of Communist arms. The plan was to load them in a Vietnamese coastal boat, engage it with fire-power and get it sunk and later on show to Western journalists the captured weapons as proof of outside aid. The second plan was to print a large number of North Vietnamese postage stamps depicting the shooting down of a US helicopter by Vietnamese forces, which Liechty alleges were printed in CIA presses. If Liechty's contentions are true then we have to believe that the CIA succeeded in its mission because an enlarged version of such a stamp was published by *Life* Magazine on its cover on February 26, 1965 — a couple of days before the Johnson Administration published its White Paper

(*Continued on page 34*)

Power for Rural Prosperity

REC has sanctioned till February 1982
loan assistance of over
Rs. 1673 00,00,000
for 5171 projects
including 23 rural electric cooperatives
to cover over
2.19 lakh
villages in 22 States
The projects will help energise over
18.30 lakh
irrigation pumpsets/tubewells and over
2.08 lakh
rural industries

ACHIEVEMENT
(as on 31.12.1981)

Villages electrified : 98,038
Pumpsets energised : 8,44,585

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of India Undertaking)
DDA Building Nehru Place
New Delhi-110 019

DISCUSSION

The perspective of Indian development is fast becoming a matter of crucial concern for the polity of the nation. Taking into account the need for serious discussion on the state of our political economy and the options before the country, *Mainstream* (March 20, 1982) published a contribution from a distinguished observer of the economic scene It has roused considerable interest among opinion-makers. We publish here a response to that article from Dr C.H. Hanumantha Rao, eminent economist, who is at present member of the Economic Administration Reforms Commission. The discussion continues, and readers of *Mainstream* are invited to participate. —*Editor*

Indian Development: Options and Choices

C.H. HANUMANTHA RAO

IN the article "Indian Development: Options and Choices" (*Mainstream*, March 20, 1982), a 'Student of Political Economy' has raised certain important issues concerning the alternative paths of development in India and the role of the Left movement. These issues have been debated ever since Independence and they seem to be eluding clarity even to this day. The Indian situation is so complex and unique that the received doctrines cannot provide ready-made answers and this is at the root of the so-called 'ideological crisis'. The author of this article has made a significant and timely contribution by throwing fresh light on several pertinent issues.

For the sake of convenience, let me summarise the main contents of the above article as I understand them before proceeding to offer my own comments on the formulations contained in the article.

The author argues that there is an inherent tendency for large industrial houses, monopolies and oligopolies to perpetuate and strengthen themselves, within the prevailing socio-economic framework, if there are no restraints on them through public regulation. These monopolies may perpetuate high prices despite the continuous adoption of new technology, with a view to maintaining a high rate of profit. Owing to the limitations of domestic absorption at such high prices, they may increasingly find outlets in the markets abroad with the help of export subsidies. This may inevitably involve them in collaborations with multinational corporations on the one hand, and with surplus producing large farmers in the countryside on the other, with all the adverse economic and political consequences on the domestic front. According to the author, such an 'export-dependent' growth is to be distinguished from 'export-led' growth: the former is the consequence of a particular pattern of growth associated with monopolies whereas the latter would be characteristic of a situation where exports become a leading sector because of the inherent comparative advantage.

The author makes a basic point in this context when he observes that in view of the large size of the country with a large segment of affluent population, general deficiency of domestic demand cannot be a constraint to overall growth in India, although this may be so for particular sectors. The author, therefore, suggests that a reasonably high rate of economic growth is possible through domestic absorption provided costs are reduced with appropriate regulations and development is made broad-based. The author underlines the crucial role of public sector not only as a countervailing power to the private monopolies and multinational corporations but also as a means for widening the industrial and agricultural base and for reducing inequalities.

Such a pattern of development, according to the author, is necessary for furthering the goals of independent foreign policy of peace and non-alignment, economic self-reliance, and reduction of poverty. As against this, 'enclave development' which would inevitably emerge under a neutral economic policy with a weak public sector, would generate socio-political forces which would work against an independent foreign policy, rapid economic development and wider distribution of benefits. Here is an opportunity for the Left to intervene and contribute towards the consolidation of the forces working for national goals of self-reliance, speedy economic growth and social justice. The failure to perceive and seize such an opportunity by the Left and other progressive forces could well lead to a major setback for the national endeavour to achieve the above goals and, therefore, for the future of the Left itself.

It is interesting to reflect on why the line of independent foreign policy, self-reliance through planned economic development and wider distribution of benefits of growth with accent on the removal of poverty, has come to stay. I would like to place these goals as national imperatives for a developing country like ours, which became free from colonialism. The goals of peace and non-alignment, democracy, secularism and socialism emerged out of the very process of our achievement of independence. These goals, which are in the nature of national imperatives, are also indivisible in the sense that one cannot be achieved to the exclusion of the others. A clear perception of imperialist manoeuvres and dangers to national independence is probably the most vital element contributing to the effectiveness with which leadership is provided.

India's survival as a strong nation-state capable of preserving its integrity is the foremost requirement on which depends the prospects of all development — whether of the capitalist or non-capitalist type. Indian history is full of instances when the rulers and society at large got lost in narrow internal grooves and became completely complacent and insensitive to external threats until the doors were knocked. Even those who subscribe to 'internationalism' as one of the principal tenets of their ideology have a tendency to become occasionally insensitive to external dangers and imperialist manoeuvres. In the Marxian analyses pertaining to the developing countries emerging to freedom from colonial rule, the primacy of the role of the nation-state in its survival and development has been highlighted. Lenin was in the forefront in the debate on the role of nation-states, especially in the Asian countries, in preserving their freedom and integrity as a necessary condition for development. It was also recognised in those debates that imperialist manoeuvres would continue in various forms to destabilise these young nation-states so as to keep them economically weaker. It must, therefore, go to the credit of our present national leadership for perceiving clearly the imperialist manoeuvres to keep India weaker and for showing the necessary courage to face the challenge. The resulting foreign policy of non-alignment and active cooperation with the socialist countries, especially with the Soviet Union, were bound to have implications for our efforts at achieving self-reliance through planned economic development and the removal of poverty.

To give primacy to foreign policy and to consider internal policies in an integrated framework, has been part of our tradition handed down from the national movement for independence. This tradition has been very much marked in the case of certain Leftist parties committed to 'internationalism'. However, it is surprising to find the tendency to see the internal policies as being distinct from and unaffected by foreign policy. There can be some inconsistencies here and there for some time between the anti-imperialist postures and internal policies. But for a developing country like India, there cannot by any basic inconsistency between the two in the long run. It is always possible to work on the one for overcoming the incompatibilities, if any, with the other.

As pointed out by the author, deficiency of internal demand is related to the pattern of development itself; a broad-based industrial and agricultural development with adequate emphasis on the generation of employment would have a redistributive bias and would generate the necessary demand for goods and services. Enclave type of development, on the other hand, can yield a certain rate of growth, but would soon face an internal absorption problem and can be sustained only through export promotion. As rightly pointed out by the author, such a situation has to be characterised as export dependency rather than reflecting inherent comparative advantages that underlie spontaneous export-led growth.

Whereas the author believes that even under the existing socio-economic framework, growth need not be constrained by the deficiency of internal demand, he does concede that enclave or elitist type of development can result in deficiency of demand and exports may become increasingly necessary to sustain such a growth. This would mean that improved income distribution is indispensable for durable and viable development. It is, therefore, necessary to emphasise that there would be a complementarity between improved distribution of income and growth in our situation rather than a trade-off as is often believed. The author seems to concede the existence of a trade-off between growth and social justice in our situation, when he says that under the alternative path of the maximum spread of growth involving increasingly larger number of people, "the overall rate of growth of gross national product may not be as high as the model of monopolist-capitalist growth outlined above, but it can still be a reasonably high growth with social justice, with increasing emphasis on providing subsidies and incentives to the weaker sections and generating indigenous capacity for self-reliance."

The proposition that improved distribution may result in slow growth because of a decline in savings rate rests on static considerations. Diffusion of development in so far as it draws in larger sections of society into the growth process may contribute to the deployment of part of the savings for productive purposes which would otherwise be frittered away in consumption. Moreover, absorption of new technology and improvement in labour productivity through improved nutrition, health and diffusion of skills may be facilitated better in a pattern of growth where benefits are widely distributed. A more equal distribution of income and wealth can facilitate the acceptance of alternative institutional arrangements for mobilising larger savings, for increasing labour productivity and for disseminating new techniques.

The experience of agricultural development in India in the recent period fully bears out the proposition put forward by the author that the elitist pattern of development may cause a deficiency in domestic demand necessitating export orientation and that such a development may unleash forces which may articulate demands of the rich to the detriment of the interests of the rural poor and may eventually lead to political formations supporting obscurantist tendencies. The Green Revolution in India has been concentrated in a few prosperous pockets and among large farmers. Although the achievements have been substantial and we have achieved near self-sufficiency in foodgrains, per capita availability of foodgrains has not increased significantly because the gains represent essentially import substitution in respect of wheat. Despite the per capita availability remaining nearly the same, we had piled up foodgrain stocks of about 20 million tonnes for two to three years and it was seriously felt that it would be difficult to sustain agricultural growth without finding export outlets. This is because the growth process failed to generate necessary purchasing power for the rural poor, particularly in the less developed regions. The rural rich emerged as a powerful lobby during this period, pressing for higher prices and subsidies. Politically they have increasingly sought alliance with those forces in urban areas who pose a major threat to the movement for speedy economic development and the removal of poverty. Public investment in agriculture, particularly in irrigation, and for providing essential inputs to small and marginal farmers, especially in the less developed regions, would raise employment, productivity and purchasing power among these large sections of rural population, and would thus serve to counteract the power of the rural rich.

This brings me to the crucial role of the public sector in giving a proper orientation to the pattern of development. The author has rightly emphasised the need for stepping up public investment so as to expand the activities of the public sector. Such a strategy can contribute to stepping up the overall rate of growth because of the essential complementarity between the public and the private sectors at the present stage of development in India. The benefits of growth under such a strategy would be distributed widely by drawing in less advantaged sections into the growth process.

However, it is important to emphasise the need for a major reform of public sector management in India. Without ensuring proper autonomy for public enterprises, and without improving their managerial capabilities through training, proper recruitment methods, etc., the public sector in India cannot play its crucial role as a countervailing power vis-a-vis the monopolies and multinational corporations. In fact, the continued neglect of managerial reform has only contributed to strengthening the bargaining power of the big industrial houses and multinationals. A mere expansion of public sector is not sufficient. It is equally important to make it function more efficiently.

From the operational point of view, the most important point made by the author is the convergence of interests of the Left in India and the forces led by Indira Gandhi for the achievement of the common goals of peace and non-alignment by resisting imperialist manoeuvres, rapid economic development and the removal of poverty, within a secular democratic framework. This, I think, is the crux of the problem. While the national goals, which in my view are in the nature of imperatives, remain the same as were handed down from the national movement for independence, the organisational apparatus working for such goals has been under severe pressure and has weakened gradually in the course of the last 30 years. This was, perhaps, inevitable because a multi-class political apparatus inherited from the pre-Independence period cannot survive the pressures of new challenges which have brought out sharply the clash of interests. Secondly, the corrupting influence of power enjoyed over a long period in a social framework like ours cannot also be ignored. The goals can remain pure and fresh, but the apparatus working for it can get rusted and polluted. A continuous renewal of such forces by drawing in the fresh and progressive elements who have the greatest stake in the fight for such ideals becomes necessary.

There is today a large organisational vacuum between the wide masses of the poor whose expectations have been aroused, and the leadership. Bureaucratic machinery cannot fill in this vacuum which can be filled only by political forces. I think the author has sharply posed here a challenge to the Left: whether they would be willing to muster their resources of patriotism and commitment to the betterment of the poor and come forward boldly to help fill this vacuum. Given the necessary imagination and courage, the Left is poised to play a historic role in the furtherance of the goals of national integrity, planned economic development and socialism. Failure to perceive these opportunities on the part of the Left could well turn out to be a tragedy for the democratic, secular and socialist movement at this point of time in our history. Such a set-back can and must be avoided.

Having fully endorsed the author's plea, I would however like to ask the question as to why the Left has time and again missed such opportunities, especially in the course of the last 30 years. This is an extremely important question from both the intellectual and practical points of view. Unless there is a frank debate on this question, it would be difficult to understand the tragedy of missed opportunities and in the absence of such understanding the appeals to the Left may have only sentimental value without any practical solution emerging.

I am afraid the Left has been groaning under the weight of its received doctrines, which do not permit it to see the realities of the Indian situation with a clear and open mind. The absence of a breakthrough on their part is explained by this doctrinal tradition. In almost all the socialist countries the success of forces of socialism represented the culmination of an anti-imperialist or an anti-fascist struggle, where such forces actually spearheaded the anti-imperialist and anti-fascist movements. In our situation the bourgeoisie held the hegemony of such a movement, although the Leftist parties have had a strong base among the working class and peasantry and some sections of the middle classes in certain parts of the country. The 'economism' of sectional approach has probably been a handicap, as against a national approach that would, as a rule, result when one has the hegemony of the national movement. However, it has been in the tradition of the Left that in ideological debates pride of place is given to foreign policy and the characterisation of the government of the day. This highly desirable approach, nevertheless, does not get translated into a practical line for building up the mass movement for the achievement of the objectives. Attention gets focussed on whether to support or to oppose the existing Government rather than on continuously striving for the goals by mobilising the maximum possible support, including from the ruling groups. In the latter approach, the onus would lie on those ruling groups which are opposed to such goals. The existing approach of the Left, on the other hand, prejudges the attitudes and the role of the ruling groups and thereby runs a great risk of alienating those who can be potentially mobilised for the furtherance of these objectives.

Preoccupation with the characterisation of the existing ruling groups may have been reasonable in certain countries where the correlation of forces was such that capture of power by the Left was in the realm of possibility. However, for the Leftist movement in India, the major task would appear to be gradually and patiently build up the mass movement in furtherance of the objectives of secularism, socialism, democracy and national independence. In this task, certain progressive policies of the Government and the mass support that is already created around such policies can become a great asset for the Leftist forces. What is needed is a modest and positive approach of building up the movement rather than of characterisation of the ruling groups into a certain fixed frame. The existing approach of excessive preoccupation with the characterisation of the Government to decide one's attitude towards Government has several dangers. First and foremost, it runs the great risk of misjudging the ruling class and, therefore, of mis-directing the whole movement based on wrong characterisation. Secondly, even if one comes out with the characterisation that the existing ruling groups need to be supported, the whole policy is focused on supporting the rulers rather than patiently building up the movement around the common goals.

For the reasons mentioned above, I think it would not be an easy task for the Leftist movement in India to play a positive role at this historic juncture without shaking off the weight of received doctrines and looking at the realities of Indian situation with a clean and clear mind. What is needed, above all, is a deep commitment to the solution of the day-to-day problems of the masses of the people and a good deal of modesty in approach. It is surprising that in a country with such problems of mass poverty crying out for solution, the ideological debates for decades together do not bring clarity. In many of the socialist as well as West European countries the Left has learnt to shed much of the doctrinal weight and think creatively by responding more to the felt and crying needs of society rather than getting bogged down in theological debates. The Indian Left has lagged very much behind other socialist movements around the world in moving towards ideological independence.

In the case of the Left in India, one finds a coexistence of sophisticated ideological debates, though unresolved for decades together, with their ready involvement in parliamentary politics as well as in the genuine trade union and peasant movements. It is their dedicated and untiring efforts and the sacrifices made in building up trade union and kisan movements over half a century that have contributed not only to raising the consciousness of the masses of the poor but also to strengthening their organised power. This constitutes a great asset not only to the Left but to the whole national movement for achieving the common objectives. In view of their declared policies, the ruling groups cannot afford to remain indifferent to the vast organisational potential that the Left can offer in large parts of the country for furtherance of the national objectives. Given the necessary imagination and initiatives on the part of both the progressive sections in the ruling groups and the Left, it should be possible to build up a wide consensus in the country for achieving the national goals.☐

Women and Anti-HPT Drive

VIMAL BALASUBRAHMANYAN

IN the current campaign by socially conscious doctors and women's groups against the 'hormonal pregnancy test' (HPT), two women doctors of the Voluntary Health Association of India (VHAI) have said in an article: "Our involvement is because of our concern for women who are passive recipients of many potentially hazardous drugs when low-cost alternatives may exist." The fact that the issue is not just a question of medicine and health but needs to be taken up by feminist activists becomes clear from the attitudes displayed by doctors — ranging from ignorance and indifference to what borders on contempt for the woman who, dismayed or desperate on missing a period, swallows a pill which nobody has told her is no longer a reliable test for pregnancy, can harm the foetus if it exists, and definitely will not cause the abortion she may hope for.

On this issue, as in many others, 'education' of doctors and pressure on drug companies are not enough to stop the misuse; these need to be reinforced by widespread awareness among women and as much adverse publicity as possible for the people who perpetrate the practice or turn a blind eye to it.

Briefly, HPT is an oestrogen-progesterone combination drug and the theory on which it is supposed to work is that if after taking the prescribed dose a woman does not menstruate, the diagnosis is pregnancy. Studies published in the last decade have shown that the test is false-positive in one out of five cases. Research at various centres abroad has shown that birth defects have occurred in babies whose mothers were exposed to these hormones in early pregnancy. HPT has been discontinued in the West and the WHO has said that the test should not be done. And there is a whole string of refeferences from research findings, medical journals and textbooks to convince any doubting medical Thomas to whom the information on HPT's risks has not yet percolated. Drug companies too are aware of the risk and some have recently started printing a brief warning inside the package, in language that may or may not be intelligible to the woman who takes the drug. Doctors campaigning against HPT say that a woman who has been exposed to it should terminate the pregnancy.

First, the attitude of doctors: One reputed woman gynaecologist is emphatic that HPT should not be done and adds that it is no longer done at least in the cities. She thinks the problem is only in the rural areas where there is possibility of many kinds of irregular and unethical practice. She also says, "I think the Government has banned it." Her responses are based on assumptions that are far from the truth. HPT misuse is neither merely rural nor merely urban. No systematic study has been done to assess which sections are most affected. But since it is a drug company product it is reasonable to believe that it has penetrated to every corner where sale is possible, and that includes urban and rural areas. Also, the Government has not banned it. Not yet.

Another doctor, elderly, sincere, with great sympathy for the poorer sections, does not know much about HPT or its misuse, but then he is neither a gynaecologist nor a practitioner. However, he has strong opinions about drug company rackets and often speaks at seminars and conferences against their malpractices. He could raise the HPT issue effectively on important medical platforms — if he knew enough about it and was sufficiently convinced. I show him the VHAI circular and he says: "Yes, this is important. But only a small section of women are affected...3 per cent...the kind of women in urban areas who buy lipstick and perfume..." Now, how does he arrive at a random figure of 3 per cent? Even if it were accurate it represents a sizeable number of women. And why should he assume that only the urban rich are affected?

For argument's sake it can be pointed out that for the urban rich woman, the alternative safe but expensive urine test is within her means and if she does not want a baby she can have MTP (medical termination of pregnancy) done at the poshest of clinics. On the other hand, facilities for the urine test may not exist in rural areas and misuse of HPT may be more likely. The fact however, is that the urban rich, poor and middle class too are exposed to HPT partly because of ignorance (theirs as well as that of doctors) and partly because the status of woman, whether urban rich or rural poor or urban poor or rural rich, has a common denominator when it comes to unplanned or unwanted pregnancy, legitimate or illegitimate.

Another doctor, young and alert, not a practising gynaecologist but who has a DGO, disapproves of HPT because she disapproves in general of 'unnecessary' prescription of hormone drugs. But she has not heard of the risks to the foetus and she thinks there is no danger. She is not aware of the latest findings. However, she is prepared to believe new claims if teachers whom she respects tell her so, — in other words, the VHAI circular citing half a dozen reputed international journals and bodies does not cut much ice with her.

A thriving gynaecologist with a posh nursing home in a well-to-do residential area quibbles when I ask him about HPT. "There are so many preparations, which one are you referring to?" he parries. I show him the VHAI circular and he realises that I am aware of the pertinent facts regarding HPT. Of course, he says, HPT should not be done, GPs prescribe it because they are ignorant, etc, but there is reason to believe that he too prescribes it "when necessary". Naturally, he does not say so directly but it emerges in the course of conversation. For example, I ask, "Don't you think the Government should make drug companies withdraw these preparations so that they cannot be misused?"

"No, that is not advisable because sometime it's necessary to prescribe it."

"When?"

"Sometimes a patient insists on it when she's very anxious to know if it's pregnancy or not, say, five days after a missed period when it's too early for a urine test."

The education of a patient is not the job of this doctor. He protects himself by telling the patient that if she is pregnant she should terminate the

DEFIANT DRUG FIRMS

Here is the gist of a report published in the *New Statesman* last year under the heading, "What mothers mustn't be told". It shows the lengths to which drug companies will go to push their products and how even in the West, medical opinion and recommendation alone are ineffective unless backed by strident public protest.

In early 1981 the Court of Appeal in London banned Thames TV from showing a programme about the drug Primodos on the ground that it was a breach of confidentiality. The *NS* managed to get a copy of the transcript which details how the German drug company Schering justified marketing and then refusing to withdraw a hormone pregnancy test (HPT) drug Primodos even though the drug was widely claimed to cause malformed babies. In the film, a former Schering UK research director reveals that one of the reasons the company did not wish to withdraw the drug despite criticism was that at that time it might have thrown doubt on the company's main product, contraceptive pills, which used the same hormones as Primodos. The producer of the film had earlier worked for Schering on a freelance basis and the film was stopped from being shown when Schering filed a writ claiming breach of confidence.

The programme refers to hundreds of mothers round the world whose babies were born deformed because of the drug. Aggrieved parents in the West who had filed suits for damages were quoted as saying that they "still could not understand how eight years could elapse between the first warning and the eventual withdrawal of the drug".

The *NS* report says that the findings of a 1967 study by Dr Elizabeth Gal were later supported in a report issued in 1975 by the Committee on Safety of Medicines. Further warnings from the same body came in 1977 but the drug was still sold. Primodos was not finally withdrawn until a vigorous campaign led by Jack Ashley brought a great deal of notoriety to the drug. —*V.B.*

pregnancy because HPT will harm the foetus. The way he describes his procedure, it sounds like the take-it-or-leave-it statutory warning on cigarette packets. It is not his job to insist that she wait a few more days and have the urine test, or a little longer and be clinically examined but he is shrewd enough to save his skin by giving her the 'warning' before the drug. Do such patients always terminate the pregnancy? "No, sometimes they change their minds. But they can't blame us if there's anything wrong with the baby."

Perhaps this doctor's style of functioning aims at motivating the patient to come back to him for MTP (such a kind and helpful doctor, he does everything you want). And the luxury look of his nursing home suggests that he may be getting a packet out of his patients whether they decide to ask him for MTP or they continue the pregnacy, to be delivered under his 'expert' care

The same doctor also describes cases where his patients were delivered of such abnormal babies that on questioning, the mothers eventually admitted having taken all kinds of pills (hormonal as well as toxic homoeopathic compounds) in their desperation to get rid of the foetus. This perhaps explains his notion that whenever a woman is keen on HPT it means she doesn't want pregnancy. He ignores the fact that she may want HPT because she does not really understand the risks, or she believes it to be a safe abortifacient. He also ignores the fact that often an unplanned pregnancy which causes initial dismay is not necessarily an unwanted pregnancy after it is confirmed. The unnecessary risk to babies of mothers who change their minds about termination is not his concern in the sense that he does not feel responsible for the 'irrationality' of the women concerned. His attitude is eloquent in the way he refers to "these women".

And here lies the crux of the matter: why should a woman remain so uninformed and why should she be reduced to desperate and dangerous efforts at abortion when legal MTP can take care of contraceptive failure and when there is every reason why she should bypass HPT? The secrecy needed from friends and family, the trauma of getting it done at a hospital or clinic, maybe facing the unsympathetic and self-righteous attitude of doctors and para-medical staff towards "these women" — all this can be too much. An overdose of the hormonal drug could result in the bleeding of threatened abortion and her life would be in danger. And if for any reason she cannot get the abortion done (opposition from family or husband) she has unnecessarily exposed the baby to risk. The attitude of society as well as of doctors is responsible for ill-informed women opting for a dangerous way out.

Now the drug companies. It is only in recent issues of CIMS and MIMS (the popular prescribers' guides) that some companies have included pregnancy in the contra-indications for these products. Some firms cleverly write "see literature" in this column. Since prescribing habits die hard, how many doctors have noticed the addition of contra-indications in the latest issues of the guides? How many bother to 'see' the literature and act?

Dr. A.R. Phadke, in an article on HPT misuse, quotes the detailed information running to a few hundred words that has to be statutorily provided with the products sold in the US according to FDA regulations. The brief warning in the brands sold by the same companies in India is so bland that the risk is underplayed. Also, the warning is printed inside the package so that a woman will see it after she has bought it and opened it. One brand has the warning printed in microscopic letters not even inside the package but on the aluminium foil and bright light and perfect eyesight are needed to decipher it. None of the brands has a clear bold warning on the outer label: "Don't use for pregnancy testing. May cause abnormalities."

What about the pharmacies? The owner of a nearby drug shop says he sells about a hundred packets every month of the two brands he stocks. (There are about 16 brands in the market.) About half are sold on doctors' prescription. Many who buy it are young girls. (Of course some of these prescriptions may be for genuine secondary amenorrhoea where pregnancy has been positively ruled out.) Sometimes the girls or their guardians ask for 'medicine to start menstruation' and he 'prescribes' these hormonal pills. How many buy the drug to test for pregnancy is not known. I point to the 'Schedule L Drug' marking on the label and ask how he can sell without prescription. *Kanoon* is one thing and *jo chalta hai* is another. But he thinks he is really helping these girls and women —when "all fails" he tells them, "Go to the nursing home". He knows nothing about the foetal risk. The information in the VHAI circular doesn't really sink in—so many drugs are dangerous, this is just one more. *Besides, doctors also prescribe it.* The only thing is he may be sincere in wanting to help, and if it were possible to enlist the cooperation of pharmacists it may be an important way of reaching the women who buy the drug. On the other hand, to counter a drive to educate the pharmacists, drug companies are capable of giving them inducements to sell the drug. While a multi-pronged effort to create awareness among all sections is needed, ultimately it is the woman who can protect her by knowing more about the pills she swallows and how these affect her body and her baby.

VHAI doctors point to the need for developing alternative, cheap, safe diagnostic tests for early pregnancy. Dr Phadke writes that pathologists charge between Rs 35 and Rs 80 for the urine test — while HPT costs less than Rs 10. It is argued that when so much money goes into contraceptive research surely some funds can be set aside for developing early pregnancy tests. Another alternative is a simple procedure called menstrual regulation which can be done in an outpatient clinic within 10 days of a missed period if pregnancy is unwanted. How many women know of this alternative and that it is safe and cheap? Is it easily available? Are women deterred because of the 'stigma'? Are they being turned away when they seek it in crowded hospitals?

The irony of the HPT issue is that so much propaganda goes into 'motivating' women to accept the pill, the loop, tubectomy, etc, but there is hardly any initiative from the same family planning bodies, official and non-official, to disseminate information on related matters which are of just as much relevance to the women concerned. Instead of the ghastly Nirodh commercials on Doordarshan or those terrible short films on population explosion why not a film in public interest on the risks of HPT? ☐

Bureaucracy, Development and People

T.K. MOULIK

OVER the years there has been a phenomenal growth in government bureaucracy in India both in its size and in its functional responsibilities. The following account of the district administrative machinery of Rajkot district is revealing:

> In Rajkot district, in 1973-74, this segment (government administrative machinery) consisted of 7,386 functionaries. On an average, there were nearly 103 paid functionaries for a group of 12 villages, or one functionary for every 21 rural households or every 40 male persons above 14 years of age.... In 1973-74, this segment of district administration spent about Rs 80 million, out of which 49 per cent was on famine relief works. Of the remaining amount of Rs 41.2 million, about 56.7 per cent, was spent on welfare services like education, medical facilities, health, family planning, community development, cooperative and social welfare. Only 17.6 per cent was spent on production-oriented activities like agriculture, irrigation, animal husbandry, industry, and forests, and 17.6 per cent was spent for infrastructure development such as construction of roads and buildings. Out of Rs 80 million, about 32.3 per cent was spent on salary and allowances. If the expenditure on famine relief works was not considered, the expenditure on salary, allowance, and contingencies formed about 62 per cent. (V.R. Gaikwad, and D.S. Parmar, *Rural Development Administration Under Democratic Decentralisation, 1979*.

The all-embracing presence of government bureaucracy in India becomes still more revealing if one examines its wide-ranging functional responsibilities. Today, there is hardly any activity of a private citizen which does not come into the purview of some part of bureaucracy or the other. There is certainly no welfare and development activity which is not controlled and regulated by the bureaucracy. It is therefore legitimate to postulate that, given the pervasiveness of government bureaucracy, one cannot but expect it to play the most pivotal role in India's development efforts. The question to be asked is whether the bureaucracy as it obtains today is capable of playing and willing to play the expected role, and if so, for what kind of development and for whom.

This question becomes crucial once we attempt to define the nature and task of development. At the outset let us not make the mistake in equating growth with development. Given the country's widely uneven and skewed socio-economic structure and its historical context, simple economic growth cannot be taken as a measure of development. Neither can we accept the theory of 'percolation' of growth-benefits. For, in actual practice the benefits do not percolate.

What then is meant by development? Development is the process by which the people's standard of living is raised, with equitable distribution and control of wealth and means of production by all sections of the people. In other words, what is aimed at is the establishment of production relations in such a way that not only is productivity increased and more wealth created but equitable distribution of wealth without minority-control over the means of production is also ensured. If we accept this proposition, it is clear that such a process of development is possible in India only if the people become conscious and confident in actively participating in development efforts, exerting all their energies and exercising their rights as a vital part of society. This means people's development in order to harness people's power. Again, under the prevailing objective conditions, since the vast majority of India's population are discriminatingly and exploitatively kept out of consciousness and confidence in exercising their social and economic rights, the immediate task of development should inevitably be directed towards this large majority of lower-rung people living in abysmal poverty and exploitative conditions. In terms of action, development in India means the development of this large majority of poor people, consisting of landless labourers, small and marginal farmers, workers (especially workers in unorganised sectors), who constitute more than 80 per cent of the total.

In essence, people's development in India has to have a deliberate bias towards the poor majority. This is a very important and crucial point, often deliberately overlooked. Let us not waste our energy in trying to wish away the stark social fact of class contradictions in India. At one extreme, there is the minuscule minority consisting of the comprador bourgeoisie and capitalists, feudal and semi-feudal big landlords, and on the other the huge majority of ruthlessly oppressed and exploited poor, hungry, naked, houseless and unemployed peasants, workers and petty-bourgeoisie. In our semi-feudal rural economy, about 80 per cent of the land is concentrated in the hands of the 20 per cent landlords and rich peasants, while 80 per cent of the rural population has no land or very little land. Added to this extremely skewed land ownership pattern are extortionate usurious credit, forcible eviction of tenants, exorbitant rent charged from tenants and share-croppers, continuing serfdom and bonded labour system, unabated miseries and oppression of Scheduled Castes and Tribes.

The role and capability of the bureaucracy in the process of people's development should naturally be examined in relation to this vast majority. For, the minority class owning and controlling all the means of production and socio-political power does not necessarily deserve any development assistance from the bureaucracy. It is irrefutable that an officially-sponsored development programme to be implemented by state machinery can have relevance only if it serves the interests of the large majority of the downtrodden and the exploited.

If we accept this premise, which is often conve-

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niently neglected in our debates, then we can easily identify the constraints and limitations of the bureaucracy. (see, for example, D.C. Korten, and F.B. Alfonso, (eds) *Bureaucracy and the poor: Closing the Gap*, 1981). Basically these constraints arise out of two historical factors: the class composition of the bureaucracy and the nature of bureaucratic functions.

Let us take the relatively higher echelons of the bureaucracy which determine the policy, implementation and general direction of development programmes. There are three distinct types of people manning this section:

(i) The most important — and large majority — is the group of nationally selected administrative service cadres (IAS, IPS, IFS, IEC, etc.) including state services cadres. These are the brahmins of the Government bureaucracy, an exclusive club, having largely generalist educational background without any specialisation (mostly graduates and post-graduates in arts and science). Apart from the basic formal educational background, their only other qualification is that they are selected in so-called national or State-level competitive examinations. In fact, it is the competitive examination alone which bestows them with brahminical exclusivity in government bureaucracy.

(ii) A very small minority group of scientists or technocrats or management experts catapulted into the bureaucracy at various levels. The process by which this category of people, often eminent in their professions, get into bureaucratic positions is characterised by various factors ranging from nature of job, political linkages and manoeuvring, to personal ambition. Be that as it may, this is still a minuscule group in the Indian bureaucracy, though ambitious enough to claim a share of the cake of bureaucratic power and political recognition.

(iii) Below these two groups is a huge/army of lower level bureaucrats. This is a mixed group of technocrats, generalists, scientists and subject-matter specialists (for example, extension workers, foresters. etc), who are basically deployed to implement and supervise the programmes initiated and imposed by the higher echelons, namely, the two groups mentioned above. In professional knowledge and field-level experience, this group of bureaucrats is probably far better equipped than the other two but has no decision-making power or scope to influence policies and programme content. Numerous though they are, there is a process of selection through stiff competition, and for most of them life's ambition is to rise in rank in the hierarchy.

Having characterised the hierarchy of bureaucracy, it is easy to examine their class background. It should be clear to even a casual student of Indian history that there could be hardly anybody in this bureaucratic system with a truly proletarian background, not at least in the first two critical categories. By the sheer weight of the historical process and given the prevalent skewed socio-economic structure, educational system and general political conditions, the working class is bound to remain excluded in the competitive process of selection. The classes which normally come into this bureaucratic stream are largely feudal or semi-feudal landlords, land-rich farming gentry, comprador elite bourgeoisie and capitalists. In other words, they are mostly people from the rich and middle class categories, and that too largely with an urban background. It is only among the third category mentioned above that one may find some from the petty-bourgeoisie class. It is often argued that the Indian bureaucracy is being increasingly representative of the poor downtrodden class by citing examples of the entry of some Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes people under reservation rules. Not only they are negligible in number, but in most cases their class background is not truly representative of the large masses of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. They are really brahmins among their caste and tribal groups in socio-economic terms.

Given the class background of the bureaucracy, it looks as if the normal bureaucratic roles, functions and responsibilities are tailor-made for them. To ask whether the class background of the bureaucracy determines the nature of its functions and roles or *vice versa* is only to look at to the sides of the same coin. In other words, both the hypotheses seem to be valid, irrespective of some of the radical politico-economic programmes and slogans enunciated by the Government more as a matter of political expediency than of ideological commitment. What then are normal bureaucratic functions and roles?

Since the modern Indian bureaucracy has its historical roots in British colonial rule of 200 years, its character in the post-Independence period is still largely determined by the colonial legacy. Thus, in the pre-Independence period the major thrust of bureaucratic functions and responsibilities was mainly concerned with law and order and revenue collection, while in the post-Independence era one more additional function is emphasised — that is, the regulatory and monitoring function in relation to various projects and programmes (governmental and non-governmental). In either case, bureaucratic roles and responsibilities are bound by a set of rules and regulations geared around definite time-bound targets and budgetary expenditure. Armed with financial and regulatory power, the bureaucracy, with its class background, easily assumes the role of 'giver' as against the vast mass of poor 'receivers'. This point needs to be explained.

Be it developmental or non-developmental, a bureaucracy is generally identified with an administrative hierarchy built around specific programmes/projects of activities. The objectives of these programmes/projects are normally broken down into some specific time-bound targets with budgetary outlays. Thus the state bureaucracy is essentially an administrative machinery to operate a delivery system through which time-bound targets are aimed to be achieved and the budgeted amount spent. So far so good. But in the process two distinct trends develop in the bureaucracy: first, undue concern about and over-emphasis of the delivery system at the cost or even to the detriment of the people's participation and interest that is, the receiver-system. Second, the bigger the target and budgetary allocation for a programme, the more conspicuously prestigious and powerful the concerned bureaucracy is perceived to be. The latter trend seems inevitable given the mobility and temporary nature of the bureaucrats in one particular position, and the emphasis on target achievement and expenditure of budgeted amount in evaluating the performance of the bureaucracy.

Thus the bureaucracy manned by a select group and class of people through competitive methods is again thrown into severe cut-throat competition in the operational field. Human nature being what it is, the response of the bureaucrats follows a predictable pattern. First, almost all of its energy and efforts are concentrated in regulating, monitoring and expanding the delivery system in order to achieve the most visible targets as quickly and as easily as possible. To the bureaucrats this means three types of action: (1) To follow mechanically the rules and regulations and precedents irrespective of what the situation requires. For, any change in the system involves a painful process of thinking, analytical study and prolonged persuasion at the risk of causing delay in target-achievement or even failure; (2) to work through the existing power structure and contacts—the path of least resistance. For, otherwise it would require a lot more effort and time to establish alternative structural contacts which may often lead to conflicts and confrontation with the existing power structure; (3) to concentrate on establishing linkages and contacts with the higher echelons of the bureaucracy and the political system in order to ensure personal rise in the hierarchy.

The second kind of response is a continuous effort to expand the empire in terms of subordinate manpower, control over increasing infrastructural facilities like cars, vehicles, office premises, etc., and lobbying for more and more financial allocations. For, only through such expansion of his empire can a bureaucrat gain in prestige and power. Thus, there is hardly any bureaucrat who does not crib about shortage of manpower and infrastructural facilities for the implementation of a programme/project. In fact, one of the constant items in project planning is the demand for additional subordinate manpower and other infrastructural facilities. It is interesting to observe that the pervasive zeal of bureaucrats in building their empires is such that even their offices assume an almost monotonous look in terms of furniture, interior decoration, exclusiveness, distance from subordinates and the general public.

The 'giver-syndrome' of the bureaucrats vis a-vis the huge mass of 'receivers' — that is, the people, particularly the poor—can be understood in view of the two types of response mentioned above. None of these responses can bring the bureaucratic nearer to the people. In fact, there seems to be a deliberate design to maintain a distance so that the bureaucrat can play the role of paternalistic feudal lord or a tyrannical 'giver' with unquestioned authority to act according to his own convenience. Since the receivers are largely illiterate, ignorant of their rights and unorganised, there is hardly any pressure to bring the bureaucracy to the level at which there can be meaningful, active participation by the people in the process of development. Neither is it in the interest of the bureaucrats that such pressure from the receiver-system should develop which will clip their own wings. To organise, to educate and to actively involve people means to share power and authority, and reduce the dependence of the receivers, that is, to be at the level of the people and be one among them. This is too high a price to pay for a bureaucrat who thinks he has earned his position of authority and power as a 'giver' through hard labour against severe competition. On the other hand, being addicted to power as 'giver', bureaucrats seem to privately enjoy and often publicly demand deference from subordinates and the public. A state machinery fuelled by public money and supposedly having public responsibility becomes almost the private fief of the bureaucrat. It is therefore not surprising to find a senior bureaucrat handling Rs 200 crores annually grumbling that he is entitled to a mere Ambassador car while a private owner or manager of a private enterprise handling the same amount of money or even less has a Mercedes car. It is striking that the bureaucrat conveniently forgets that not a single paise of the Rs 200 crores is from his pocket, that he is a mere public servant hired by the public to use public money as the public desires.

Another manifestation of the same empire-building phenomenon can be observed in the creation of the semi-government or semi-autonomous corporations. The only differences between a direct state bureaucracy or department and a semi-autonomous corporation are the perks and facilities enjoyed by the bureaucrats in the corporation and the flexibility in terms of rules and regulations followed in the normal government bureaucracy. In other words, a corporation is one step ahead towards the coveted image of a bureaucrat's private empire. In recent years there has been a mushroom growth of such corporations in India headed and manned by bureaucrats. This phenomenon is partly based on the oft-repeated argument that the bureaucrats perform most efficiently in crisis-management. It is implied that in the absence of restrictions of normal rules and regulations and provided there is freedom of action a bureaucrat performs better. Thus it is made to appear that the bureaucrat can be efficient only when there is a full play of his 'giver' role without much of restrictions and restraints. Crisis management like flood and famine relief provides the bureaucrat such unfettered and unbridled opportunities. The idea of semi-government, semi-autonomous corporations seems to work on the same logic. It was not surprising when the topmost bureaucrat of a State, the Chief Secretary, said he would prefer to be Managing Director of a prestigious Corporation rather than head the State bureaucracy because of the extra perks, facilities, foreign trips, power and authority — that is, the 'giver' par excellence.

It is in this context that the bogey raised about a 'committed' bureaucracy needs to be understood. When the bureaucracy is asked to be committed, it means commitment to the existing power structure, oiling the existing delivery system, not commitment to the people, to serve and to strengthen the receiver system. The basic purpose of raising this bogey is to reduce deviance and dissonance between the bureaucracy and the existing socio-economic structure — a structure on the maintenance of which the existence of the present political power arrangement depends. Fear of deviance and dissonance arises out of various legal and developmental programmes which, if properly implemented, may endanger the existing social order. By asking for 'commitment', the bureaucracy is given the signal that implementation of various developmental and legal programmes should be limited to the extent that it should not upset the apple-cart of the existing social order. The kind of commitment sought from the bureaucracy comes easily to most of the bureaucrats — after all they are only asked to sail with the wind.

This question of committed bureaucracy and the subtle campaign for commitment among bureaucrats by the political power structure, demonstrate the existence of or potentialities for deviance and dissonance among a section of the bureaucrats Such a threat exists for two reasons, often inter-dependent and inter-related. First, irrespective of class background, many young bureaucrats carry with them at the entry point various shades of ideological values and attitudes acquired consciously or unconsciously in their young days, mostly in colleges and universities. In many cases the pre-entry ideological consciousness and values are totally different from or even diametrically opposite to the ideological base (if any) of the ruling elite. Most of these young, newly-recruited bureaucrats who run headlong into ideological conflict with the ruling elite are the middle class bourgeoisie. Though their ideological consciousness is most often not steeled by social practice, their middle-class bourgeoisie background and linkages with the left out peer group keep their ideological consciousness alive for some time. Initially, these young bureaucrats attempt to implement various developmental policies and programmes with their pre-entry level of ideological values, thereby creating a dissonance in the system and socio-economic power structure.

The second reason lies in the very nature of some of the developmental policies and programmes which for some political reasons or other are promoted or perhaps are forced to be promoted, but are essentially aimed at changing the existing socio-economic order. Programmes and policies like land reform, cooperative credit and marketing facilities, various loans and subsidy schemes, SFDA/MFL schemes, Antyodaya schemes, removal of rural indebtedness and bonded labour, minimum wages law, MRTP Act, nationalisation of banks and similar other programmes (including "Garibi Hatao" and the Twenty-point programme) come to mind. Ostensibly, these programmes are promoted to benefit the downtrodden proletariat. Many of them are quite radical or revolutionary in the sense that, if truly and properly implemented, they can alter the socio-economic power structure considerably. Young bureaucrats with different (from the ruling elite) ideological constructs may use these programmes and policies in their delivery system true to their overt intent and purpose, defeating the covert purpose of the ruling elite. Hence the concern of the ruling elite for a 'committed' bureaucracy. Many of these policies and programmes are promoted by the ruling elites merely for consolidating the vote-bank. It is in fact naive to think that the ruling elite would like to demolish the very socio-economic structure that keeps them in power.

Few in number as they are, these recalcitrant bureaucrats do indeed pose a threat to the existing power structure. As a result, they attract all kinds of pressure and arm-twisting from the socio-political and administrative hierarchy in order to pull them into line. The pressure takes a carrot-and-stick, form – incentive promotion, coveted posting, foreign trips. study leave, etc., on the one hand, and the threat of punishment in the form of transfer, delay in promotion, posting to infrastructurally difficult areas or to not so-important decorative positions, official and non-official harassment, etc. Given the not-so-firm ideological commitment and the middle-class bourgeoisie or petty bourgeoisie background, most of these bureaucrats soon succumb to the pressure Many senior bureaucrats readily admit that within a short period (2 to 4 years) after entry, all their enthusiasm, motivation and ideological values in relation to bringing about basic socio-economic changes become steam-rollered into a stereotype. In other words, a young, intelligent person becomes a typical moron bureaucrat.

It is true that a few continue to resist pressure, unmindful of punishment or incentive. But the number of such bureaucrats is very small. But these is a relatively large number who, having succumbed to pressure, continue to feel dejected and disappointed but yet perform routinised bureaucratic functions like robots. This is the group of people who are perhaps sitting on the fence and, given the right kind of environment and socio-political development, would jump to the other side, but will not initiate the process of change by themselves. At the other extreme are a large number of people who easily and comfortably shift to or continue from the beginning to enjoy the stereotyped role of bureaucrats. A very insignificant few find the existing system in conflict with their ideological commitment and protesting get out of the service voluntarily.

There are two other important limitations of the bureaucracy. First, there is the age-old tradition of India's state administration, which has been and continues to be aimed at maintaining and safeguarding existing property relationship. In fact, all the procedures — civil and criminal laws and judicial procedures and practices — are oriented towards safeguarding property ownership and resultant production relationship. The bureaucracy is specifically trained in this basic traditional ethos of administration. This in turn strengthens the second but most important binding constraint, that is, the caste-class background of the bureaucrats. There is a clear tendency of coalescing of interests between the bureaucrats and the landlord-capitalist-comprador class. A very senior bureaucrat of a State in charge of land reform, for example, had no hesitation to say, "How do you expect me to implement the land reform measures which are going to hurt my father and several of my relatives?" Even when the bureaucrats have no connection with land — coming from urban middle class without any linkage with the landed gentry — they seem to maintain an attitude of either hostile neutrality or a conspicuous paternalism towards the downtrodden proletariat. At the other extreme, where caste-class feelings are traditionally strong and nurtured by feudal or semi-feudal production relationships, the bureaucrats fail to take an impersonal and officially legal stance in the event of caste-class struggle. A Rajput Collector in Bihar, for example, did not find it unethical to publicly assure the Rajput landlords of all official help and support against the minimum wage demand of low-caste landless labourers. The Adivasis and the Scheduled Castes are so increasingly victimised.

As a result, when the benefits of the special development projects (for example, SFDA, MFAL, land reform, cooperative credit, tribal development, etc.) specifically targeted for the downtrodden do not reach the target group and are instead grabbed by the richer class, it does not disturb the bureaucrats as it should. That most of the benefits of the target-group oriented programmes are going to be grabbed by the non-target group, that is, the socio-economically richer sections, is almost accepted both officially and unofficially as inevitable. In fact, there seems to be a "one-third syndrome" of efficiency running across the bureaucracy in the sense that there is a great fanfare of appreciation if benefits reach at least 30 per cent of the target group.

What then could we expect from the bureaucracy in relation to people's development? Given its nature and character, we cannot expect the bureaucracy to bring about any fundamental socio-economic change. Neither can we expect the bureaucrats to have empathy towards the downtrodden proletariat in order to encourage them to actively participate in the development process. It would be utterly naive of anyone to think that the bureaucrats, as they are, will have time, patience, willingness and empathy to organise the largely unorganised downtrodden proletariat in order to turn them from a mere receiving system to a demand system. For, the very process of organising the poor proletariat in an articulate and vigilant demand system defeats the interest and authority of the bureaucracy, though there may be and often is a general feeling among some bureaucrats and ruling politicians that it is necessary to organise the poor into a demand system. As explained earlier, much of these feelings and official utterances are the result of a vague hope that somewhere, somehow, somebody will do the job of organising the poor into a demand system without hurting or depriving the bureaucrats, own interests and power. On the other hand, there is clear historical evidence to prove that whatever so-called radical or liberal measures or poor-oriented development programmes the existing socio-economic-political structure has undertaken are direct or indirect result of some form of class struggle threatening the balance of political power. Most of such development programmes are at best ameliorative and at worst a simple mechanism of hoodwinking the unorganised poor with false promises in order to divert or diffuse the class conflict, without any change in the socio-economic power structure. In fact, the bureaucracy is usually found to take the side of the existing structure in any class conflict to the extent that it even promotes or instigates a counter-organisation of the rich to deal with the organised and legal demands of the poor.

It is often argued that what is needed for the people's development is a 'well-knit and well-ordered structure of administration'. Some people even think that there is no alternative to "this basic requirement". Having made the prophecy, the same people then argue that this so-called well-knit administration of bureaucrats will deliver the goods only when it is properly directed by the democratically elected political leaders. The fallacy in this argument is obvious. It is inconceivable that such political leadership with sufficient strength can come up from the existing power structure as to direct and compel the bureaucrats to organise and educate the poor into a demand system. On the contrary, with the coalescing of interests of the bureaucrats and ruling power structure, their basic aim is to resort to repression or urge the oppressed and the poor to be cautious in pressing for any basic change in the present socio-economic structure.

It is often pleaded by some that the only alternative approach for people's development without class struggle and basic institutional change is an approach of technological innovations and gradual incremental reforms. Among this group of people there are a few who wishfully believe that by the sheer force of history and democratic processes, the present political leaders will increasingly learn to align themselves with the downtrodden and to consider the proletariat as the stable constituency or vote bank. Once this happens, they would force the bureaucracy to implement the development programme for the poor and with the poor as a process of people's development in order to maintain their hegemony. Either the protagonists of this gradualist thesis are blind to the historical process or they refuse to learn from history. Apart from the inordinate delays with various interacting unknown forces in achieving this gradualist stage, people's development cannot and will not take place by merely forcing the giver-bureaucrats to streamline the delivery system. Attempts to push through such a strategy of development and change, in the absence of basic changes in the socio-economic power structure, only result in retardation, frustration, discontent through preventing large masses of latent productive forces from participating in the process of development.

The only way therefore is to turn upside down the existing pyramid of socio-economic power structure, with only 10 per cent of the ruling elite and urban white collar workers at the top, thus bringing the organised poor and downtrodden proletariat to the top. This is possible only when there is a genuine people's development programme in educating, politicising, and organising the poor with class solidarity and continuous class struggles.

For the present, it is sufficient to conclude that bureaucracy as it obtains in the present socio-economic order cannot organise people's development; at best they could operate as givers in a moth eaten and often corrupt delivery system. If the pyramid of power structure can be turned upside down, it is possible that a large part of indifferent and hesitant bureaucrats sitting on the fence will gain courage to join the proletariat for people's development. ☐

Politics of Protection : A Bihar Study

A.K. LAL

PROTECTIVE discrimination as a policy to steer the process of mobility among the depressed classes seems to have become a fact of life in India. It has profoundly affected the course of change among these communities and has helped cause a major breakthrough in ameliorating their condition. Giant strides have been made in laying the infrastructure to sponsor upward mobility of the historically disadvantaged through the policy of protective discrimination. In fact the 'coming up' of the exploited people "from the lowest estate into which any people have ever fallen anywhere at any time in human history" has been rendered feasible through preferment in both education and jobs.

In modernising society the relationship between mobility and education is an intimate one. Education is not only an effective means to social mobility but a prime mover of change so far as these communities are concerned. Protective discrimination has gone a long way in promoting spread of education among the scheduled communities. Special provisions to benefit such communities as have no tradition of education have led to steady growth in enrolment to various institutions of learning. The representation of the scheduled communities at various levels of education has been greatly helped by the parallel changes in the economic structure. The importance of education increased as it became an important agency to inculcate skills required for taking up career positions in the modern diversified occupational structure. Education no longer remained primarily a conservative and culture-transmitting institution. These people, lying at the base of the traditional hierarchical structure, have found in education the necessary avenues for status elevation through acquisition of particularistic traits of status elevation. A good number of the one-fourth population of Bihar described as the scheduled communities have found entry into Government, business, education and politics. This has led to the creation of an educated professional elite among them. Entry into Government service remains the primary avenue for the mobility of the educated among the weaker sections of society.

These professional elites as well as political activists and social workers are reported to have exerted effective influence on the course of changes within their community. They have turned out to be viable units of guidance and direction for their unschooled brethren. Functioning as a bridge between the bulk of the illiterate people and the larger society, these groups are often the modernisers in the process of social transformation, initiating, stimulating and accelerating it. They have operated as 'standard setters' and 'symbol builders'. As a demonstration unit or reference model they have been found capable of affecting the behavioural patterns and attitudinal dimensions of their community members in a significant way. As catalysts and sustainers in different types of organisations they set the tone and determine the direction of change. Such elites have provided leadership to various associative activities and collective strivings aimed at activating the community.

There are instances when these have been found to be integrated into the 'supra unit' of which they are an internal elite. In effecting the alteration of the socio-economic contours of a traditional society, oriented to modernisation, the elite through their resources, talents and links have made a significant contribution. They have been found to be experts in performing mediatory functions through action-sets and focussed networks. They are important links between the supplicants of the community members and the administrators. Their resource disadvantage has ceased to be cumulative. Redemption from defiling jobs, and participation in modern occupations have brought them in close proximity to the secular, egalitarian and 'ritually neutral work spheres' of city life. This has liberalised their relationship with the privileged commmunities. A natural outcome of this improvement has been lesser disabilities for financially and educationally better off members of the scheduled communities. With the cooption of these people with the elite of society, a move towards greater integration has been started. Elevated socio-economic standing of these community elites has enabled them to be closely linked to the middle class among the upper castes. This in turn is considered conducive to the integration of the emerging elite with the larger society.

This should not lead one to construe that the process of emancipation of the scheduled communities is complete. On the contrary, it is a long way off. Disabilities continue to exercise profound influence, especially in the countryside. The scheduled communities are more subjected to humiliation in rural areas than in urban areas. The antipathy towards neo-literates from these communities is pervasive. Urban heterogeneity may afford a relative sense of anonymity keeping the traditional ascribed status in temporary abeyance. In the long run, however, the 'dominant status' of these people remains the overriding status. There is also evidence to show that the mobility of the scheduled communities of Bihar towards higher ranks in Government service is very slow (Dushkin, 1972. — *Untouchables in Contemporary India.*)

Though politics in Bihar has come to be articulated in terms of the backward vs the forward,

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leaders from the scheduled communities have remained the appendage of the dominant castes. While in power they tend to represent the apparent centre rather than the real centre of power. They act as a rubber stamp of the primary leader. Power marries better with wealth and ritual status than with number. The various units among them work at political cross purposes.

The greatest shortcoming of the policy of protective discrimination lies in its failure to ensure fair and equitable distribution of facilities among the different sections of the beneficiaries. Benefits meant for the scheduled communities have remained concentrated at the top. These have not percolated effectively downward in the hierarchy. Only those having a head start have increased their lead. Representation in politics tends to be confined to a few castes and tribes among the scheduled communities. Within the communities that have been successful in hogging the benefits of protection, a gap has been created between the masses and the emerging tiny elite. There are evidences to suggest that educated people lose their moorings and are cast adrift without any goal. They find solace in anonymous retreat. They move into what Isaacs in his book *India's Untouchables* (1965) calls a kind of 'semi-limbo' pulling up and away "from the sudden bleakness of their past estate, but do not quite get nowhere, but neither do they reach somewhere."

For those who are at the bottom of the heap, poverty is rife and there are fewer opportunities. Their mobility aspirations and achievements remain less spectacular. Thus the policies could not take care of the lowest among the lowly. Distribution of resources has been determined by the existing social class boundaries. The poor among them lead a bleak existence, always threatened by the uncertainty of getting their next meal. The benefit of Green Revolution which lifted the big and medium farmer to the orbit of influence have sent these people hurtling into an abyss of poverty. Many of them are dependent upon the caste Hindu patrons finding themselves in semi-indentured or bonded relationship. Since these communities provide the bulk of labour in the countryside they are seen as the highest threat to the existing semi-feudal mode of production. Nowadays they are being coerced to accept the exploitation of the upper castes through violence. Unabated atrocities on the depressed classes, their killings with frightening regularity and acts of reprisal are grim reminders of the futility of the policy of protective discrimination for the helpless among these communities.

The availability of reverse discrimination to other backward castes is only a recent phenomenon in Bihar. These constitute the latest addition to official protection. Included in the Janata Party manifesto (1977), the policy of protective discrimination for these categories was finally promulgated in late 1978. The provision of protective discrimination for the other backward castes include reservation of 20 per cent Government jobs for 128 such castes. All of these belong to the middle-range Hindu castes. Economically weaker sections of the upper castes have also been entitled to 3 per cent of Government jobs while the other 3 per cent are reserved for the weaker sex.

Extension of reservation to the backward castes after a bitter struggle signifies many things. It heralds an important landmark in the history of political modernisation in Bihar. It represents a situation wherein a number of castes inducted only recently from the periphery to the centre of political universe refuse to be the appendage of the main contenders in power politics — the upper castes. The retention of political dominance by the upper castes long after traditional sanctions for superior status have been impaired spurred the 'ascendant castes' to organised action to challenge the supremacy of the former. A number of cognate caste groups conglomerated themselves into a federation to stake their claims for their 'due share' in the modern diversified occupational structure. In order to compete with the upper castes who had a head start in capturing the modern sources of status because of their inherited superiority, the federation sought shelter under the protective umbrella of reverse discrimination. The backward caste people agitated for reservation of caste quotas for jobs in the administrative services and seats in arts, technological, medical and science courses. The coming together of these castes is not a simple exacerbation of the parochial activities of narrowly circumscribed lesser identities and undissolved residue of traditionalism. It marks a clash between the established and the emerging holders of power.

The collective strivings of the backward caste people (OBC) was oriented towards removal of discrepancy between the different attributes of their secular status. Their increasing strength in the legislature prompted them to seek parallel elevation in the hierarchy of modern diversified occupational structure. They did not claim and dispute rank precedences. Protest against their conditions of relative deprivation seemed to be the dominant theme of the backward caste movement. Exposure to egalitarian values and attainment of higher levels of education promoted awareness of the negative discrepancy between legitimate expectation and actuality. This realisation of their dominant political status made them capable of initiating the process of struggle. The 'substantialisation' was against their discrimination in the socio-economic field. The opposition reference group happened to be the upper castes who are the biggest appropriators of modern secular resources.

It represents a big leap to ensure distribution of resources in an egalitarian manner. It challenged bureaucratic manipulation of modern resources in favour of the privileged few. Dominance of the upper castes has led to the perpetuation of their traditional hold in the modern setting by acquisition of the new resources. In a bureaucracy which is not oblivious to caste, kinship and religious pulls, assertive discrimination in favour of those who are under-represented are bound to be sought.

It is true that the economic policies of the post-Independence phase have been highly in favour of the rise of kulaks in Bihar from among the 'Other Backward Castes'. But there are evidences to indicate the continuation of mass poverty among these people. Caste hierarchy has been and is still indistinguishable from economic hierarchy. Among the Hindu land-owners in Bihar in the early twentieth century, there were rarely found members of castes other than the upper castes. Even as late as 1951 about 80 per cent of all landowners in Bihar were from these castes. According to a recent estimate, the Other Backward Castes constitute the bulk of poor and middle peasantry, whereas only 3 per cent of the upper castes are in this economic group. Similarly 80 per cent of the 16 per cent population of Bihar holding 60 per cent of the cultivable land holdings are from the upper castes. Thus, in spite of the rise of the kulaks from among these communities, they are essentially a deprived lot. In Government occupations also they are far behind the upper castes who hold 80 per cent of the positions in the bureaucracy. They remain under-represented in spite of educational attainments. The demand for job quota for backward castes is further justified in a situation where merit, efficiency and virtues are coterminus with caste.

Since the facility is quite new for the backward castes, its implications for them are not exactly known. One can however predict that this too is likely to be distorted to buttress the rich and advanced people among these castes. It is likely to remain stuck with the four comparatively advanced backward castes — Kurmi, Yadav, Baniya and Koeri. The apprehension grows out of the fact that these four castes in themselves are the highest representatives of the backward castes in the legislature, bureaucracy and education. According to figures available in 1978, 91 of the 94 legislators belonging to the backward castes were from these castes. Similarly, of the 216 gazetted officers belonging to Other Backward Castes only seven belong to other castes. They have been the largest beneficiaries of the educational facilities, consuming as much as 98.6 per cent of the total provision for scholarships and stipends meant for the backward castes.

The scheme is against the upper castes. The rigours of reservation are to be felt by these people. The youth of these castes find themselves twice deprived. They had made a violent protest against the extension of this scheme to the Other Backward Castes. The scheme provoked the envy and ire of these people. It turned the whole of Bihar into a cauldron of caste tensions. The situation was highly inflamed. Trouble spread quickly and tension assumed frightening proportions — there was a wave of violence in Bihar. Though things have softened with the passage of time, there is still a strong backlash against the reservation policy. Misgivings against the scheme of protective discrimination have been accentuated.

To sum up, protective discrimination is one of the many measures aimed at reallocation of resources on egalitarian lines. It is affirmative state action to compensate the historically and structurally disadvantaged for their disabilities. It is a compensatory programme available to those who cannot hold their own. If the policy was initiated to correct the damage caused by the traditional ascriptive stratification, its extension to newer strata indicates the failure of the state to prevent continued appropriation of modern resources by the entrenched few. If the sins of the upper castes are responsible for its arrival immediately after Independence, its increased clientele is the product of upper-caste manipulation to keep others stagnant. The diminished political clout of the upper castes made them accept the increased applicability of reservation. Similarly, the increasing power of other castes has prompted them to successfully strive for corresponding elevation with regard to other status attributes.

The experience of the execution of the policy of protective discrimination reveals its ineffectiveness among the lowest of the lowly. They are in great number. The policy has helped the creation of a new schism and perpetuation of the old ones. It needs to be radically reoriented in favour of those who deserve it most. Among the depressed communities it should first go to those communities that have been left untouched. Among these also, the poorest should get first priority. Only then can the policy be justified as a measure of resource dispersal.☐

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Should India Go Nuclear?

KRISHAN KANT

I must pay my compliments to the Rifle Association for holding such lectures for a number of years as a part of the military education programme. This is an area of education and knowledge which has not yet been integrated into a national framework as in many other countries. That is why no debates on different aspects of national defence take place in the country. We bestir ourselves whenever there is an attack from Pakistan or China or there are reports that their defence preparedness could pose a threat to our security, and after a few months the discussion dies down. This lack of sustained interest and knowledge is also reflected in the debates in both Houses of Parliament. Very few members — not even reaching two digits — have adequate knowledge of the changing strategic environment with which the country's national defence has to cope. So far no tradition for genuine national security debates has been built up. Another factor which inhibits such debates is the attitude and policy of the Government not to place before the public from time to time an appraisal of the strategic situation based on facts and an absurd concept of secrecy that has been perpetuated by successive administrations. In such a climate, the efforts of your organisation are praiseworthy. I do hope a new defence consciousness will grow out of efforts such as this.

It is rather unfortunate that even 34 years after achieving Independence, India needs a debate about its geostrategic and historical role and we are yet to define and discover what our national security priorities are. Our national mind hovers between our supposed national mission of peace and friendship on the one hand and the national imperative to keep the nation strong enough to meet all possible eventualities on the other. We do not seem to have learnt any lessons from our experience. Jawaharlal Nehru's role and image as world peacemaker and founder of the non-aligned movement suffered a serious blow when the Chinese marched into India and humiliated the nation. They are still holding on to 40,000 square miles of our territory. A national hero and a rising Ashoka passed away licking the wounds inflicted by the Chinese *bhai* and Panchsheel partner. The country showed deference to Nehru but will not forgive any ruler, political leader or party if he, she or it continues to waver between the two extremes and is not able to find a balance and there is to be yet another failure to safeguard our security in the fullest measure. A weak leadership cannot play any role in nation-building, nor can it keep the country together. Weakness is the biggest curse for any nation or leadership.

The nuclear debate in this country depicts a split mind. We started thinking about it when China had its first nuclear explosion in 1964 and followed it up with missile tests. The debate in India waxed and waned depending upon the frequency of Chinese tests. Recently a similar situation has arisen vis-a-vis Pakistan. Excepting for an infinitesimal minority, the Indian political, administrative, social and economic elite are united on one point, that if Pakistan makes a bomb, then there will be no option left to India but to make one also — as if India exists only with reference to Pakistan and has no independent regional or global identity and a role of its own. If India had developed its nuclear defence system and doctrine following the Pokharan test such a situation would not have come about. Yet various polls conducted by our media have revealed that our people have always been in favour of the country acquiring nuclear weapon capability.

This hesitancy to exercise nuclear option until today not only in the political leadership but among the economic, social, academic elite is attributable to our not being clear in our mind as a nation what is the destiny of India and how we should try to fulfil it in the geostrategic situation in which it is placed. It is time we brought some definition to it. Otherwise the drift may cost us very heavily.

Many among the elite feel that India has a natural role to play in promoting a climate of peace and friendship in the world by virtue of the Indian heritage and especially that left to us by Gandhiji who conducted the entire national struggle through the instrument of non-violence and satyagraha. Nehru attempted to extend the Gandhian concept to international relations through non-alignment and the concept of peaceful co-existence. The non-aligned movement helped in reducing the tension in the super-power confrontation and prevented it from escalating. Today the role of non-alignment is widely acknowledged. Given this background in which our perceptions and policies originated, it would be quite pertinent to analyse Gandhiji and the peace movements in the world. Here I may make it clear that I am not referring to the movement led by the World Peace Council under the leadership of the Soviet Union, which is itself a nuclear super-power. The Soviet Union, in order to safeguard its own security vis-a-vis the United States and to ensure its place in world affairs, decided to develop its own nuclear weapons. And I must say it was a correct decision in the interest of their nation. The Soviet leadership was clear about their national destiny and geostrategic situation.

The author is a former Member of Parliament. This contribution is the text of the Capt. G.V. Modak Memorial Lecture delivered by him under the auspices of the Ahmedabad Military and Rifle Training Association at the Military Education Campus, Khanpur, Ahmedabad, on February 19, 1982.

Gandhiji was no doubt a war resister but not a pacifist. He stood for abolition of war from the world by struggling against it and not by staying out of it. He was not a Utopian but a realist. He preferred violence to cowardice. He worked for inculcating a spirit of resistance against injustice, inequity and domination and for lifting entire mankind towards equality of opportunity and dignity. His basic approach was quite different from that of a person like Bertrand Russell. Russell refused to participate in war or war effort.

Gandhiji participated in the Zulu war in South Africa in the Red Cross. After his return to India he worked to persuade the Indian people to join the army on the side of the Allies in the First World War of 1914-18. He was decorated with Kaisar-i-Hind medal for his services which he renounced in the wake of the Jallianwalabagh tragedy. Even in the Second World War, he had no objection to the Congress taking up the reins of government and participating in the war effort against the Japanese. The Congress wanted an Indian to have the defence portfolio (in their negotiations with the Cripps mission). The defence of India, they argued, should be in the hands of Indians.

Bertrand Russell urged individuals to refuse to fight and said pacifists were justified in emigrating to a neutral country. Russell himself was in America during the Second World War, though it did trouble his conscience as he wrote to a friend in July 1940: "We constantly wish we were in England — it is like being absent when someone whom one loves very much is dangerously ill. But the children and the need for earning money make it impossible." Much of the pacifism amongst the intellectuals and so-called sane policy makers is similarly motivated by 'children and the need for earning money.'

Gandhiji's motivation was different. His ideals and practices were born out of deeply held idealistic convictions as well as realism based on the level of mental and spiritual development of his own people because he wanted the people as a whole to be elevated in their consciousness and norms through the struggle. He was also conscious of the inherent limitations of mankind. He would not prescribe his own standards and approach for which he had prepared himself by constant internal struggle, a kind of *tapasya*, to ordinary people, for he knew the populace was dominated by fear and anxiety and deeply devoted to comforts and pleasures of life and the Governments as they were constituted were essentially based on violence. His prescription would be to meet their short-term needs in a pragmatic way but at the same time in the direction where they could rid themselves of fear over a period of time and move the state from violence to popular cooperation and support which would enable the state to function progressively with lesser violence.

Gandhiji would never have left his post of duty with the people and moved to a neutral country. He would have devised a strategy for the people which would strengthen individuals and society morally and spiritually to resist an invader. He would have even defended and supported violence or war when individuals, groups or nations could not find any other way to resist evil, injustice and occupation. He would not adopt a holier-than-thou attitude as many pacifists do. Let me draw attention to some quotations from Gandhiji which will make my point clear:

> "Non-violence is not a mechanical thing. You do not become non-violent by merely saying 'I shall not use force'. It must be felt in the heart...When there is that feeling it will express itself through some action" (pp 506-507. *The Last Phase*; *Harijan*, March 9, 1940, p 31).
>
> A question was put to Gandhiji, "Suppose someone came and hurled an insult at you, should you allow yourself to be humiliated?" He answered, "If you feel humiliated, you will be justified in slapping the bully in the face or taking whatever action you might deem necessary to vindicate your self-respect. The use of force, in the circumstances, would be a natural consequence if you are not a coward (p. 506, *The Last Phase*; *Harijan*, March 9, 1940, p 31).
>
> Another question: "Supposing in the presence of superior brute force, one feels helpless, would he be justified in using just enough force to prevent the perpetration of wrong?" Gandhiji answered, "Yes. But there need not be a feeling of helplessness if there is real non-violence in you. To feel helpless in the presence of violence is not non-violence but cowardice. Cowardice must not be confused with non-violence." (*Harijan*, March 9, 1940, p 31).

The issue to be assessed is whether the people of India and especially the so-called peace enthusiasts and unilateral disarmers have developed that spirit of non-violence to an extent that they are not feeling helpless before superior brute force.

Gandhiji was an evolving man both in his search for answers and in preparing the nation for the ultimate goal, while being completely realistic in his perceptions of the situation he was living in and functioning.

Here are a few other quotes:

> A question was asked: "Is it possible for a modern state, which is essentially based on force, to offer non-violent resistance for countering internal as well as external forces of disorder?" Gandhiji answered: "It is not possible for a modern state based on force non-violently to resist forces of disorder, whether external or internal ... (but) *it is claimed that a state can be based on non-violence*, that is, it can offer non-violent resistance against a world combination based on armed forces. Such a state was Ashoka's. The example can be repeated". (p 510, *The Last Phase*; *Harijan*, May 12, 1946, p 128).

The issue is whether Indian rulers and people have renounced war as Ashoka had done. Have they reached a stage of moral and spiritual development when they are capable of renouncing war and violence? Or are these only academic or theoretical propositions propounded by those sitting in ivory towers of the Gandhian era when it was left to Gandhiji to thank and decide?

Gandhiji was aware of the lack of answers to issues arising out of the situation when India became independent and decided to keep an army. There is a relevant and interesting discussion between General Cariappa and Gandhiji. The General asked, "I cannot do my duty well for the country if I concentrate only on telling the troops of non-violence all the time, subordinating their main task of preparing themselves efficiently to be good soldiers. So I ask you, please, to give me the 'Child's Guide to Knowledge'.... Tell me, please, how I can put this over, that is, the spirit of non-violence, to the troops ... without endangering their sense of duty to train themselves well professionally as soldiers....” Gandhiji replied, “You have asked me to tell you in a tangible and concrete form how you can put over to the troops you command the need for non-violence”. Half closing his eyes he added, “I am still groping in the dark for the answer. I will find it and give it to you some day”. (*The Last Phase*, p. 524).

I do not know if the protagonists of peace and unilateral disarmament who advocate abjuration of nuclear weapons for India have been able to find the answer which Gandhiji thought he was still to find and hoped to give some time. He, unfortunately, did not live long enough to find the answer and give it. This question was with him earlier even in 1928 when he wrote in *Young India* of September 13:

> “If there was a national government, whilst I should not take any direct part in any war, I can conceive of occasions when it would be my duty to vote for the military training of those who wish to take it. For I know that all its members do not believe in non-violence to the extent I do. It is not possible to make a person or society non-violent by compulsion” (p 508, *The Last Phase*).

Whether it is a question of military training, keeping an army, or equipping the army with modern sophisticated weapons, the relevant considerations are the same as were before Gandhiji in 1928. I shall deal later with some of the considerations which should weigh with us.

Gandhiji did not ask Nehru or the Government of independent India to renounce war or not to keep the defence forces. It may not be out of place to refer to another aspect — the Pakistan question — while we are on Gandhiji’s approach. This might help us in reaching realistic conclusions. It is again from *The Last Phase* (p 476).

> “At the prayer meeting on September 26, Gandhiji remarked that he had always been an opponent of all warfare but if there was no other way of securing justice from Pakistan, if Pakistan persistently refused to see its proved error and continued to minimise it, war would be the only alternative left to Government. War was no joke. That way lay destruction, but he could never advise anyone to put up with injustice. If all the Hindus were annihilated for a just cause he would not mind it. True, his own way was different, he worshipped God which was truth and non-violence. But then, he was not the Government”.

Gandhiji in his private advice to Nehru and the Government of India did not disapprove of the Indian Army being sent to Kashmir and gave his best wishes when Brig. Sen went to Gandhiji for his blessings before flying to the frontline in Kashmir. He spoke publicly also about it, and here is an extract from *The Last Phase* at (p 502):

> “When the Kashmir invasion by the tribesmen was at its height and the invading army composed of Afridis and the like, ably officered, was advancing upon Srinagar burning and looting villages all along the route, Gandhiji remarked in one of his prayer addresses that it was difficult to believe that this intrusion could take place without some kind of encouragement from the Pakistan Government. He could not escape the conclusion, he said, that Pakistan Government was directly or indirectly encouraging the raid. The Chief Minister of the Frontier Province was reported to have openly encouraged the raid and had even appealed to the Islamic world for help. It was, therefore, right for the Union Government to save the fair city by rushing troops to Srinagar. He would not shed a tear if the little Union force was wiped out bravely defending Kashmir like the Spartans at Thermopylae nor would he mind Sheikh Abdullah and his Muslim and Hindu and Sikh comrades dying at their posts in defence of Kashmir. That would be a glorious example to the rest of India. It would make the people of India forget that the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs were ever one another’s enemies”. Pyarelal continues: “Some people were shocked by Gandhiji expressing his appreciation of the Indian Union Government’s action in sending troops for the defence of Kashmir. His exhortation to the defenders to be wiped out to the last man in clearing Kashmir soil of the raiders rather than submit was even dubbed Churchillian”.

So the basic difference between Gandhiji and the pacifists must be properly understood to clear the confusion in the national mind. Writing in the pamphlet ‘For Pacifists,’ he said that he would “rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she ... in a cowardly manner become or remain a helpless witness to her dishonour.”

Undoubtedly he would have liked India to become non-violent and brave — but after raising the citizens to that level. In reply to a question, “Will free India carry out total mobilisation and adopt the methods of total war?” Gandhiji answered, “I cannot say whether free India will take part in militarism or choose to go the non-violent way. But I can say without hesitation, if I can turn India to non-violence, I will certainly do so. If I succeed in converting 40 crores of people to non-violence, it will be a tremendous thing, a wonderful transformation”. (p. 508, *The Last Phase; Harijan*, July 19, 1942, p. 234).

Stephen Cohen in his book *The Indian Army* compares Gandhiji’s and Nehru’s attitudes. According to him, Nehru was a Fabian anti-militarist while Gandhiji was not.

It is for the rulers of Indian and the protagonists of the abjuration of India nuclear option to judge for themselves whether they have been able to convert the 70 crore people of India to non-violence. They should first ask themselves how much they have been converted to non-violence in their personal or societal relations in the country. As is obvious from the above, Gandhiji would have advocated and taken the country to the non-military way only after successfully converting the population of India to non-violence and not pacifism.

Bertrand Russell and many others of his way of thinking reached a point where they considered the survival of man to be more important than any other consideration — ideological, political, national or territorial. In his essay, “Inquiry into Meaning and Truth” he commented, ‘I feel the only thing I can do for the world for the moment is to try to preserve as much as possible of our persisting civilisation, in the hope of renaissance in a thousand years’. Many Indians took inspiration and approvingly quoted Russell at the time of the border conflict with China. Betrand Russell wrote, “This (great hour) is fateful for India and her friends. But unless every serious effort is made to prevent an extended conflict with China, and unless this is the first priority of Indian policy, even if territorial loss is involved, democracy in India is doomed. Democratic institutions will not survive even a few months of full militarism and economic advance will be permanently halted”.

Probably for him survival was more important than human dignity. If this argument is taken to its logical conclusion, Russell's life-long struggle becomes illogical. All struggles that the Namibian and the South African peoples are waging would become obsolete because the South African Government possessing atomic weapons may use them as a last resort to keep control over their territories and the system of Apartheid. According to the Russell logic, which he espoused in the last stages of his life, mankind must wait for inner contradictions to destroy the dictators and imperialists rather than wage struggles for freedom and human equality. Can the movement of history and people's urges for equality be curbed because of dangers of physical suffering and even threat of annihilation? Would Gandhiji have agreed to that? He was basically a resister against evil, dominance and injustice and would not give in, whatever the threat. He would not approve of the peace of the grave. Perhaps the pacifists would prefer that kind of peace for personal suruival!

At least one can understand those pacifists propagating non-nuclear as well as non-military course of action for nations. It is however difficult to understand others who support the acquisition and maintenance of defence forces but would not like India to go nuclear. Their arguments may be divided into four categories:

1. If nuclear weapons are used, there will be immense danger of destruction and annihilation and so India should not go in for them.
2. Nuclear deterrence is of no use. Nuclear weapons have not been used after the Second World War in any conflict.
3. India should not go in for nuclear weapons but try to have a nuclear umbrella or guarantee.
4. Even if neighbours or others make them, India should not. India can meet the challenge with unity and strength of will.

The first consideration brings back to our mind much of the debate of the thirties when air power came to dominate military affairs. Then predictions were made that the next war would be fought by aeroplanes spreading poison gas and disease germs. Bertrand Russell wrote in 1933: "If either side wins the next war (which is unlikely), it will be the side whose young men have shown the most intelligence in chemistry and bacteriology". Speaking to the Fabian Society in 1935 Russell prophesied that air attacks on big cities would mean destruction and panic, involving a total breakdown of food supplies, and launching of millions of starving desperate nomads from the ruined towns on the countryside. He predicted tremendous loss of life and said he was afraid the war would go on until Europe was in chaos, industrialism and ordinary government had disappeared and there were widespread epidemics. Therefore gas-masks were distributed and 'gas drills' were performed by the Army. It was assumed that air raids on London might lead to breakdown of the Central Government. England survived these raids, and so did many other European countries.

No doubt the destruction with atom bomb will be much more severe and costly to the human race. This scenario should be applicable to all and not merely to India. According to a UN report even countries which do not possess the weapons will suffer if there is a general nuclear war between two super-powers because of radioactive fallout. But one should distinguish between a limited nuclear war between two countries with a few bombs and a general nuclear war involving the super-powers. In the former case the destruction will be somewhat greater than in the Second World War but countries will survive. In case of nuclear war between the super powers, civilisation will perish.

Such arguments would lead one to assume that the objection would be met if nuclear weapons of reduced lethal power or capacities could be developed which come to more or less the level of conventional weapons. Continued underground testing has produced nuclear weapons of very low yield, down to 0.1 kilo ton according to some reports. It has also produced a variety of options between heat, blast, shock and radiation. In yield there are now available a range of nuclear weapons which compare with advanced conventional weapons. The conventional fuel air explosive has five times the explosive effect of TNT and an FAE dispenser with 0.1 kilo ton equivalent is possible. The closing of the gap has obvious significance in overcoming the so-called 'fire break' principle, which has been observed since 1945. Reduced radiation nuclear weapons have been developed since early the 1960s which enhance blast and heat and produce very limited radiation.

It should be remembered that the advanced conventional weapons are today as lethal as low yield nuclear weapons. Ten times more people than in Nagasaki and Hiroshima were killed in Manchuria in the Second World War. In Nagasaki and Hiroshima about 2,00,000 were killed. Hitler killed six million Jews. In the 1000 bomber raids on German cities and fire raids on Tokyo more people were killed than in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. There is no immorality in nuclear weapons themselves if we decide that we will not be the first to use them but have them only for deterrence. This is the position in regard to poison gas under the Geneva Convention. As a Major in the Army told me: "The country has decided to keep an army, an air force and a navy. It means the nation has decided that our forces will kill if necessary to defend the country. The question is what is the best strategy to maintain the sovereignty of the country and dignity of its citizens. If you have decided as a policy that we will go and kill our enemies at the risk of our lives, then the risk to our lives must be minimal. Only then the defence forces can remain strong and face any danger. If the defence forces know that the enemy has the ultimate weapon of the present times, the morale of the forces cannot be kept".

It will be unpatriotic and stupid of the Government and the country's elite to throw our forces into the jaws of death knowing full well that they have to face the ultimate weapon on the other side. The honest course in such a situation would be for the Government leaders and the so-called intellectual elite to lead the fight against the enemy and demonstrate their moral courage and not ask the jawans to face sure death and defeat. Therefore, the political and the intellectual elite must search their hearts first and come out honestly and say that they are asking our jawans to take impossible risks with the odds totally against them. An army will fight only when it is confident that the people of its country have done their best to equip it. If it develops doubts on that score, that army will not fight when the war starts.

The second argument that deterrence has no use may be looked at from the point of view of historical experience. Where only one side has the weapon the situation is very different from one when the two adversaries have limited nuclear arsenals. Threats in such asymmetric situations have worked:

1. After the Second World War in 1946 the Truman papers show the US conveyed a nuclear threat to the Soviets to withdraw their armies from Iran and it worked.
2. When the Panmujom talks were stalemated during the Korean war, Eisenhower is on record in his book *Mandate for Change* that he conveyed a nuclear threat to the Chinese and the talks did come to a conclusive stage.
3. Eisenhower conveyed a nuclear threat to the Chinese when they were bombarding the Quemoy-Matsu Islands with a view to annexing them. The Chinese wanted the Soviets to give a counter-threat in their support but the Russians dilly-dallied. The American threat worked and it was then that the Chinese decided to have their own independent nuclear deterrent.
4. During the 'Ussuri River Crisis' on the Soviet-Chinese border, it is said that the Russians gave a nuclear threat to China to stop nibbling at the border and it worked.

There were two other occasions when such a threat was considered or is supposed to have had its effect:

1. During the Vietnam War when the US troops were faced with a difficult situation at Khe Sanh, considerable discussion took place in the US about the possible use of nuclear weapons. Probably the counter possibility of use by the Soviets deterred them.
2. A section of the leadership in the US feels convinced that it was the USS *Enterprise* having nuclear weapons on board sent into the Bay of Bengal in 1971 that deterred the Indian leadership from dismembering Pakistan.

If in various conflicts during the last 35 years after the Second World War nuclear weapons have not been used, it is because both super-powers possess nuclear weapons and most of the industrialised countries believe that it was the nuclear weapon which stabilised peace in Europe.

The development of the new doctrine of limited nuclear war has great significance for the non-nuclear nations. US Presidential Directive No. 59 (accepted by NATO allies) regards nuclear weapons not only as a deterrent but also as a weapon to be actually used in a controlled or limited role. If they are used in Europe it will not limit the war. It is bound to escalate because both sides possess enormous nuclear striking power and the existing command and control system cannot limit escalation. So both the super-powers and their allies will think a hundred times before resorting to the 'mininukes' or a demonstration nuclear strike. The real danger is to the non-nuclear weapon states who do not have the capacity to strike back. The Reagan limited-war theories and demonstration strikes may be used only against non-aligned and non-nuclear nations. Also, such doctrines legitimise the use of nuclear weapons by countries like Israel, South Africa and Pakistan. It is in this context that a country like India has to take a decision about its strategy as a non-aligned nation.

Turning to the third consideration of India opting for a nuclear umbrella, it may be pertinent to refer to what Acharya J.B. Kripalani said in the Lok Sabha in November 1964 following China's first nuclear bomb blast. He warned India that it was useless to talk of China's peaceful intentions and submitted that in order to meet China's new threat India would have to look to the West. "We have to rely on the West and we must see that we are assured of their help. If we want to have a deterrent here, it may be necessary for the West to have even bases here as they have in European countries, and nobody has lost his sovereignty because America is helping them." This view of obtaining a nuclear umbrella at any cost from the West was held by many Ghandhians' and peace seekers.

Lal Bahadur Shastri on his first visit to the United Kingdom as Prime Minister probably discussed the possibility of a nuclear umbrella with Prime Minister Wilson. He did not succeed in getting the necessary protective guarantees. If he had succeeded, it would have been at the cost of non-alignment and independence. In 1967, Vikram Sarabhai and L.K. Jha went to the USSR, France, Britain and the United States and explored the possibility of an umbrella when the idea of a non-proliferation treaty was being discussed. But the response was negative. When the Western countries were unwilling to give us even conventional weapons against the Chinese because of their partiality for Pakistan, it was in fact total unrealism that made people look to the West for nuclear guarantees.

The implications of the umbrella have to be clearly understood. Can any guarantee to India and other non-nuclear nations, in general, either unilaterally or jointly, be more credible than the kind of guarantee built into the military alliance system? De Gaulle decided that France must exercise its independent nuclear option despite the NATO guarantee. This decision was based on the French perception that the US would not risk its cities to defend France notwithstanding President Kennedy's categorical assurance on June 25, 1963, that "the US will risk its cities to defend yours". Can India ever hope to get the kind of guarantee that the United Kingdom and France had? In fact, all that the nuclear weapon powers have undertaken under the non-proliferation treaty is to convene a meeting of the Security Council to consider appropriate action. India did not consider it as a credible guarantee.

Besides, such a guarantee would necessitate India to integrate its defence system with those of nuclear powers, stationing nuclear weapons on its soil to be manned by their personnel and having command and control infrastructure. In addition they will even ask that India should not take any independent action even with conventional military forces lest it should escalate into nuclear war. For the US, China and Pakistan are more important strategically and otherwise. They will therefore not give any guarantee against Chinese and Pakistani threats. Consequently we can rely only on Soviet guarantees, if at all any power would give such a guarantee. If De Gaulle did not believe that the Americans would risk their cities to protect France, can we trust that the Russians will risk their cities to protect us against China and Pakistan? The Chinese felt that the Soviet guarantee did not work when they were military allies of the Soviet Union. Incidentally, the Indo-Soviet Treaty does not give any guarantee that the Soviet Union will act in India's defence. It provides only for mutual consultations. When the Chinese attacked India in 1962, the USSR was involved in the Cuban missile crisis, and therefore it was not in a position to support India against China. In such circumstances was issued the famous statement that 'Chinese brothers' and 'Indian friends' should make up. Now the USSR has three more nuclear adversaries. Therefore, if at any time the USSR was engaged in a crisis and at the same time Pakistan or China were to threaten India, can India expect the USSR to come to its rescue?

So no guarantee can be credible. Can India's security be bartered against unsure guarantees? Seeking nuclear guarantees will not enhance India's prestige but reduce it to a laughing stock, especially if we are to look for guarantees against Pakistan. Can such a nation play any role in world affairs?

(To be continued)

Syed Ahmad Khan & Rationalism in Islam

ALI ASHRAF

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's efforts to reconcile Islam to 19th century liberalism led him to the position of secularism where every human being was a Muslim inasmuch as he abided by the laws of nature, and Islam was only a reaffirmation of these laws. This universalism and freedom of thought which he preached could not go together with opposition to democracy resulting from his aristocratic class bias. The Muslims of this sub-continent had to pay the price for the failure to resolve this contradiction. They appear to be still suffering from its consequences.

— A.A.

SPEAKING on the occasion of 'Sir Syed Day' on October 17, 1954, Dr. Zakir Hussain had said: "Syed Ahmad Khan wanted to build a multi-faceted structure of the national life of the Muslims. He could not complete the whole of it ... He constructed a part from which he expected the future generations to appreciate the entire plan and carry it to completion. But those who came after him turned it into his graveyard ... And in this grave they buried his ideas."[1]

These are hard and bitter words from one who was not given to exaggeration.

The Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, Aligarh, which subsequently developed into a University, was but a small part of the comprehensive scheme which Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had prepared for the upliftment of Indian Muslims, and the reformation of their religious and cultural life. Explaining his aims and objects in the sixth issue of his journal *Tahzeebul Akhlaque*, Sir Syed mentioned the following items:

"First, freedom of opinion.
"Second, reforming of religious faith.
"Third, religious ideas and practices.
"Fourth, research and analysis of certain religious problems.
"Fifth, correction of certain religious matters.
"Sixth, education of the young.
"Seventh, making provision for education.
"Eighth, women's education.
"Ninth, promoting skill and the arts and crafts."[2]

The fact that education came sixth in the list did not mean that Sir Syed Ahmad Khan attached less importance to it. But it certainly indicated the kind of education that he desired to be imparted. Education had to be characterised by freedom of opinion, and the reform of religious beliefs and practices which were accorded top priority in his scheme of things.

The main difference between Sir Syed on the one hand, and his detractors among the Ulema and others belonging to various religious schools and sects on the other, related neither to English education nor to the question of joining British Government service.[3] In fact, his two most rabid opponents who took the lead in organising an edict expelling Sir Syed from the fold of Islam, Maulvi Imdad Ali and Maulvi Ilahi Bakhsh, were both in the service of the British Government, one a Deputy Collector, and the other a Sub-Judge. The roots of their difference lay precisely in Sir Syed's ideas of religious reform. They related not only to the relatively minor issues like that of Muslims eating with Christians and Jews, the fact of Christ having been born without a father (which Sir Syed did not accept), human slavery and polygamy (which, according to Sir Syed, Islam virtually prohibited). Differences on these questions reflec-

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ted more basic differences on questions of principle as well as of the methodology to be adopted in the exigesis of the Quran. The fundamental aim of Sir Syed's comprehensive plan of reform was to face the challenge of the West by adapting its main ideas to our needs, and to bring about an intellectual transformation among the Muslims of India. The fact that Muslim religious fundamentalism is once again raising its head makes the religious and philosophical views of Sir Syed not less but more relevant today.

Sir Syed's own understanding of his mission was characterised by a sense of continuity from earlier Islam, especially the *Mu'tazela*[4]. The latter, who constituted one of the earliest schools of rationalism among the Muslims, made their appearance as early as the later *Omaiyads*. The essential point of departure of the *Mu'tazela* was that they did not consider human reason to be irrelevant in matters of faith. Maulana Shibli Nu'mani relates that when objections were raised against the repressions and brutalities committed by the rulers belonging to the *Omaiyad* dynasty, the latter offered the plea that man does nothing except what God wills him to do. The victims of their regime of terror, however, found it necessary to tear off the facade of this theological defence of governmental misdeeds. The *Mu'tazela* insisted that blame and responsibility had to be apportioned. They, therefore, enunciated the principle that man, by virtue of his reason and understanding, is free to make his choice. Accordingly, they are also known in Islamic history by the name of *Qadriah*, that is, the sect which believes in man's freedom of choice.[5]

An important point to be noted here, incidentally, is the close relationship between theological and philosophical controversies, on the one hand, and social and political issues, on the other, even in those early times.

In fact, Maulana Shibli has noted that all the religious schisms that took place in Islam, for example, between the *Sunni*[6] and the *Shia*[7], between the latter and the *Khariji*[8], between the *Mu'tazela* and the *Asha'ira*[9], and the *Batinia*[10] were due primarily to social and political causes.[11]

As to which of these schools genuinely represented, in letter and in spirit, the real Islam, Shibli has an interesting theory to offer. He says: "Though like the other religious schools, *I'tezal* was born in the later period of the Prophet's Companions, it was present in an embryonic form in the early years of Islam. To assign the origin of any of these religious schools to this or that period is doing a kind of injustice to it. Either it should be said that in early Islam, that is, during the lifetime of the Prophet and his Companions, none of these religious schools ... existed, or otherwise, it has to be admitted that all of these had already emerged during the Prophet's time."[12]

In other words, Maulana Shibli Nu'mani concedes that the rationalist and the anti-rationalist schools of thought in Islam had both originated during the Prophet's lifetime, and, therefore, from the religious, Islamic point of view, on the basis of deriving their authority from the Prophet, neither of these schools can claim precedence over the other.

The development of *Ilm-e-Kalam* proper (rationalist theology) took place, however, only after translations of the Greek philosophers into Arabic had thrown open the floodgates of new ideas to Muslim society and made it susceptible to new influences. The efforts of Muslim thinkers, however, to reconcile the teachings of Islam, which, in itself, has never been a static concept, to the then-known propositions of Greek science and philosophy, were not unaccompanied by the most bitter controversies and often severe repression.

All this is relevant in an objective assessment of Sir Syed's religious and philosophical views because very often the categories were borrowed from the old *Ilm-e-Kalam*, and if not Sir Syed himself, at least his colleague Mohsin-ul-Mulk sought to justify many ideas of Sir Syed with reference to the authorities from olden times.

For example, Mohsin-ul-Mulk argued in support of Sir Syed by claiming that "the Muslim philosophers in the second century or at the latest by the fourth century (Hijri) had come to understand the reality of nature in the same manner as the philosophers of the present era, and they also said the same things which Syed Sahib says today.'"[13]

Thus, while Sir Syed sought to reconcile Islam with 19th century natural and social sciences, Mohsin-ul-Mulk was attempting a reconciliation between the views of Sir Syed and those of the early philosophers and theologians of Islam. Mohsin-ul-Mulk was a follower of the school of Asha'ira, and the most eminent among them — *Al Ghazali*[14] — had in his writings sought to bring about a reconciliation between the views of the rationalists and those of the orthodox school.

The *Asha'ira*, on the one hand, admitted in accordance with the orthodox position that the *Quran* was eternal in God. But, on the other, faced with the objection that the Arabic language used in the *Quran* showed — like the language spoken by the Arabs in those days — traces of Hebrew and Jewish influence, they maintained that its expression in words and syllables was created in time.

This, too, was the position of Shah Wali-ullah[15] who, in his book *Tafhimat-e-Ilahia* had maintained that only the meaning of the *Quran* was revealed to the Prophet by God, whereas the language used is the one with which the Prophet was acquainted because of his having been born in Arabia.

Sir Syed differed. In order to answer this question in the context of the intellectual milieu of the 19th century, he had to go beyond the bounds of this controversy and pose the whole problem of *wahi* (revelation) on a different plane.

Sir Syed argued that a dichotomy between the meaning and the word is not possible. Ideas always come into the mind clothed in words. But having thus restored the unity of content and form, the meaning and language of the *Quran*, Sir Syed gave an entirely original interpretation of the phenomenon of *wahi* or revelation. The prophets, according to him, were endowed with something like a sixth sense which is not given to ordinary mortals. This he called the trait of Prophethood. *Wahi* or revelation is the response of this extraordinary, Prophetic sense to the developing events in the world. And that is how Sir Syed explains the fact that the Quran was not revealed all at once but only in pieces as the situation demanded.[16]

Having thus bypassed the age-old controversy concerning the eternity or otherwise of the *Quran,* Sir Syed proceeded to lay down a more important and fundamental proposition that the Quran being the *word of God,* and the objective world, as we know it, being the *work of God,* there cannot be any contradiction between the two.[17] This implied that the *Quran* had to be understood not only through the medium of Arabic as spoken at the time of the Prophet, but also in the light of the latest discoveries of natural sciences and in conformity with them.

This, to say the least, was not only a highly unorthodox but also a very dynamic way of *Quranic* interpretation. In this the key, active role is played by human reason.

With Sir Syed reason is the supreme criterion, the ultimate test even of the teaching of religion. Thus in the very first issue of his journal *Tahzeebul Akhlaque,* by way of his testament, he wrote: "After all these considerations, I came to the conclusion that the only means of gaining knowledge, conviction or faith is reason."[18]

Making reason the sole guide in the cognition of reality, Sir Syed had to face the inevitable question: Since it is proved that reason is not infallible, and reasonings do differ, how can one distinguish between right and wrong and find one's bearing in this wide world?

Sir Syed tackled this problem with characteristic boldness and optimism — and faith in human reason. He wrote:

"Then I considered how to guarantee against mistakes being committed by reason. I admit that in reality there cannot be any guarantee against this. But when reason is applied in practice, then the mistake of the reason of one person is corrected by the reason of another, the mistake of the reason of one age is corrected by the reason of another age. But when knowledge, conviction or faith is not based on reason, then it is impossible to arrive at them in any age or period."[19]

It will, perhaps, be difficult to find in the whole of Muslim philosophical literature anything comparable to this.

Sir Syed had little direct knowledge of the latest trends in European philosophy of his time. It is, therefore, remarkable that he evolved a theory of cognition which, notwithstanding the many contradictions in his ideas, can be rightly considered among the most advanced for his times in India. With him reason is no more contemplative and abstract, but arises out of and is applied in practice, it is not the reason of one individual but the collective wisdom of society as a whole correcting each other's mistakes, not the reason of one age but the reason and wisdom of each age being corrected in the evolutionary process by the reason of the following generations. It is this concrete, collective and evolutionary concept of cognition and reason which Sir Syed puts forward as the sole guide for man in his long journey through his universe. Man's knowledge goes on ever increasing, and with this his practice improves and his control over nature expands and consolidates.

This bold venture in the realm of thought was bound to shake the foundations of all traditional faith. Because inherent in this concept of the ever-expanding contours of man's knowledge of and control over nature was another and a more basic concept — the concept of the immutability of the laws of nature. Sir Syed was a religious man. But his understanding of religion was objective. Defining nature as the work of God, Sir Syed believed that nature had an objective existence with its own regularities and laws which do not change. But if this be so, then what remains of the powers and functions of God? Here the traditional ideas about God were subjected by Sir Syed to serious modifications. This evoked protests even from some of his closest colleagues. Mohsin-ul-Mulk wrote: "The way you treat the (question of the) qualities of God...can only mean that God is a useless being and to ascribe will and power to him...is meaningless."[20] For if the laws of nature will take their own course and even God cannot do anything to change them, then prayer and application are also useless in so far as this cannot bring about any change in the conditions of man. Mohsin-ul-Mulk wrote that "to deny the efficacy of prayer in the achievement of material objectives is in practice heresy"[21]

Sir Syed's reply is interesting. He wrote: "God is omnipotent.... And if by virtue of being all-powerful he sent the hypocrites and the infidels into heaven and the Muslims into hell — then what will you do?"[22]

These discussions couched in theological terms were no exercises in abstract and abstruse scholastics. They had serious practical implications. By denying the role of prayer and supplication in mundane affairs, Sir Syed was, in fact, establishing the primacy of human action, man's conscious effort to improve his lot.

Moreover, some of these arguments had a logic of their own whose momentum carried them to positions perhaps not imagined earlier. If the *Quran* and Islam are in complete accord with nature and its laws, then, argued Sir Syed, every human being, irrespective of his attitude to religion, is a Muslim inasmuch as he can thrive and live a meaningful life only by observing these laws. But, concedes Sir Syed, a distinction has to be made between a Muslim and a Mohammadan.[23] While conscious religious beliefs, thus, come to be of little relevance in the struggle for material, social progress, Mohammadanism — faith in the prophethood of Hazrat Mohammad — is not held to be a necessary condition for salvation even in the world hereafter.[24]

It will be no exaggeration to say that these ideas of Sir Syed provided a basis for inter-denominational unity and a secular society in India. Sir Syed's vehement opposition to pan-Islamism is well known.

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Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was under strong pressure to recant his views publicly in the interest of the Anglo-Mohammadan Oriental College. He refused. Nevertheless he had to agree to close down the *Tahzeebul Akhlaque*, the powerful organ of freedom of opinion and free quest of ideas. He also had to promise to do everything so that his views on religion did not find their way into the AMO College[25]. He paid this price for the sake of this educational institution. In the end he found to his dismay that this institution was very far from what he had intended it to be.[26]

During his last days there came a final parting of ways between him and almost all his closest associates. Apparently the issue was a minor one — the election of his son Syed Mahmud as his successor. But for this issue to blow up into a major crisis could only have been due to the accumulated differences of a lifetime. A document denouncing him was signed by almost all his colleagues and sent to the press. If it did not see the light of day it was only due to the sudden death of Sir Syed. He died an unhappy man.

What went wrong with Sir Syed Ahmad Khan?

Various explanations have been put forward for this development. But the more important and significant cause from the point of view of both immediate and long-range consequences was the inner contradiction in which Sir Syed himself was involved. His ideas of freedom of opinion and expression, of rationalist interpretation of Islam, and his efforts in the cause of liberal education could not thrive on the basis of the old decadent aristocracy. Sir Syed was not only unable to make a break with this class but, in course of time, became more and more dependent on it. He based his movement of reform and education on the support of the Muslim aristocracy. His educational efforts, in the main, were aimed at spreading education among the aristocratic classes. Dr Syed Abid Husain has remarked that "Aligarh became the mirror of the desires and aspirations of that class of Muslims with whose help Sir Syed set up the AMO College and which controlled the Board of Trustees .... The college had almost nothing to do with the other aspects of Sir Syed's reform movement".

This was, perhaps, inevitable because of the anti-democratic sympathies of Sir Syed. He opposed the demand for holding the Indian Civil Service competitive examinations in India because members of the so-called inferior classes (even from among Muslims) would get an opportunity of joining the Indian bureaucracy and ruling over the members of the superior classes. It is wrong to say that Sir Syed's opposition to democracy arose because of his fear of the numerical superiority of Hindus. It was his concern to preserve the privileges of the Muslim aristocracy which made him oppose democracy within the Muslim community.

Rationalism and freedom of thought and expression cannot go together with opposition to democracy. Sir Syed and together with him the Muslims of this sub-continent had to pay the price of this contradiction which Sir Syed could not overcome. Even almost four decades after Independence and partition, the Muslims of India and Pakistan are still suffering from its consequences.

Today the situation is certainly very different from what it was during Sir Syed's time. Large sections of toiling Muslims — from among the peasantry, the artisans and the industrial working class, as well as the intelligentsia — constitute an organic part of the democratic movement.

A major task and challenge facing them is to carry forward the rationalist tradition of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan while, at the same time, overcoming his contradictions and class limitations.

References and Notes

1. Quoted by Abdullah Ghazi in his article 'Aligarh Tahreek Aur Jamia Millia', *Aligarh Magazine*, Spl. Number 1953-55, p 263.

2. *Tehzeebul Akhlaque*, Vol. I, No. 6, in the article: 'Kin Kin Cheezon m'n Tahzeeb Chahiye?'

3. Mohammad Ikram, *Mauj-e-Kausar*, p 67.

4. *Mu'tazela*, literally meaning the 'secessionists', constituted the earliest school of rationalists in Islam. Emerging into prominence in the second century AH (seventh century AD), their influence declined after the fourth AH.

5. Shibli Nu'mani, *Mazameen*, Vol. V pp 8-9.

6. *Sunni*, the major sect among the Muslims claiming to follow the *sunnah*, that is, the precepts of the Prophet.

7. *Shia*, literally a partisan. Name of sect which supported the claim of Ali, the fourth Caliph of Islam, against the preceding three.

8. *Khariji*, the extremists among Ali's supporters who denounced him for his compromise with Mu'aviya, the founder of Omaiyad dynasty.

9. *Asha'ira*, a school of thought which tried to follow a middle path between the traditionalists and rationalists, but in practice, adopted a rigid, conservative stand. Ghazali is the most eminent representative of this school.

10. *Batinia*, an unorthodox school, branch of the Shia sect, which insists on the allegorical interpretation of the Quran, so that revelation is made to mean not the literal statement but an inner meaning.

11. Shibli Nu'mani, *Mazameen*, vol. V, p 8, also *Ilmul Kalam*, part I, p 17.

12. Ibid, pp.5-6.

13. *Tahzeebul Akhlaque*, Sha'ban 1, 1312 AH.

14. *Al Ghazali*, d. 1111 AD, the most eminent exponent of the Asha'ira school of thought, and continues to maintain his authority as the ideologue of the most numerous sect, the Sunnis.

15. *Shah Wali-ullah*, born in Delhi in 1114 AH (1703 AD). He and his followers dominated all the significant schools of Muslim revivalism and renaissance from the 18th to the early 20th century in India.

16. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, *Tahreer fi Usul-ul-Tafseer* (Note on the Principles of Exegesis, being the introduction to his *Tafseer-ul-Quran*) pp 3 and 12.

17. Ibid, p 19.
18. *Tahzeebul Akhlaque*, Vol. I, No 1.
19. Ibid, 15 Shawwal, 1278 AH.
20. Ibid, 1 Ramazan, 1312 AH.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. For a detailed discussion of this point see Prof Umruddin, 'New Religious Mode of Thought of Sir Syed', Aligarh Magazine *op. cit.*
24. *Hayat-e-Javed* by Altaf Husain Hali, part II, p 762.
25. Dr Syed Abid Husain, *Hundustani Musalman Aayeena-e-Ayyam m'en*, p 57.
26. Ibid; *Aligarh Magazine*, op. cit., p 13.

Regan and Third World (*from page 5*)

can be used as a quid pro quo is being emphasised. America's friends — Chile, Argentina, El Salvador, Turkey, Pakistan, Morocco, Egypt and Israel — get large doses of military aid: others who will not join the US in "standing up" to the Soviets must learn to do without US aid.

More worrying for the Third World than this is the explicit American attempt to bring both the World Bank and IMF "closer in line with the administration's philosophy, on worldwide lending". A Treasury Department paper wanted borrowing countries to take more stringent measures to "streamline" their economies as a condition for receiving loans. Specifically, the multilateral institutions should require "among other measures that borrowers eliminate government price subsidies, ease import restrictions and cut the size of the public sector." Any loan not in line with the new tenets would be opposed tooth and nail by the United States. The threat does carry weight, because with its voting strength of 20 per cent in the IMF and World Bank the US can virtually veto all decisions at the Executive Board level of these institutions. The Treasury Department paper also included the demand that the institutions move away from soft loans and phase out better-off developing countries from the roster of those qualifying for special low-interest lending. It also advocated cutting back US financial obligations to the World Bank and other multilateral lending organisations and reducing US commitment to the IDA. Current World Bank and IMF policies reflect these recommendations; in pursuance of its budget cuts the US has stretched its contribution to the IDA.

American efforts to rid multilateral financial institutions of any "socialist tendencies" and to use them as vehicles for the propagation of its ideological preferences will profoundly affect developing countries who are the major borrowers from these institutions. And given America's growing neoconservatism, developing countries are likely to face an uphill task in what Helmut Schmidt called the struggle for "the world product".

It may be true, as a Rand study report says, that "nations like individuals do not divest themselves voluntarily of their accumulated wealth." But then, nations like individuals cannot reconcile themselves to a state of perpetual poverty either. The Third World struggle for a large share of the global cake will continue, as will its struggle to attain greater autonomy culturally, economically and politically from the great powers.

It is the wooden American policy again, of preserving the status quo, that brings it into clash with the Third World vis-a-vis South Africa. Here America's traditional postwar reluctance to support the forces struggling for decolonisation has been compounded by South Africa's strategic significance — its geographical position astride the Cape Sea route, its rich mineral resources and the heavy western investment there.

The racist regime in Pretoria could not have a better friend than Reagan. The spectre of an apartheid-induced political conflagration in South Africa did force earlier American administrations to nudge Pretoria towards accommodating, in some measure, the aspirations of its nonwhite citizens for political participation and equal status. Not Reagan however, who would not like America to abandon a country that has "stood by us in every war we have fought" and a "country that strategically is essential to the free world". High-level contacts between Pretoria and Washington have been resumed and economic sanctions against the former withdrawn.

The Reagan Administration's stand on Namibia's independence is unprecedented. Before the question can be considered, it says, the Cuban troops in Angola must be withdrawn. At the same time, the US administration encourages intervention by South African troops in Angola and supports the Unita guerrillas who are battling the Angolan government.

After the breakdown of the Geneva Conference on Namibia the UN General Assembly, in March 1981, called on the Security Council to urgently impose mandatory sanctions against South Africa with a view to ensuring compliance with UN decisions and resolutions relating to Namibia. When the UN Security Council met on April 30, the three western powers — the USA, France and UK — vetoed all the four draft resolutions which had received clear majority support. Mrs Kirkpatrick, the US delegate, argued that sanctions did not solve problems. And this at a time when the USA had embargoed grain trade and banned export of sophisticated technology to the Soviet Union and Iran.

Later, on August 31, 1981, the USA was isolated in the Security Council on the issue of the South African invasion of Angola. France voted for the resolution tabled by the non-aligned members of the Council condemning the South African action while Britain abstained. The US delegate conceded that South Africa's intransigence over Namibia was the cause of instability and tension in the region but also blamed the presence of Cuban troops and Soviet advisers in Angola and the alleged supply of arms to Swapo guerrillas.

The US Administration's policy on Angola, Namibia and South Africa has been criticised by influential Americans. A Rockefeller Foundation study for example, has concluded that changes in southern Africa are inevitable and has suggested adjustments in US policy. A failure to do so may grievously affect American interests in the long run and provide another target of opportunity to the Soviet Union, as in Angola.

US attitude on West Asia and Palestinian autonomy has displayed the same disregard of international opinion. Despite the UN resolutions seeking a solution of the West Asian problem on the basis of the right to self-determination and autonomy of the Palestinians, Americans have shown no inclination to extend the framework of the Camp David agreement or to restrain Israel. On the contrary Reagan's stress on evolving a strategic consensus to contain the Soviet Union and the agreement on strategic cooperation with the Begin Government, have enabled Israel to flout international laws with growing impunity. The confrontation with Syria in Lebanon, the bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor at Osirak and the Israeli annexation of the Golan Heights have met with little more than proforma protests by the United States and even these have been necessitated more by the US desire to avoid offending the oil-rich Arab states than by any annoyance with Israeli actions. Thus the US response in the UN to the Israeli raid on the Iraqi reactor was essentially an exercise in damage limitation. While supporting Iraq's resolution (which was moderated by the Iraqis to satisfy the US) condemning Israel, Jeane Kirkpatrick recalled "the strength of the US commitment to Israel and the warmth of our feelings". Reagan, in a press conference prior to the UN vote, went even further in providing an alibi: "Israel", he said, "might sincerely have believed it was a defensive move." On the annexation of the Golan Heights not only did the Americans veto, in the Security Council, a resolution calling for mandatory sanctions against Israel, but also lobbied openly to block support for a General Assembly resolution tabled by 56 nonaligned countries. The resolution, which was adopted by the General Assembly on February 5, 1982, called on all member-states to stop arms sales to Israel, suspend aid and sever all ties. It strongly deplored the negative vote by the US in the Security Council which had prevented appropriate action being taken against Israel.

The problem of peace in West Asia today stems, in point of fact, much more from Israeli intransigence and its perceived need to ensure absolute military superiority over its neighbours than from any Soviet designs. Any durable peace in West Asia would, therefore, have to be based on autonomy for the Palestinians and the return of occupied territory in return for Arab recognition of Israel. This is, in fact, the burden of Saudi Arabia's eight-point proposal.

THE problems that America today faces in interacting with international organisations, its sense of being under siege, stem essentially, as we have seen, from its inability to reconcile itself to the gradual erosion of its hegemony in the world system. These problems are likely to become more acute if the US seeks, as it does under Reagan, to hark back nostalgically to the postwar style of US leadership.

The world is far too complex for any one country or group of countries to impose 'order' and America must reconcile itself to a cooperative approach to global problems if mankind is to survive.□

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COMMUNICATION

Railway Finance

THE review made by P.N.S. Bedi on the Railway Budget 1982-83 (*Mainstream*, March 13, 1982) and the debate on the same in Parliament is by far the best one has come across. Bedi has shown that improvement of productivity in railways is more urgent than increased investment, which "are needed more for education, health, housing and supply of clean drinking water, for example".

There was a time when modern management and costing techniques were not in vogue in this country. Yet all along the railways were compiling for managerial use a series of inter-related indices, in physical terms, on operating performance vis-a-vis utilisation of assets, both at zonal and apex level, periodically. These indices clearly showed the areas of malfunction and level of deterioration. Nothing was left out of reckoning. Even the state of affairs regarding repair and maintenance as well as use of track and rolling stock used to be focussed. Hence there was lesser call for investment in railways. What is therefore needed is better utilisation of the existing assets by way of "enthusing" railwaymen to "higher productivity", which however does not come on asking. Productivity is the product and index of quality in management. The discipline also is.

Bedi has however left from his analysis one vital point, also raised in Parliament. Should the railways go on its own, to raise institutional funds or for market borrowings? This leads to another question — should railways remain as a department of the Government of India or be converted into a corporation in the public sector? Both the questions are also being examined by the Railway Reforms Committee. For answer it is to be noted that the railways is essentially a functional apparatus of the government to help implementing its socio-economic policies and programme. In that respect the railways is an integrated part of infra-structure of economy and development Hence railways should remain a department of the Central Government; only this status allows the scope for rationalisation of the role and function of railways consistent with national goal and exigencies. Finding funds for investment in railways is again linked with the government's overall economic and fiscal policies which do not admit of any duality in approach.

S.K. Mazumdar

Calcutta

Doctors in the Dock

(Contd. from 6)

pride. Even as an elite institution for high-level research it has produced nothing new even for the elite. How many drugs have been invented? How many groundbreaking diagnostic tools? How many vaccines, prophylactics and pharmaceuticals? How many new implants, surgical procedures and treatment methods? The answer is: hardly any.

This is not to say that there are no excellent physicians and surgeons at the AIIMS. Obviously there are some. We would be in deep trouble if there weren't. But they have to survive by working 'quietly' or by being loyal members of one clique or another. No, the AIIMS can't be let off the hook because there is no basic health care in India. The AIIMS must do some *original* work, whether for the poor or for the rich. At least for a start, it could get rid of the cockroaches.

(Dr) Piloo Khory

New Delhi

CIA Forgery *(Contd. from 8)*

on the Vietnam fighting, captioned "Aggression from the North." An account of a suspicious cargo vessel moored in shallow waters which was sunk by Vietnamese forces was also accorded space in the White Paper. This vessel carried arms of Communist origin and newsmen were allowed to visit the site and view the cargo. This happened on February 16, 1965. It was the publication of this White Paper which mobilised US public opinion on direct commitment of American forces in the war.

What did the Americans gain from the Vietnam war? While Vietnam became a testing ground for new American weapons the Vietnamese underwent untold misery, a misery that has no parallel in the second half of the twentieth century. With Reagan determined to show his might somewhere and with events in El-Salvador coming his way, it will not come as a surprise if we hear more of Vietnam type exploits down there by the Reagan Administration in the near future.

Rather interesting is the report that Liechty was forced to speak out because he fears that watching the present goings-on in El Salvador the CIA might prepare something similar for an American intervention in that country.

Manjulika Dubey Replies

MY intention was not to "let the AIIMS and its doctors off the hook" but to point out that the phenomenon of "medical politics" was an inevitable by-product of our system of health care. Dr Khory's remarks only strengthen my contention. The point he makes about the poverty of original research in the Institute is a valid one. But I should like to ask: if the protesters are so firm in their conviction that dirty work is afoot, why do they sign public statements defending their superiors and put up private posters attacking them? Doesn't that kind of morale cowardice perpetuate the system he criticises? □

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Economy : Danger from 'Invisible Hands'

Mainstream

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Drift-wood Politics

CHARAN SINGH'S "retirement" from active politics announced with almost sonic bang has ended in a miserable whimper in exactly nine days. But the Lok Dal's old man of the sea is not the only politician who is engaged in enacting a farce.

The three-in-one unity convention due to take place in Chandigarh about the time these lines are to go in print, can hardly be a morale-booster for the Opposition. The utmost it may hope to achieve is to avert the splitting of votes among the three — the Biju-Devilal rump of Lok Dal, the Congress-S and the Janata — which is not expected to make any material difference to the outcome of the poll announced in the four States of Himachal, Haryana, Kerala and West Bengal. Far from achieving even an alliance of the three parties, it will not even bring about electoral understanding among the three: the Janata has already announced that it will go it alone in Kerala and West Bengal. Even in Haryana, this combine has little chance of wresting the majority from the Congress-I which is now reinforced by the appearance of a very active Bansilal.

The fact that BJP is left out of this Opposition combine means that triangular contests are inevitable in most of the constituencies in Haryana and Himachal and this is likely to help the ruling Congress-I. There are even reports of Charan Singh and Jagjivan Ram striking a deal with BJP — a prospect which may not be adverse for the fortunes of the Congress-I.

In the Left-dominated West Bengal and Kerala, marginal shifts may make a big difference; this will be particularly true in

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COMMUNICATION

Kerala and not so much in West Bengal. In fact, the mini-parties with their shifting loyalties may be holding the balance in Kerala, where a new element this time will be BJP, thanks to the growth of RSS in rebound to the CPI-M sectarianism. In West Bengal, while the Left Front is assured of a majority, the margin of its victory is likely to be thinner this time compared to 1977.

This kaleidoscope of Opposition fragmentation coupled with occasional attempts at unity, holds out no possibility of Indira Gandhi's party suffering a reverse in the electoral tally — even if Bahuguna manages to win the Garhwal fresh poll — as compared to that of her adversaries. The Left leaders would be making a grievous mistake if they came to the hasty conclusion that the Congress-I is cracking up or fading out. The creeping inertia in governance, the Antulay affair, the skeletons in the Bhosale cupboard, the Maneka episode with its mother-in-law-daughter-in-law dimensions — all these are grains of sand which do not yet make a mountain. No doubt these do not enhance Indira Gandhi's standing, but as yet there is no sign of her party having suffered sufficient erosion to think of a change in the balance of forces.

The international environment — particularly the developments in the region — does not in the least undermine Indira Gandhi's position at home. Rather the urgency of strengthening the country's security can only help her standing since she has never been afflicted with the Janata's appeasement propensities. This does not however mean that in the event of an actual conflict, Indira Gandhi can expect to reap the political harvest in the manner she did after the victory in the 1971 Indo-Pak war. Certainly the internal situation today is more complex and the morale less sustaining than these were ten years ago, but there is no room for Opposition hopes of a collapse of the Indira Raj. The Opposition, particularly the Left, has to guard against self-deception which passes off wishful thinking for objective appraisal.

Equally will Indira Gandhi be making the mistake of being complacent. Over the years, one has often noticed that she is in the habit of alternating between self-complacence and a sense of insecurity. Both take heavy tolls in terms of policy moves and performance record of her Government. The complacence born out of the electoral victories of 1971-72 led to drift in the next two years, followed by a sense of insecurity over the unrest in Gujarat and Bihar leading to Emergency and its excesses. If anything, Emergency was the product of panic in the Indira establishment, not certainly a demonstration of its strength nor of its sure mastery over the situation.

Viewed in this context, the present drift in our political life may give rise to complacence on the part of Indira Gandhi at the Opposition's imbecility, which may accelerate the process of drift followed by discontent — a scenario which in turn may lead to panic on the part of the ruling establishment. The Opposition prognosis that Indira Gandhi might in such a situation go in for something drastic such as imposing a presidential system of government or clamping down Emergency is not based on any dispassionate assessment of the existing trends and of the overall situation. While there is little to doubt Indira Gandhi's dreams of playing a De Gaullist role in the Indian context, there is no indication of Indira Gandhi planning a drastic overhauling of the present system which may only help her opponents to close their ranks to fight her. As for the possibility of re-imposition of Emergency, one can only venture to suggest that History does not really repeat itself; if anything, Indira Gandhi must have learnt that her Emergency misadventure was responsible, to a large measure, for her poll debacle in 1977.

It is futile at this stage to speculate about what Indira Gandhi might be doing tomorrow or the day after, as it will be to expect the Opposition to overcome its chronic bankruptcy. It may be a truism to say that things will get worse before they are better, but this seems to be the only truth warranted by the present drift in Indian politics.

N.C.

April 14

COMMENTARY

Tinsel Politics in Telugu Land

A celluloid avatar turned at an advanced age into a real-life political avatar is novelty enough to keep the gossip mill well fed in Andhra Pradesh and outside. N.T. Rama Rao, with the rounded figure and Cheshire-cat grin associated for some obscure reason with most of Hindu divine incarnations, is said by some enthusiasts to be looked upon by the illiterate poor as a genuine avatar descended from the screen to save them in this life or their souls in the next. Others have a higher opinion of the discernment of the electorate.

A cinema star attracting crowds is common enough; but the crowds have a tendency of acting as heady liquor in the case of the ambitious and the vainglorious. Those two words would seem to sit well on Rama Rao who is mentally inadequately equipped to see that he is being used. No doubt he sees himself as the future Chief Minister *a la* M.G. Ramachandran of Tamilnadu. The difference is that MGR had been in active politics for well over two decades before he thought of Chief Ministership. He was one of the chief architects of the pre-split DMK, enjoying the confidence of its leader Annadurai by whom everybody now swears in that neighbouring State. MGR worked among the poor in many parts of the State, offering generous relief out of his earnings, apart from providing funds and a sizeable following for the party. Rama Rao has no such record, though his earnings too have been substantial over long years. That he has "jumped into the fray" as he is about to turn sixty is not without its point.

Of course the Congress-I is in a mess in Andhra Pradesh. The style of functioning of the central leadership has only left a lengthening line of disgruntled elements. N. Bhaskara Rao, a "Congressman" of four years standing turned defector because of frustrated ambitions, is considered the brain behind NTR. His plan seems to be to spread the net wide and get as many defectors as possible. That some have walked over should not be seen as the last or even penultimate scene in this multi-dimensional real-life screenplay with a heavily made-up tinsel-god as the centre-piece. Already there are signs that the play is not proceeding according to Bhaskara Rao's script which is said to have the blessings of some leading lights of the infighting in the Andhra Pradesh Congress-I. Anjiah was freely mentioned, not without reason; but he swears loyalty to Indira Gandhi and claims that his controversial Panchayati Raj Forum, newly floated, is no political platform but an instrument to consolidate Congress-I gains and improve on them. In politics one takes every utterance with a large dose of salt, but for the moment Anjiah may be expected to lie low or seek redressal for the humiliation to which he was subjected. Even Chenna Reddy, the undimmed nodal point of political controversy in Andhra Pradesh, was mentioned, but he has accepted a governorship, this time in Punjab, though he is noted for long-distance operations even if not for remote control. And there are others, including Brahmananda Reddy.

The Congress-I has neither organisation nor cadres nor discipline — something that is true not only of Andhra Pradesh. This situation is certainly a great help to the likes of Rama Rao and his mentor Bhaskara Rao. If Indira Gandhi, increasingly surrounded by topless advisers, imposes nonentities as Chief Ministers in States (even if, as in Maharashtra, to replace arrogant and unscrupulous upstarts), she and her colleagues in what passes for the central leadership must pay the price. They are paying it. Caste, regional and factional quarrels were never absent either in Andhra Pradesh or in some of the other States. Every senior leader has a background, often unsavoury, and this plus the presence of hostile groups makes the choice difficult, certainly. So the supreme leader resorts to nomination; and that leads straightaway to resentment and intensification of faction war based on caste, region or merely personalities. Politics becomes lively at least for the media if not for Indira Gandhi and her coterie at the top. Instability in many of the Congress-I States has inevitably become the rule, and this is what throws up Rama Raos and in another sense Akbar Ahmeds. And Venkatrams and Bhosales are no answer; they are perhaps new questions.

"Telugu Desam" (Telugu country) is rather an odd name for a political party; it doesn't even sound like a good film title. Nor does it offer the advantage of sounding impressive when abbreviated, as in the case of the DMK and ADMK. In any case the name does not reflect anything, least of all the reality of politics in Andhra Pradesh, where the Reddy-Kamma conflict has long been part of life, with each of these castes seeking to assert its supremacy. The other upper-caste groups have always resented the domination of these two caste groups, but have taken sides as convenient, while the lower castes with their miserable conditions have remained unaffected, except perhaps adversely in some areas. Thus the derisive description of the Bhaskara Rao-Rama Rao brainchild as "Kamma Desam" should cause little surprise. The chances are that before long Rama Rao will be left holding a Kamma baby, with other caste leaders moving away, and possibly the shrewder among Kamma leaders now looking benignly upon him will also have second thoughts. NTR fans are spread over all castes; but the way his political adventure is shaping, he cannot count on the majority of them, in contrast to MGR who could and does bank on their unwavering support. Whether he is proving to be a good administrator is a different question; but on that score NTR's promise is far dimmer.

Apart from the fact that like other new or splinter parties Rama Rao's set-up is also raising well-worn slogans and indulging in discredited shibboleths, his initial forays into political tub-thumping have shown him to be devoid of both historical and political sense — and of common sense as well. His vituperation against the ruling Congress-I, its inept administration, frequent ministerial visits to Delhi and so on, at first sight seems justified. The Congress-I ministers and even legislators do invite such criticism by their conduct; and the operational style of the central leadership adds weight to such criticism. But can it be overlooked that it is precisely from that same ruling party that NTR and his "Telugu Desam" seek to organise defections to strengthen themselves? It was when a whisper campaign began about his calculations vis-a-vis Indira Gandhi that he has come out with criticism of the Prime Minister. Andhra Pradesh Congress-I men have reacted angrily to the attack on their beloved leader. But from the press reports one hardly gets the impression that NTR was making any worthwhile point against her. His targets are within the State; his ambitions are also limited to the State. Some would substitute "his caste" for those last two words in the previous sentence.

One does not know if it is only ignorance that led to the vicious attack on that giant freedom fighter, T. Prakasam, who will not be judged by his brief and ineffective spells as administrator. Sanjiva Reddy has been an active politician for years and the attack on him will be seen as part of an attempt to whip up casteist chauvinism. The reference to Madras City and to the utilisation of Krishna waters is perhaps meant to rouse secessionist, or at least sectarian, feelings. It is doubtful if all these stunts will help the film star and the wire-pullers behind him; he will no doubt find his level before long, even if he and those who find his money useful will make much noise prior to the elections. Politics is in bad enough shape already, without having to be pulled down to the Bhaskara Rao-NTR level.

Rama Rao's party would have been dismissed as a passing freak but for the rumblings in the Andhra Pradesh Congress-I. Till now the other parties have not even reacted to what is projected as something of a phenomenon (no one has yet said however that the NTR party is a direct result of the recent planetary conjunction). It is the Congress-I with its changing personalities and vote bases that is somewhat worried. The party's central leadership is yet to learn the obvious — that it is not enough to change the face in the Chief Minister's office or to convert ministerial berths into musical chairs or to appease different groups at different times hoping that ultimately permutation or combination will turn out to be just right. Politics cannot be managed that way; nor can effective administration be ensured. To organise the choice of their leader by the legislators themselves, to prevent abject dependence on the central leadership or more precisely on one leader for survival in office, to help tone up the administration, to establish rapport between the ministerial and organisational wings, and to help build cadres and an organisational apparatus that will function as the people's watchdog — these are the tasks for the central leadership, and these precisely have been systematically neglected.

What is really regrettable in the Andhra Pradesh situation is not the glamorous entry of a film star into politics with a party of his own; in the nature of politics it cannot last long. The matter for regret is that the Left, democratic and secular parties and forces have shown lack of readiness to utilise the situation to further popular causes and interests or to mobilise a new popular alternative.

Rama Raos may come and go, but the warning implicit in the development needs to be heeded.

C.N.C.

April 13

Punjab : Changing Contours

DAMPENING hopes aroused by the earlier round of talks between the Prime Minister and the Akali leaders belonging to the Badal-Longowal group — undoubtedly the major one of the two rival Akali Dals — their last round of negotiations in New Delhi have been completely fruitless. Those who had been expecting that some sort of realignment might emerge in Punjab, with the Congress-I and the dominant Akali group entering into some kind of entente, have now perforce to revise their thinking.

The Akali version is that the Prime Minister did not sustain even the assurances she had earlier extended with regard to several of their demands, such as the merger of Chandigarh with Punjab and live relay of *Shabad Kirtan* from the Golden Temple in Amritsar. As for the Prime Minister's award on the Ravi-Beas waters dispute, the former Chief Minister, Parkash Singh Badal, has expressed total rejection by the Akali Dal of the water-sharing formula as between Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan.

Thus, the outlook has undergone complete change. Instead of an accord, the Akali Dal-L and Congress-I have found even the meagre common ground that was emerging in their relations, to be disappearing. In fact, the Akali Dal-L has launched a fierce (though non-violent) struggle, which they have been describing as an all-out 'war'. Mercifully, it is not a 'dharam yudh' this time but an economic form of struggle, in which the CPI-M has also lent a hand.

The change in the Punjab scene is being ascribed to several visible as well as subterranean factors. The Akali leaders themselves have attributed the Prime Minister's altered stance to the imminence of the elections in some States, including Haryana. Thus, this consideration will certainly apply to the demand for immediate merger of Chandigarh with Punjab. Equally, the demand for altering the award on the sharing of Ravi-Beas link waters and giving a larger share to Punjab can be considered impracticable, and all the more so because of the Haryana elections due next month.

But it would be unreasonable to take the view that the Prime Minister has to accept all Akali demands without question: such, for instance, is the case about live broadcasts from the Golden Temple of *Shabad Kirtan*, since acceptance has been given of such a broadcast on some outstanding occasions, while taped *Shabad Kirtan* is being broadcast at regular intervals. The same can be said about several other Akali demands that have already been accepted in substance. Among them is the demand, already fulfilled, for making Amritsar an international airport.

However, it would be fair to ascribe the new tenor of the Akali-PM talks to the altered situation in Punjab. One of the factors, even if not the most important, now in operation is the backdrop of the Congress-I factions and alignments. The point to be noted is that there is a discernible shift in favour of Chief Minister Darbara Singh, while the stock of Giani Zail Singh has slumped. It was the Giani who was arduously working for a Congress-I-Akali line-up, with himself at the helm. On the other hand, Darbara Singh has been far from enthusiastic about the linkage. The Punjab Chief Minister is among the group of staunch Punjab nationalists who have always stuck to the view that in Punjab; the main political rivals that the Congress has to face are the Akalis, in the first place, and the RSS in the second place. The rift in the Akali Dal has no doubt altered the situation to some extent. But which of the two Akali factions can be of greater value in terms of a tacit understanding vis-a-vis the Congress-I — on this opinions differ.

There is another sizeable change in the set-up in Punjab. Darbara Singh's men claim that the Chief Minister's staunch policies have led to isolation of the extremists propped from abroad, with the result that one hardly hears talk of 'Khalistan' even from extremist platforms. The Akali Dal-T's gathering in Anandpur Sahib is a case in point. "The World Sikh Convention" which the Dal sponsored there has been a tame show. Apart from the poor response it evoked — and the attendance at this so-called international gathering was not even a shadow compared to the massive gathering addressed by the Prime Minister not far away while inaugurating the Ravi-Beas link canal early this week — the speeches too lacked the earlier fire associated with the sponsors of the Sikh-a-nation theory.

Significantly, the expulsion of Ganga Singh Dhillon at Delhi airport itself, just as he landed from Washington with a well-prepared address for the convention, hardly aroused the type of protests that were expected. Dhillon's address read out on his behalf, as well as other major speeches, were on a low key. The secessionist overtones were being slashed and the character of State autonomy and Punjab-and-Punjabis was now being carefully played down.

While these developments have set the tone for a cooling of ardour of the extremist groups, the major Akali Dal-L is now gradually reorienting itself to demands which are being projected not only as Sikh demands but as those of all Punjabis. This will be seen as a welcome development, though the logic of power struggle introduces many a distortion into what might be a struggle for economic demands of the Punjab peasantry. The fact that the cotton price crash provides a distressing backdrop to these developments has not been widely noticed. But it does provide a major point for garnering peasant support by the Akali Dal under Badal's leadership, more so since Chief Minister Darbara Singh props up his image as a "Jat leader," basing himself on the Punjab peasant.

Badal and his colleague, Barnala, have not forgotten their days in office when they found their solid peasant votes slipping in the last Assembly polls, which coincided with an earlier cotton price crash. "*Uppar Jat, Heithan Jat, Narman Wikya Do Sow Sath*" (Jat on top, Jat below, but cotton crashed to Rs 260) — this is the chant which swamped the Badal ministry then. Cannot the scene be repeated? Surely, Badal and Barnala are asking this question now, while launching the struggle for more Ravi-Beas link waters.

To this must be added the behind-the-scenes activities of Giani Zail Singh, who rushed to meet Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale in the Capital, movingly seeking his blessings while touching his feet.

O.P. Sabherwal

April 14

FOCUS

Crafts and Cant

MANJULIKA DUBEY

WHAT factor could there be in common between the mammoth eight-month-long Festival launched in London last month by the Government of India at an estimated cost of ten million rupees and a modest four-day exhibition of assorted handicrafts organised in Delhi by a voluntary action group of five women at a cost of Rs 17,000? The answer, incredible as it may seem, is: the bottom line, in terms of net financial benefit to the craftspersons whose products in both instances was offered for sale. The *Dastkar* exhibition fetched the craftsmen and women an average of Rs 20,000 on each of the first two days, and the figure sagged slightly thereafter only because there was not enough stock to meet the demand. The balance-sheet of man-hours and money spent against profits made compares more than favourably with Selfridge's reported average daily intake of Rs 50,000 — which, when offset by substantial overheads and commissions, will easily whittle down profits to less than what five determined women have accomplished.

It will, of course, be argued that the impact of the Festival is not commensurate with that of a crafts-oriented body like *Dastkar*, that the spillover effects of the London extravaganza are of much wider significance, and that comparisons of this kind are inadmissible or picayune. Everybody enjoys a good *tamasha* and, after all, haven't handicrafts exports gone up as a result of promotional exercises of this kind in the affluent West? It's only a handful peevish killjoys who are trying to dim that comfortable glow of satisfaction ensuing upon the inaugural flourish by asking questions about cost-benefit analysis and other such niggling matters.

The debut of *Dastkar* and the Festival have many more implications for the country's future than are evident at first glance. The special place that handicrafts occupy in the life and psyche of the country was given symbolic weight with the spinning wheel as the motif during the feedom movement. Adrift as we are today on the cross-currents of old and new, East and West, the crafts in which the soul of India spoke through wood and stone, clay and metal, can signify either a lifeless talisman to parade and flaunt or a seedbed to restore us to an organic and harmonious connection between the land and its people.

The touchstone is the artisan, the craftsman himself. If he is able to work, if he can continue to make what he has been trained to produce with care and concentration over generations — whether it is to weave a grass mat or cut and polish a diamond — secure in the knowledge that his labour will be recognised and rewarded, then we can say with pride that we are doing something about restoring a heritage threatened by the mushroom cloud of plastic and terylene. If the craftsman is not respected and supported thus, our activities amount to just so much chatter, self-delusion and tokenism: Marie Antoinettee playing at dairymaids.

And this is where the juxtaposition between the grandiose Festival and the unpretentious *Dastkar* exhibition becomes significant.

What are the compulsions that give birth to organisations like *Dastkar*, when for thirty years we have seen agencies proliferate and crores spent ostensibly to secure the livelihood of our 19 lakh craftsmen? Are there any data on the number of artisans employed in the various branches of handicraft production? Nothing but what can be culled from census reports. Any study of the impact of Government policies and programmes on, let us say, the middlemen whom they are supposedly geared to eliminate? None. Any feedback on how effectively all those crores have been spent? Again, only in the case of exports, where foreign exchange figures are available elsewhere. The last report of the All-India Handicrafts Board appeared in 1979, and after this confection of moonbeams and cobwebs was torn to shreds by the Public Accounts Committee the Board has maintained tactful silence on the subject of its annual activities. Where are the 218 rural marketing centres that were said to have been set up? All defunct. How fast are decisions taken and implemented? Make a guess. How often do the policy-makers — or, for that matter, the functionaries who deal directly with the artisans — venture from their airconditioned warrens into the heat and dust where the potters and weavers, leather and glass workers sweat and struggle for a bare existence? Guess again.

This is not to say that nothing at all has been achieved in these thirty years. In the Central Cottage Industries, Corporation, the energy and will of a single person has in a few years cut down the quantum of business through middlemen from 90 per cent to 40 per cent and as long as the craftsman continues to be plagued at every stage between securing an order and receiving his final payment, alternatives like *Dastkar* will be necessary to fill the vacuum.

Crafts have their roots in a community life that is now disintegrating rapidly, and attained their highest expression in a symbiotic nexus between privileged patron and artisan. The tradition can be revitalised only if those roots are conserved, not simply by reconstructing hothouses of patronage. The slow, meticulous and painstaking work of setting up systems and organisations that are governed by an enlightened perspective and in tune with the specific needs of the artisan is largely neglected — which is fundamentally, for markets and for access to credit and raw materials.

The successful four-day *Dastkar* exhibition was partly sponsored by the All-India Handi-crafts Board. These efforts to provide markets and retail outlets, improve techniques and ensure quality control, offer design and marketing expertise, arrange orders, loans, advances and raw materials, tap existing facilities and lobby for more, that will eventually coalesce into a real renascence of the crafts. Then, indeed, will we have cause to celebrate a Festival of India. (*April 13*)

Peace and Growth: Hanoi's Approach

Vietnam's Foreign Minister, Nguyen Co Thach, the substance of whose interview with a group of Indian journalists in Hanoi is given below, is visiting India on April 24.

Is the Kampuchean issue the main bottleneck in improvement of relations between the Indo-China states and the ASEAN countries? The Vietnamese Foreign Minister, Nguyen Co Thach, considers that this is not so. Not for the first time have Vietnamese forces gone to Kampuchea — they were there during the common struggle for freedom from French rule, then for ending Japanese occupation. Later, the Vietnamese and the Kampucheans fought together to free the country from American domination.

So, the Vietnamese Foreign Minister asks (in the course of an interview he gave to a group of visiting Indian correspondents in Hanoi at the time of External Affairs Minister Narasimha Rao's trip to Vietnam): What are the real causes of disagreement between ASEAN and Vietnam, or ASEAN and the Indo-China countries? Nguyen Co Thach draws upon history to underline the point he was making.

The talk that the presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea 'threatens' Thailand does not cut much ice. In history, have the Vietnamese ever invaded Thailand? The reverse is true in relation to the Indo-China States, and in particular, Vietnam There has been trouble from Thailand on five occasions, during the last forty years. The first 'trouble' was in 1940: Thai troops had invaded Laos and Cambodia at the beginning of the Second World War. The second time, Thailand joined SEATO against the three Indo-China states in 1954 when they were struggling for independence. The third was in 1960-62, when troops were sent to intervene in Laos. The fourth time was in 1965-1973, when they joined the American army to fight against Indo-China states, and they also gave bases to the United States in Thailand to bomb Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia — "all this you know" and now, they have joined the Chinese against the Indo-China states. They cannot say there are Vietnamese troops in Thai territory. Never.

Thach went on: "And you see, when I met the Foreign Minister of Thailand, I told him that in history Vietnamese troops never settled on Thai territory, but the Thai army has been on Vietnamese soil three times. The Thai Foreign Minister told me, 'No, not three times. Two times only'." (laughter).

However, while reviewing relations between ASEAN and Vietnam, Thach felt there was no need for despondency: It is right that these relations are not good, but in comparison with the past they are better. In the past, from 1945 to say, 1975, they supported the French or the Americans against the Vietnamese and the other Indo-China states. Then it was war. But now it is not war. "At least we have diplomatic relations," he emphasised. Yes, there is improvement. In fact, from 1976 to 1978, the ASEAN countries were moving towards normalisation of relations with us, but at that time came China, with whom too the ASEAN countries wanted to normalise relations.

The Chinese leaders, in this period, came forward with the proposal of the ASEAN nations joining China in a front against Vietnam. Deng Xiao-ping visited the United States in January 1979 to prepare the invasion of Vietnam which came in February that year. That ASEAN went in the direction of China rather than support Vietnam is what led to the present situation in relation to ASEAN and the Indo-China states. So, the design of China has been to create a gulf between the ASEAN and the Indo-China states, and to see that the focus is not on China's aggressive designs towards the Indo-China states. That Thailand has shielded the Pol Pot remnant troops is part of this machination.

Thus, Vietnam's military presence in Kampuchea is linked to the threat from Thailand, from the Chinese. Once the Chinese threat is over, Vietnamese troops would be withdrawn completely.

"I can give you a date for our withdrawal — only one day after the Chinese threat is over", said Thach

Q: What would be the sign that the threat from China is over?

Thach: The evidence? We have experience with France and America: we can sign an agreement on the pattern of Geneva, for non-aggression. We have proposed a non-aggression treaty with China, and Laos too has proposed a similar treaty, so also Kampuchea. But China has refused.

Q: If China were to sign a non-aggression treaty with Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea, you would accept that as evidence that the Chinese threat is over and that you can withdraw?

Thach: It is correct.

Turning to bilateral relations between India and Vietnam, the Vietnamese Foreign Minister indicated that Vietnam would soon be seeking India's cooperation in the development of agriculture, light industry, promotion of export goods, development of inland transport and the country's energy resources.

These also were the five priorities incorporated in the country's forthcoming five-year plan, and consequently his country could accept more assistance in these spheres of economic activity. This matter was discussed at length during the visit to Hanoi by India's External Affairs Minister, and would be continued when the Vietnamese Foreign Minister comes to India.

Thach believed that Vietnam could cooperate with India in the entire range of textile industry operations. Vietnam could also cooperate with India in building agricultural machines, in the mining industry, in coal, mica, bauxite, and so on.

How would Vietnam secure the financial resources for all the projects proposed, since India did not have enough financial resources, although it could extend technological aid and know-how, Thach was asked. There can be triangular cooperation, was his answer. Would it mean cooperation between India, Vietnam and COMECON? The Vietnamese Foreign Minister's reply was: "All other sources — third sources — we can get loans from, IMF, OPEC or COMECON, but it is not yet really clear. But we think that the third source of financing is very important".

Asked if it was a "very small loan" he was thinking about, Thach quipped: "It is very dangerous to have a big loan" (from IMF).

Falkland Flutter

PATRICK JONAS

APRIL is the cruellest of months said T.S. Eliot, and the Britishers found it true on April 2, for it was on this day that Argentine military forces took over British-controlled Falkland Islands down south in the Atlantic. Clearly it was not the loss of a few square miles of peat and grassland that hurt the British so much as the fact that it was left to a country like Argentina to remind them that they are no longer a power to be feared as in yesteryears.

Twentyfive miles across at its widest point and 250 miles to the nearest point on the South American continent, Falkland Islands supports a population of about 2000. For over 120 years Britain occupied and administered these 200-odd islands and Argentina has off and on voiced its claim to these islands on the basis of proximity (for 35 years during the 19th century claims were dropped but were later revived). Towards the end of 1977, Britain offered to transfer the archipelago to Argentina within 15 years provided a number of joint agreements were concluded for exploitation of natural resources. Talks on this have led to no agreement.

The initial feeling in Argentina after their takeover of the islands was one of joy— something akin to their winning the world cup football in 1978 — but this has gradually changed. People now wonder where this adventure of Argentine President Leopoldo Galtieri will take them. General Galtieri is well known at home and abroad for contempt of human rights. The nation runs an inflation rate of over 125 per cent, one of the highest in the world. This military move is believed by many Argentines to be a diversionary tactic, but the invasion of Falklands might well change the career of the Argentine President. After he took over as Commander-in-Chief of the Army in December 1979 he was responsible for closing the border with Chile in April 1981, thereby risking renewed conflict with that country — they were on the brink of war at the end of 1980. Later last year he offered Argentine troops for the Sinai control force; and to the Salvadoran junta he offered troops and equipment. Now, after his successful invasion, he is prepared to fight a full-scale war with Britain and if he wins, it will give a much-needed boost to his image at home.

Visibly shaken by the incident is the Iron Lady — Margaret Thatcher. Will she change her mind and recall the strong naval force despatched to the area? If events since the take-over are any pointer, Margaret Thatcher seems to be in no mood to go back on her promise of unfurling the Union Jack on the Falklands. She is already weakened by the resignation of her Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington, and two others from the Cabinet, but after the Security Council calling upon Argentina to withdraw its forces, Margaret Thatcher is willing to defuse the crisis through peaceful means if the Argentine military junta is interested.

The voting at the Security Council (10-1) only shows that there are few backers for the Argentine action, at least in the open. That China and the Soviet Union abstained is to be noted. Also worth noting is the fact that when the United States placed an embargo on wheat sales to the USSR following that country's intervention in Afghanistan, it was Argentina which made good the loss. The Argentine regime would have expected some show of sympathy as a reciprocal gesture, but the Russians, realising the implications of the situation, thought it wise to abstain though the Soviet representative had, prior to the vote, told the Council that he would not support the British resolution because the problem was one of decolonisation. China on the other hand has called for a peaceful settlement through negotiations. Meanwhile economic sanctions have been called for against Argentina, but the numerous sanctions imposed on the South African regime having made hardly any impact only show that Argentina too can get away without being hurt.

The 2000-odd inhabitants of the islands who are of British stock are engaged in rearing sheep, the main industry of the Falklanders, had earlier expressed their desire to remain British and not become Argentines. Speculation is that the islands possess immense natural resources and the two large forces are all set for a confrontation over them. With Britain despatching two-thirds of its navel force and Argentina landing a large number of troops on the island during the past week, it is most certain that the 750,000-odd sheep on the islands will not get enough grass in the days ahead. For the British it is matter of prestige and past glory, and for Margaret Thatcher, her political career is at stake. Refusing to resign, she is committed to restore British rule on the islands. For Argentina it is 'reconquering' part of its territory.

Most nations including India have called for a peaceful solution but have done nothing more than that. Ronald Reagan said, "We are friends with both sides", and as such dispatched Alexander Haig to London and Buenos Aires as mediator. Of all European allies, Britain had been the most vociferous supporter of American policies, and as such the US would like to see that Britain's prestige is not lost. But as a friend of both sides the US. Administration is finding it all the more difficult to find a solution. Whether Britain regains Falklands or Argentina keeps it, there are bound to be repercussions. Already Venezuela has expressed solidarity with Argentina. Venezuela lays claim to 160,000 sq. km Essequibo territory, awarded to the then British Guiana by international arbitration in 1899. Britain has a few more colonies left with a total population of 5 million. Of these Hong Kong alone has 4.4 million. Many of these colonies have been in the news occasionally following claims by neighbouring countries. There is the case of Gibraltar which Spain wants. While most Spaniards believe that the Rock should be returned to the Spanish, a few Right-wing extremists advocate an Argentine-type invasion. If negotiations fail and if a person like Galtieri comes to power in Spain, invasion of the Rock will not come as a surprise.

The question now is whether at all Britain and Argentina will stage a naval battle. Britain with Harrier jets and nuclear-powered submarines in its flotilla now on its way seems to have an edge, but when it comes to distance Argentina has the upper hand, especially in terms of supplies and replenishment of equipment. Latest reports indicate that Argentina has withdrawn most of its warships from Falkland waters. With the British deadline for a military blockade of the archipelago, Argentina seems to have realised the risks involved in a naval battle. The British lion may let out a brief growl of satisfaction, but with Argentina soldiers still entrenched on the islands it looks as if Alexander Haig has little chance of early success in his 'mission'. (*April 12*)

DISCUSSION *Press Commission Report*

The Report of the Second Press Commission and the bulky note of dissent by four members were not available when this issue of *Mainstream* was being prepared. We are publishing here an article which is in the nature of preliminary observations on attitudes and approaches on some of the crucial issues, based entirely on inadequate press reports. A series of articles on different aspects of the Report as well as the Note of Dissent will be published in the coming weeks. The writer this week is an eminent journalist who appeared before the First Press Commission in the fifties and before the Second Commission in the late seventies on behalf of the Indian Federation of Working Journalists. A contribution from A. Raghavan, President-elect of the IFWJ, will be published next week. Editor.

Gospel According to K.K. Mathew

G.N. ACHARYA

FIRST thoughts are not necessarily the best thoughts. But there is this to be said in their favour. They come without having been subjected to the invisible blue pencil that gnarled, old ancients learn to carry in their heads — an expression of caution born of experience. The reason why there can be nothing more than first thoughts and some memories is that till today (April 8) I have nothing more solid to go upon than scattered reports which our newspapers have provided.

These scatterings have given prime importance to a 100 page note of dissent — almost a parallel report — submitted by four of the Commission's members, Justice Sisirkumar Mukherjee, Rajendra Mathur, Girilal Jain and Prof. H.K. Paranjape. This is an odd company. Odder still are the eloquent statements made by the Chairman, Justice K.K. Mathew, and K.R. Ganesh. From their past postures, pronouncements and actions—so far as I know them — I should have counted them as radicals who would stand foursquare among those arguing for freedom, more freedom, still more freedom. It is disheartening to find Justice Mathew talking in terms constitutionality, legality, competence. We go to courts of law to find out the limits of legality. We do not appoint a commission to find out what we can do within the existing law.

I am one of the diminishing tribe of people who were concerned — may be peripherally — with the First Press Commission. That was appointed on September 23, 1952, and it signed its report here, in Bombay, as we were allowed to look on eagerly, on July 14, 1954. The archival limit of 30 years is not quite past. But given the frailty of life and fading memories, I may be forgiven a bit of anecdotage.

As it happened, just before we were due to appear before the First Commission, there was a change of office-bearers. The late M. Sivraman, who was elected chairman of the Bombay Union of Journalists, had no time to assimilate the written material submitted earlier and be ready for the cross-examination. So he whispered to me to take over as the spokesman, and I nodded my rash head.

The late Justice G.S. Rajadhyaksha was a tough judge, and I was a raw recruit. At one stage H.Y. Sharada Prasad, who had not yet joined Government service, came to my rescue by reading out in his bold, clear voice what we had already submitted in writing. But such temporary alleviation would not have halted my fumbling, unless the Chairman came to something, the answer to which I was nervously fingering.

This is the story. An employee of the Press Trust of India, who must have long retired but I hope is still alive, had told me a few days earlier that the agency's teleprinters were used to transmit commercial private messages between some parties up country and others in Bombay. It may have been a private arrangement made by somebody in power, and may no longer exist. I asked him how I could tell a story like that to the Press Commission without evidence. He promised to get me the evidence. On his assurance we submitted a note. Luckily he was as good as his word. The night before, he tore off copy from the spare teleprinter, and passed on a bundle to me. I spent an anxious hour picking out the items containing messages from Jaipur and other places containing instructions to Bombay parties about bullion and shares.

Justice Rajadhyaksha also must have marked out our note on the subject for early challenge. He had half asked the question: "How can you say this...?" When I pushed across the bundle of papers to him and merely said: "Here, sir."

He started to go through the papers. As he scanned each message, he would turn towards the late A.D. Mani, who was a member of the Commission, and also then a director of the PTI. "Mr Mani, Mr Mani," his startled voice would say, "What is this? What is this?". Mani was struck dumb. So were the other members of the Commission to whom the scraps of paper were being passed on.

Meanwhile another smart member of the PTI staff — now retired, old and ailing like me — overheard the talk inside the room, rushed to his office not far away, and brought a copy of the day's commercial bulletin — a fat volume of cyclostyled information meant for market subscribers. The volume mysteriously reached my hands. I had just enough time to realise what it was, and as Justice Rajadhyaksha paused, pushed it towards him and said: "You might have a look at this also, sir." That started him off again on his "Mr Mani, Mr Mani" routine.

Our day had been won. Never again did any member question the veracity of our statements, or ask for proof. Once in fact, in relation to a note in which we had said that a weekly — *Forum* — had been sold for Rs 7 lakhs but the employees had not been paid their wages (the note had been prepared on his examination of the facts by the late B.S. Thunga), C.P. Ramaswami Iyer asked: "What has happened to the money?" The reply came not from the delegation, but from one of the members of the Commission, Rao Saheb Patwardhan, who said: They don't say there is money. There are only shares."

The point of telling this story — not just a point of senile irrelevance — is that Justice Rajadhyaksha was as legal-minded a jurist as was ever minted by the Bombay High Court. But as the facts were piled up before him, there was no more talk of legality, constitutionality, competence and such wholly legal concepts. That is why the Commission's report became so comprehensive and so informative — the first full exposure of the mysterious workings of the multi-headed hydra called the Indian Press.

The Second Press Commission, it is necessary to recall, was appointed by the short-lived Janata Government, on May 29, 1978, with Justice P.K. Goswami as the Chairman. A more gentle and fair-minded person it is difficult to imagine. Because of his sense of political propriety, the Commission submitted its resignation as soon as Indira Gandhi's victory at the polls led to the formation of a new Government. Strictly speaking, I do not think it was called for. For instance, the Chairman of the Press Council, the President and Vice-President, did not resign.

It is the reconstituted Press Commission whose report is displaying the obvious impact of political loyalties of proprietary affiliations. Justice Mathew, of all persons, says that it was beyond the competence of the Commission to discuss censorship during Emergency, because it is permitted under the Constitution and an emasculated Parliament had approved of it.

There are apparently some people for whom Emergency and all that was done under it are sacrosanct; others to whom it was an act of profanity which must be reviled on all occasions. Is it impossible to take a secular attitude? Personally, I plead guilty to the charge that at the beginning I welcomed Emergency as a necessary evil. Six months later I wrote that it had become counter-productive.

One of the curiosities of modern censorship is that the Censor gives no reasons for his diktats. Secondly, the paper which has been subject to any censorship orders is not allowed to disclose that such an order has been passed. The paper in which I was writing was put under pre-censorship of all its matter including advertisements, and the editor told me that this was because of what I had written about the Press and objectionable Matters Act. I want to take no credit for anything so much in the field of uncertainty. And that exactly is the reason why the Press Commission should have made a thorough study of how censorship worked.

The amazing part of the working of censorship during Emergency is that while there was a handful of small papers — some of which went to courts and obtained excellent, if unpublishable, orders from the Bombay, Gujarat and Delhi High Courts — the bulk of the press, particularly the bigger papers, carried on as merrily as before. They not only lived but prospered. With the solitary exception of the *Statesman* which preserved all the orders that the censors issued, and later published them in a supplement, no paper, as far as I know, has cared to preserve all the orders and correspondence with the censors. Sometime in 1976 Soli J. Sorabjee brought out a volume on *The Law of Press Censorship in India* (as it stood on April 19, 1976). But I doubt if it was publicly sold in India. Y.D. Lokenkar, who fought and won a notable case, published a book in Marathi. *Sadhana* of Poona also won a court case, and I am told has published the judgement in both Marathi and English. Despite efforts, I would not get a copy of either. I am only pointing out how difficult it is to get material about our late, unlamented censorship.

What a tremendous service to the unfolding of historical truth the Commission would have rendered, if it had used its enormous research facilities to merely produce a comprehensive report of the working of censorship under Emergency! To reiterate the legal position is easy. M. Hidayatullah, presently Vice-President, has put down the legal position pretty clearly in his Foreword to Soli Sorabjee's book. No apology is needed for quoting this extract;

"In America Freedom of Speech has long had a 'preferred position' because of the absolute terms in which the First Amendment is worded. Prior restraint, that is to say prevention of publication, as opposed to subsequent punishment, has always been in disfavour with the Courts. As Prof. Martin Shapiro said, 'if anything at all is clear about what the Founding Fathers meant by the language of the First Amendment, it is that it was designed to prohibit prior restraints' (*Freedom of Speech*, p. 152).

"Our Constitution has borrowed the language of the First Amendment in Article 19 (1) (a) but has put in some exceptions in 19 (2). Thereby the freedom is not as absolute as in America and for this reason our Supreme Court has denied that it has any preferred position...."

That is as things are. That is things as they ought not to be. From the very beginning, even from the days when the Constitution was in the making, the working journalists' movement has always demanded as much freedom for the Indian Press as the British and American. Right down to the first stage of the Second Press Commission, we have continued to ask for an amendment to the Constitution, which recognises the press as an entity, as it is bound to be in any modern democratic state. In the Journalists' Federation delegation that appeared before the Second Commission, I was once again cast in the role of a spokesman, by virtue of being a veteran. In the group was another veteran, J.P. Chaturvedi, who had also appeared before the First Press Commission.

Freedom of the press was the first question on which I was invited to express myself. This freedom has been compared to the space between encompassing walls — Constitution, laws, customs, proprietary powers, advertisement interests, political alliances and many more. Our interest is to push these walls as far back as we possibly can. Meanwhile we would like to open as many and as wide windows in the walls as we can.

Hidayatullah in the Foreword I have mentioned cites the ancient juristic authority of Sir William Blackstone: "The liberty of the press is indeed essential to the nature of a free state; but this consists in laying no previous restraints upon publications, and not in freedom from censure for criminal matter when published. Every free man has an undoubted right to lay what sentiments he pleases before the public; to forbid this is to destroy the freedom of the press; but if he publishes what is improper, mischievous, or illegal, he must take the consequences of his own temerity."

Although I have used the following quote before, I would repeat this 20th Century pronouncement against censorship. It is from Edgar Wallace's daily column "London Opinion," written when he was still a journalist, yet to become an affluent writer.

"Censorship has been established in India, naturally, because a censorship is the most powerful weapon that bureaucracy can wield. It hides their mistakes; it perverts the truth. It is a stupid and senseless instrument that is wielded by stupid and senseless men. It is the face-saver of officialdom. It qualifies rank failures for honours. It represents incompetent men as men of genius. It is the first and most alarming sign of political panic...A censorship is a liar's charter and hides nothing from the enemy...."

But Justice K.K. Mathew says that the Press Commission was not competent even to discuss the subject.

Let us remember two other declarations. V.C. Shukla, the author of censorship during Emergency, has declared that it was clearly a mistake and has explained that while it prevented the people from knowing certain essential facts, it also prevented the Government from knowing essential facts, including facts regarding the working of the minds of people. The consequences of this would indeed have been far-reaching but for the toomfoolery of Morarji Desai-Charan Singh-Raj Narain and company.

Indira Gandhi, prime beneficiary of this toomfoolery, has said there will be no similar Emergency in India for a thousand years: Amen!

The terms of reference of the Janata part of the Second Press Commission had some reference to the scope of freedom of expression being affected through trade union action. This had deeply disturbed the working journalists and other trade unions. Written protests had been made. Towards the end of the second day of the appearance of the Working Journalists' Federation delegation, the Federation's then President raised this question. Hedidn't get far.

and firmly: "If you think this Commission is going to recommend any curtailment of trade union rights, or any ban on strikes, it would be better if the Commission is dissolved here and now."

The brave Justice K.K. Mathew says the Press Commission was not competent to consider the most serious chapter of restraint on freedom of the press in our recent history because it was legal and constitutional. In that event, I humbly suggest, he should have followed Justice Goswami's logic and sought the immediate dissolution of the Commission, because it had lost its purpose. By his frailty in this matter, he has enabled the incongruous group of four dissenters to get away with a triumphant grin. "The Press Commission may well come to be known as the Press Annihilation Commission," they cackle. Having won credibility on one point, they can clothe all the rest of their interested business pleadings with the same credibility.

I have taken up a great deal of space in making one point. Therefore I shall only deal briefly with the vexed question of price-page schedule, and the proportion of news and advertisements. The judgements of the Supreme Court in the *Sakal* and Bennett Coleman (ten-page) cases have muddled up freedom of expression and business aspects of a newspaper.

Newspaper business has to do with machines, newsprint rolls, ink drums, advertisement tariffc and other sundry matters of cash and credit, accounts and balance-sheets. Freedom of expression is a matter of ideas, thoughts born in somebody's head, and the words and deeds that follow such thoughts and ideas. Since the 1880s the readers or newspaper-consuming public have not paid the full cost of the news and opinions they consume. This has been possible simply because the advertisers have been subsidising the media.

The public are slowly becoming aware of this because advertising and its availability is conditioning, the birth and death of newspapers, and has made their survival dependent virtually on becoming appendages to the consumer industry.

Nobody has yet found a way of total liberation. The limit of reform sought is to reduce the dependence of the press on advertising. This is the purpose of devising a price-page schedule — an idea which may already be running out of steam because of the high prices of newspapers. The idea of fixing the proportion of advertisement and news is that, assuming that what people buy when they buy a paper is news and views and advertisements are an adulterant to keep down the price, an attempt is to be made statutorily to keep down the extent of adulteration.

I fear neither the valiant group of warriors who have signed the majority report nor the minority dissent group have caught on to this simple point. The entire report seems to suffer from the lack of a single nexus firmly founded in well-considered principles. The sway of momentary interests mars the quality of both affirmation and dissent — despite the shallow ranks of the dissenters being enriched by an economist of the calibre of H.K. Paranjape. He sounded different when he was on the Monopolies Commission, as Justice Mathew and K.R. Ganesh did on other occasions. That is the disease of changing values in a rapidly changing socio-economic environment.

Maybe, Commissions are out of date. Political possibilities and economic advantages are the 'in'

Economy : Danger from 'Invisible Hands'

BHABATOSH DATTA

WHEN Adam Smith wrote on the harmony in the economic order brought about by the spontaneous action of each individual seeking his own interest and on the "natural order" and the "invisible hand", he could not have anticipated that, two centuries later, he would be quoted in support of policies enunciated not only by economists like Milton Friedman or F A. Hayek, or political heads like President Ronald Reagan or Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, but also by that very class against whom he was sharply vocal. It is true that Adam Smith disliked state intervention (with some special exceptions) and controls over prices, wages or profits, but it is often forgotten that he was strongly critical of all types of monopoly in manufacture or in trading. Speaking about "merchants and master-manufacturers" he said that their interest

> is always in some respects different from, or even opposite to, that of the public ... The proposal of any new law or regulation of commerce which comes from this order ought always to be listened to with great precaution, and ought never to be adopted till after having been long and carefully examined, not only with the most scrupulous, but with the most suspicious attention. It comes from an order of men whose interest is never exactly the same with that of the public, who have generally an interest to deceive and even to oppress the public, and who accordingly have, upon many occasions, both deceived and oppressed it. (*The Wealth of Nations*, 1776, Vol. I).

Stimulated by the arguments put forward by those who combine their "monetarism" with a logically unconnected brand of *laissez-faire* economics, like Friedman, or by philosophical "libertarians" like Hayek, a strong industrial group in India has recently been urging "decontrol" and even "deplanning", with a view to bringing the "market forces" into operation. Examples are cited from Latin America, or from Singapore and Hong Kong, forgetting altogether the nature of the problems of a poor overpopulated country and also the income and wealth disparities created by the visible metropolitan prosperity thriving on extensive invisible poverty of large numbers. The case of Japan is sometimes cited, forgetting again the large role played by the Government in directing the development of the economy and also the failure of the new Japanese economy to solve the problems of economic justice and, more visibly, of severe inflationary pressures.

In India, the devotees of the "market forces" include political leaders and, of course, some economists also, but the main spokesmen who set the tune and conduct the orchestra are the big industrial groups. A remarkably clear exponent of these groups is S.L. Kirloskar, who recently urged a return to the "market forces" through a fourteen-point programme. (*The Economic Times*, May 1 and 4, 1981). It is necessary to state at the outset that many will agree with Kirloskar's analysis of the deficiencies and failures of the planning process in India, though they will not accept the thesis that these deficiencies and failures justify a reversal in economic policy. The substitute for inefficient planning is efficient planning. Kirloskar should, however, be praised for his honesty in stating the industrialists' position, with no holds barred and without any attempt to sugarcoat his suggestions. The individual policies recommended by him have been urged by many in recent years — in meetings of the Chambers of Commerce, in the widely-advertised chairmen's speeches at the annual general meetings of big companies, in political leaders' confident utterances, and in special articles prominently published in periodicals. Kirloskar has brought all these together and has given a clear picture of the needs of the economy, as viewed by the topmost one per cent of the Indian population. The fourteen points suggested for "immediate" adoption include:

> The abolition of "the Planning Commission with its vast bureaucratic superstructure"; denationalisation of all public sector industrial and commercial enterprises; dismantling of the "complex mechanism of controls"; repeal of the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices (MRTP) and the Minimum Wages Acts: restriction of Government activities to the "basic function of provision of social and economic infrastructural facilities"; reduction of the rates of direct and indirect taxes; restricting the revenue of the Government "to just enough to meet the basic financial requirement"; abolition of the capital gains tax and reduction of the personal and corporate income tax rate to 30 per cent at the highest slabs, together with the raising of the exemption limit for personal income tax to Rs. 25,000 per annum: exemption from income tax of all personal and corporate savings invested in equity shares of industrial units or in deposits in public limited companies; tax exemption of all profits of industries for the first ten years; admitting liberal depreciation allowances on fixed capital on the basis of ruling prices of capital assets; putting a ceiling of 10.5 per cent on the interest on loans to private industry by commercial banks and financial institutions; and, finally, allowing "market forces" the "maximum scope for their operation".

All this has to be done "immediately" or "forthwith", so that one morning Indians wake up to the heaven in which the industrialists are free (the more powerful ones freer than the others) to produce what they find most profitable to produce, free of all controls, charge any price that the market will bear, get bank loans at low rates and pay low wages, combine together to earn tax-free or low-tax profits, retain large personal incomes openly, as all markets will be "white", and own and operate the denationalised public enterprises, including banking and insurance and "returned"

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sick units. There will be no central planning, while industrialists will be free to plan for achieving their own ends. The final peroration in favour of the "market forces" is in effect a plea for handing over the economy to the forces that the industrialists themselves can control.

It is this basic fact that has to be clearly recognised. There is an emotive persuasiveness about the argument for "market forces", deriving from what the elementary text-books describe as perfect competition. It is necessary, therefore, to keep in mind what the so-called "market forces" are, under a theoretically neat model of perfect competition and under the conditions of real life. The competition to which the "market-force" protagonists appear to appeal has never existed in any country at any time in history. It is a good expository model for starting one's discussion of price theory, justified only as the first level of abstraction, from which one can, by successive approximation, that is, by relaxing the assumptions step by step, approach the complexities of real life.

Even at the risk of appearing a little pedagogic, one has to emphasise some of the essential conditions of the perfectly competitive model: an infinitely large number of sellers and buyers, so that no seller or buyer can affect the price by changing his supply or demand; perfectly divisible and homogeneous commodities and factors, market by market; diminishing marginal rate of substitution between commodities and between factors; diminishing rate of transformation of factors into output; full knowledge and full mobility; full freedom for any buyer or seller to enter the market or to go away from it. Given all this, there is an equilibrium output in the industry as a whole and in every unit composing it, but whether such output is the social optimum or not depends on the accepted standard of distribution of incomes and assets. The basic facts of life are that not only the technical conditions of perfect competition are nowhere satisfied, but also that all buyers are not equally powerful if their incomes differ and that all suppliers are not equally powerful if their command over resources differs. What is often persuasively described as "healthy competition" is often a contradiction in terms. Competition in real life tends to be unhealthy, because of inequalities in the competitive power.

The fact is that, correctly used, the term "market forces", without its emotive slant towards the apotheosis of perfect competition, is broad enough to cover all types of markets. There are forces identifiable as operating in the theoretically compplete, perfect competition; there are similarly identifiable market forces operating in imperfect markets, in monopoly or "monopoloid" systems. The implication in all the pleas in favour of the "market forces" is that the controlled economy would revert to the theoretically neat competitive market when controls have been withdrawn, but the reversion is more likely to be to the market forces of monopoly or oligopoly and to a system in which large numbers of poor suppliers of labour and raw materials and the equally large numbers of poor consumers are at the mercy of the forces that would dominate the market. These forces would also be "market forces" and in the absence of controls could be called "free" as well.

II

ONE can look at the actual situation in India and see what is the nature of the "market forces" at present operating and therefrom also visualise what will be the forces in the "heaven" of the industrialists' dream. In general, agricultural goods are taken to provide examples of more or less perfect competition. In India, the number of producers in each of the major products is large, but there has been an emergence of large producers in some regions. None of the major products, however, is homogeneous, there being many varieties and subvarieties. Physical transportation problems often demarcate sub-market boundaries. Communication of information between one locality and another is also imperfect. An agricultural producer cannot easily go out to another line of production, even when he is persistently losing. He cannot wait for good prices. And, above everything, the market is imperfect and often "oligopsonistic" on the buying side.

The bulk buyers are on the stronger side of the bargain. This applies to foodgrains sold to middlemen; to sugarcane in which case the neighbouring sugar factory is a "monopsonist" in the locality; and to such raw materials as jute or cotton, in which case the real buyers are the big organised mill sectors. A return to the "market forces" will only strengthen the already strong buyers, who can use their resources, staying power and cartel-like understandings to influence the prices. These "market forces" are actually in operation, despite controls and Government purchases at pre-declared support prices. In the absence of controls and Government intervention, the market forces that will operate will not be closer to perfect competition but very much away from it.

The position in industry is equally one of high degrees of monopoly and monopsony. The Monopolies Inquiry Commission of 1965 defined a "dominant unit" in an industry as one which controlled 30 per cent of the total supply, and considered the market monopolistic if three topmost units controlled 50 per cent or more of the market supply. On this basis, the Commission gave a long list of industries containing dominant units and another list of industries with monopolistic elements. In the case of 810 out of 1,385 products examined, the topmost three enterprises produced more than 75 per cent of the output in the organised sector. Other detailed breakdowns were also given, and it was shown that 425 commodities were produced by only one producer each, 225 by two producers in each case and 160 by three producers for each commodity (Monopolies Inquiry Commission *Report*, 1965, Chapter II and Appendix *C*).

The position in the later years does not appear to have changed, despite the operation of the MRTP Act. The assets of the topmost industrial groups have increased considerably. The increases, it has to be remembered, cannot be attributed entirely to the rise in prices, because the assets are recorded in their initial book values and these book values are high only in the case of recent acquisitions. The total assets of 114 "monopoly houses" in the country went up from Rs 107,400 million in 1978 to Rs 1245,70 million in 1979 and their profits increased from Rs 16,580 million to Rs 17,910 million. Some individual houses have shown extremely high rates of growth. The assets of the Tata group increased from Rs 5060 million in 1969 to Rs 13,090 million in 1979 and those of the Birla group from Rs 4,180 million to Rs 13,100 million. These are likely to be under-estimates, because there are a number of allied firms and subsidiaries that have escaped registration.

The operation of the multinationals and their subsidiaries or "collaborators' has also expanded and even apparent competitors are bound down to them by sale agreements. One can take well-known examples of concentrated production or sales of basic chemicals, drugs and pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, baby food, shoes, tobacco products, electrical goods and explosives. The present position has been tellingly described by one who has a thorough knowledge of the field as follows:

> The concentration of economic power as represented by a small number of business groups has continued to increase, both in terms of their total role in the economy and their dominance in particular areas of production. Similarly, little success has been achieved in respect of curbing the monopolistic and unfair trade practices of the dominant and monopolistic concerns (H.K. Paranjape. Kale Memorial Lecture, *Mainstream*, October 17, 1981).

The attempt of the Government to maintain competition through reservation of a large number of commodities for the small-scale industries has not produced the desired results and the "market forces" have not become more competitive. The definition of small units has, after successive changes, reached a level (Rs 2 million of plant and machinery, or possibly Rs 3-3.5 million, including land and buildings and stocks) at which they are not quite small. The more important fact is that many of the so-called small units are open or disguised subsidiaries of large units, registered and operated as small units to take advantage of tax and interest rate concessions, to channel out the profits of the parent concerns and, more generally, to avoid the stigma of monopolistic operations.

An independent small unit finds the "market forces" operating against it, because of the strength of the sales organisations and the size of the advertisement and other sales promotion expenditure that the monopolistic competitor can undertake. The advertisement and sales promotion expenses are deductible for tax computation and thus the net cost to the large firms is relatively small. It is also well known that even Government stores purchase agencies sometimes specify brand names in their advertisements for supplies. The advantages specially meant for small units are almost all enjoyed by their large competitors through subsidiaries, while the disadvantages of the small units multiply with every growth of monopolistic competition.

The plea for decontrol with an ostensible view to restoring "competition" and "free" enterprise, has recently been accompanied by the half-educated appeal to what is being called "supply-side economics". Terms that the glossy magazines abroad start using are often taken here as the essence of progressive thought. It is not realised that the supply side is only half of the economic picture and the supposed dichotomy between demand management and supply management is meaningless. An economic model which ignores either the supply or the demand side cannot give a picture of the whole process. If, however, the only objective of the "supply-siders" is to emphasise policies that will increase output, the question that immediately arises is: "What output?" The actual market forces, as operating in India now and are likely to operate more strongly when "decontrol", "de-nationalisation" and "de-planning" have been adopted as basic state policies, will increase some supplies certainly. These will be the supplies of high profit luxury goods and consumer durables (including costly housing for the richer classes) and not the supplies of those goods which are relevant to the large mass of low income consumers.

III

THE public sector in India has much to answer for, but so has the private sector. The losses of the public sector enterprises are highlighted everywhere, but no one cares to find out what has been the total loss of equity-holders' and lenders' capital in the private corporate sector, how many companies have gone into liquidation in the last thirty years, how many (even though listed by the Stock Exchange) do not pay any dividends at all or pay at rates much lower than the deposit rates of interest, or how many have paid dividends to the "close-holding" shareholders out of capital. No spokesman for the market forces looks at the number of sick units, some beyond redemption, brought to the present stage by poor foresight, lack of innovativeness, mismanagement and sometimes unalloyed corruption. If the taxpayers are bearing the burdens of losing public sector enterprises, they are also bearing the burdens of the mistakes and malfeasances of private enterprisers. In the case of the state enterprises there is at least full publicity.

The basic fact to which one returns is that the actual "market forces" nowhere correspond to the perfectly competitive market in the name of which the economic case and the emotional appeal are sought to be made by the industrialists and their supporters. And even the perfectly competitive model is pointless as a social welfare model when the buyers and sellers are divided into economic brackets with wide divergences in purchasing and holding power. The market forces in real life are not controlled by Smith's "invisible hand" which was supposed to be spontaneous, automatic and impersonal. These forces are actually controlled by the "invisible hands" of powerful producers and traders who shape and operate the economy to attain their own interests. Some of the "hands at work" are occasionally visible, but the more dangerous ones are those "invisible hands" which control the markets through secret understandings, through apparently competitive brand names, through the complexes of interlinked firms, through purposive transfer pricing and through the influences exercised on policy-makers.

A surrender to the actual and potential "monopoloid market forces" in India will strengthen these "invisible hands". The industrialists' paradise that will be ushered in will be one in which the large groups will be free to invest in lines which they find profitable. They will be helped by relatively low interest costs, by unregulated wages, by uncontrolled selling prices for outputs and buying prices for inputs and by low direct and indirect taxes. The GNP, as estimated usually, will show an increase and perhaps a high rate of annual growth, but the composition of the commodity basket will be quite different from what the country requires. There will be no restrictions on the imports of luxury goods and the supermarkets in the metropolitan cities will be "flush" with imported goods (as in Hong Kong or Singapore), while the essential supplies will remain in short supply to the large masses of the poor. Income and wealth disparities will increase. Multinationals will find easy entry into the country and get the advantages of siphoning off local capital, while using local labour at a cheap price. Economic power will be concentrated in a few pairs of "invisible hands" (perhaps guided by other "invisible hands" out side the country), and as economic power is what ultimately matters, these "hands" will control the politics of the country as well.

The most distressing element in the present picture is that some of the recent policies of the Government indicate the success of the "market-force" protagonists in turning official policy to their favour. The industrialists' plea has been strengthened by the stiff instructions from the international financial institutions which continuously try to sell their own brand of economic philosophy. The raising of the income tax exemption limit to the high level of Rs 15,000 (making the effective exemption limit in many cases Rs 25,000 or thereabouts) in a country where the per capita income is only Rs 1,400 (1979-80); the reduction of the tax rates at higher levels of income; liberalising the rules of the valuation of property for wealth tax purposes; adoption of specially favourable measures for the holders of black money, like the "special bearer bonds"; subsidies which most often benefit the rich farmers; and exporters; tax concessions that provide incentives to make production less labour-intensive; liberalisation of imports of plant and machinery, even when these are produced within the country; relaxation of the rules regarding conversion of loans by financial institutions into equity; changing the established equity-debt ratios, with easy conditions for the issue of debentures; financial and other policies which practically invite the industrialists to make some of their units sick; the decision to return sick units to their owners — these are all much more than the proverbial straws in the wind.

They all indicate a positive slant towards a direction opposite to that required for efficient economic planning which seeks to secure economic growth in terms of the socially desirable components and economic justice. The "invisible hands" appear to be succeeding visibly in their efforts to maximise the private good of a top bracket to which belong or with which are associated the large industrialists, farmers and traders and also policy-makers at both the political and bureaucratic levels. Adam Smith's "invisible hand" was an abstraction. The industrialists' "invisible hands" are a sinister fact of life.☐

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DISCUSSION

Scientific Temper

A Statement on Scientific Temper signed by outstanding intellectuals, released by P.N. Haksar at the Nehru Centre in Bombay (*Mainstream,* July 25, 1981), has touched off rethinking in a broad spectrum of our national life. Nine comments on the Statement have so far been published in *Mainstream* (August 29, October 10, November 14 and December 19, 1981, January 2 and 16 and February 6, 1982). We publish here two contributions: the first is by two experts, Harsh Sethi of the Indian Council for Social Science Research and Prof Dinesh Mohan of the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi (the latter was a signatory to the Bombay Statement); the second is by Rajendra Prasad, a Marxist intellectual.—*Editor*

Time for Reason, Not Tantrums

HARSH SETHI and DINESH MOHAN

ONE wonders why arguments have to be so shrill. Assertions, counter-assertions and hysterical accusations become more important than the issues involved. The Scientific Temper (ST) document was meant to be an appeal for more "reason" in our lives, and the debate was expected to centre on the shortcomings of this committee document. Instead of focussing on this, the critics have used the document to ride their own hobby-horses. They have even questioned the right of those who have wielded power in the past, or are powerful at present, to make such pronouncements. This is a clever ruse, because all of us who can afford to participate in such a debate must share some of the blame for the situation our country is in. Pointing fingers is just abdicating responsibility.

The ST document communicates at many levels, depending upon how charitable one wants to be towards it. A consensus document from quite a divergent group, it gives vent to the feelings of distress caused by the "misery" and "oppression" the country is living through. It also attempts a superficial analysis of this sorry state of affairs. We cannot read the document in isolation. We read it in an era of conscious awareness of Bhagalpurs, Belchis, Antulays, "encounters" and rampant fraud in our scientific establishment. We are aware of the realities around us. Millions of people living in what have to be the most degrading physical conditions anywhere in the world. An inefficient administrative system which works mainly on misinformation heading towards a steady Brazilization of our economy and culture. A legal system, unable to handle the rich criminal, keeps itself happy by incarcerating and torturing the poor undertrials. An educational establishment which collaborates with state power in the stupefaction of the young while pretending to educate. A religious establishment which consciously eschews participation in social upliftment but can hold yajnas and Kumbh Melas with the approval of the state. A political leadership which can have as Cabinet Ministers persons who believe that the Ganga cannot be polluted, and as youth leaders those whose main claim to fame is their genealogy. What do we lack? Religion? Tradition? Living with nature? Manual Labour? Poverty? Cruelty? Obscurantist reasoning? Corruption? No, none of these.

The ST document is an appeal for something we do lack, and not a statement against the things we have in plenty. The ST document is an appeal to build a society "which is animated by a spirit of enquiry rather than passivity and acceptance": be questioning, be critical, rely on 'facts', go by testability and verifiability — these are some of the positive values it calls for. Equally important are the things it condemns: superstition, unreason, blind obedience, fatalism and passivity.

According to the document: "If we have to regain our place in the world and are not to be relegated once again to the dustbin of history, if we wish to offer a life of fulfilment to our destitute millions, indeed if the light of our civilisation is not to be extinguished, we have to undertake, on a priority basis, the task of nurturing the Scientific Temper."

How does all this sound? (Pompous? Yes, but what else? Is this a call for a new renaissance, or the manifesto of a totalising ideology? To decide this we must look at the ST document and its criticisms a little more closely.

To begin with, we must be clear about what we mean by "Science" In the current debate the word has been used rather loosely to score debating points with one's own admirers rather than to

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improve understanding or communication. For the purposes of this article let us see what different visions one can conjure up when one talks of science. Science, to some, means the organised science establishment—complete with expensive laboratories and linkages with state power and war. The term "science" could also mean the present body of knowledge sanctified and approved by the scientific establishment. A third sense of "science" is the role and behaviour patterns of scientists as individuals and as members of a profession. Lastly, "science" is also the short name for the scientific method — the methods by which we determine, for the time being, whether a given assertion is close to the *truth* or not.

While all these roles and meanings are interlinked, one cannot have a reasonable discussion if the word is used with deliberate ambiguity by the participants in the discussion. The ST document deals mainly with the *method* of science in its most liberal sense. Its critics, on the other hand, have taken "science" mainly in its other three senses. The ST document does not really use the word science in any of its other three *avatars*. The ST document completely underplays the organised nature of science — with its links to big business, war and domination. It is silent on the quality and lack of contribution of the scientific establishment of India. It also avoids any discussion on what horrors may have been perpetrated in the name of science. The document does not address the question of arrogant scientists who can at times do more harm than good.

All this may sound like outright condemnation, but it is not. These are some of the problems associated with the world of science and they really cannot be wished away. But let us for a moment look at what some of the critics say. The pride of place must go to Ashis Nandy (*Mainstream*, October 10, 1981), and we agree with Rev. Paul Gregorious that had Nandy not reacted, the ST document would not have got as much notice (*Mainstream*, February 6, 1982). We also agree with him that Nandy's writing was a "horrid everstatement" and that "he has obviously missed the main point of the ST document which was directed against a phenomenon which frightens many thinking people — the growth of irrationality or retreat from reason, manifested in the recrudescense and popularity of religious practices (superstition and bizarre rituals) incompatible with a rational world view." But that is only a reaction to Nandy's worst writings. In many ways, his M.N. Roy Memorial lecture, "Science, Authoritarianism, and Culture" (*Seminar*, May 1981) is the piece which deserves a little more attention.

Nandy's presumption that all the signatories to the ST document are votaries of the Science Establishment is personal slander in bad taste. In no way does it add to the argument. Just as an aside, do Prof Damodaran, an active member of the Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad, Mohit Sen of the CPI, H Narasimhaiah, a staunch Gandhian, and V.G. Kulkarni, a promoter of science teaching programmes in Maharashtra constitute the Science Establishment? If Nandy chooses to read the ST document as an undifferentiated overkill, through the use of selective quotations, what sense is one to make of his undifferentiated critique of modern medicine, agronomy, and technology: "Recent experience has repeatedly confirmed that the so-called kindly sciences like medicine and agronomy are not merely cut-throat enterprises but are fast becoming counter-productive mega organisations, dealing out mega-suffering and mega-death" Yes, we are all aware of *iatrogenesis*, but Nandy's statement is hardly a true picture, unembellished as it is by any qualifications. He also treats us to gems such as: The common man is not so common after all", or to the extolling of popular wisdom and folk cultures ("under-socialised" is the term used). But enough of sniping. The major contribution of Nandy's (at the risk of over-simplifying and caricaturing him) is his pertinent reminder that science and culture and consciousness are both products and creations of history; that there is no unique perception to a unique truth; that any attempt at creating a universalising paradigm that does not admit any external criticism is likely to facilitate totalitarianism. Thus his appeal for a plural vision of sciences and humanity. So far so good, but we are still left with a number of imponderables to chew on.

What is Nandy's notion of "critical traditionalism"? To quote: "The authentic critical traditionalism I am talking about does not have to see the modern world or modern science as alien to it, even though it might see them as alienating. It sees modernity and modern science as parts of a new tradition which could be used for critical purposes within the earlier traditions and their long-term concerns" (*Seminar*, May 1981). How is this view to be reconciled with his other view that modern science is over-objectified, that it is over-isolating, that it has become another pathological correlate of the demise of traditions and erosion of cultures?

Similarly, let us for a moment examine Nandy on traditions. Just as he argues against an over-isolating science, he argues against over-isolating traditions. The example he uses is Coomaraswamy's critique of modern civilisation, which while being brilliant, is not critical, "because it leaves no scope for anti-traditionalism, and also, in spite of being holistic by design, it does not allow any creative use of the modern consciousness". The problems now are two: Do modern science and tradition come to us as packages, the good along with the evil, or can we pick out what we consider good from both and create a new organic viewpoint? The case for the former has been argued out by Coomaraswamy as also by Saran. If Nandy rejects them, then, we are afraid, he has to go beyond idealised exhortations.

One continuously gets a feeling as one reads and re-reads Nandy that he overplays the "undifferentiated nature of modern science", and underplays the "undifferentiated nature of traditions". This is mainly because of a distinction he draws between early modern science and present modern science. What was once a critique and a dissent to the then existing meaning given to the man-nature system is now portrayed as an onslaught on human survival. Tradition, being of the past, can be viewed more benigngly. But is this justified?

And so Nandy can present science and/or tradition as over-objectified, isolating wholes for one argument, and differentiated entities for another. If 'critical traditionalism' is acceptable, then so is, by the same argument, "critical science."

Another major problem that we face in understanding Nandy is the notion of "plural sciences". Even if one grants that in earlier times contending schools of thought could co-exist, and compete, and grow (for example, the different schools of medicine in India, prior to the elevation of allopathy as the medical science), it was so because it was earlier times.

Let us take the example of medicine. If in earlier times many different systems could co-exist it was because no system had an edge over another on the basis of knowledge alone. Fundamental assumptions of each school were different from those of the others and there were no *a priori* reasons why one could claim superiority over another, except belief. However, the total fund of knowledge in Western medicine has increased greatly in the last century while the other systems have remained static. If others are showing a resurgence now, even their staunchest supporters would like to use the tools of modern science — controlled experiments, statistics, etc. — to weed out the bad practices from the good. Even Nandy's "common people" all over the world demonstrate a preference for Western medicine over traditional for a large number of ailments. If they are wise, then Western medicine must be superior. If Western medicine is not actually superior then Nandy's common man must be common after all. One can't have it both ways.

Nandy says that "the common man has not only his traditional or folk science, he has his own philosophy of science. It might be vague, implicit and non-professional but it is informed with the experience of suffering. Such folk sciences and philosophies must be taken seriously". Now, we know that a tribe in Madhya Pradesh treats its infants colic pains by placing burning embers on the children's bellies in the belief that the pain is cured for ever. Would Nandy use the same treatment for his child? If not, what logic system would he use to select some knowledge and reject another when both are informed with the same "experience of suffering"?

It is easy to demonstrate problems with a system, it is a little more difficult to argue an alternative. The social forces that Nandy appeals to — folk and popular cultures (in themselves not specified enough) —have, by his own logic of a totalising ideology of science, lost the capacity to fashion an alternative in a complex, inter-dependent world. their intellectual idealogues notwithstanding. They have lost out in the real world, not because they were ethically or morally disgraced, but because they could not provide the necessary cohesion to a social force which could contend for an autonomous place in this world. But if Nandy thinks that these forces are still viable, we think it is necessary for him to demonstrate how. A major problem with this kind of critiques is that they argue that at some stage in world history, there was a major disjuncture. The winning out of the Cartesian logic in the 17th Century meant that the modern world embarked upon a course which eventually will lead to its own destruction. This is implicit not only in the critiques of technology now so fashionable (Illich) or in the "notion of man colonising nature" now leading to the possibility of an ecological breakdown, but also in Nandy's descriptions of "early" and "now over-organised science". The glorious march of human kind from the caves to the medieval civilisations, was rudely diverted towards cataclysmic doom.

Are we serious when we argue that for over 300 years humanity has followed a course which, in the name of increasing control over the environment, is reducing the probability of mankind's own reproduction? In the A.K. Saran, Coomaraswamy, Dr K.P. Gupta frameworks, we could possibly argue this out, because then incontrovertible decisions have already been taken, but not if we believe in a trend notion of "progress", and definitely not, if we continue to make appeals, to "the common man who is not so common after all". If this "common man" is blessed with the potentialities of overcoming 300 years of deadweight, then what happened to him over the last three countries? Or is it that the disjuncture was no disjuncture after all?

There are a few more red herrings thrown our way. Vandana Shiva (*Mainstream*, December 19, 1981) is upset about "Western" science and seems to have some vision of "plurality" of sciences. Many others go to the extreme of advocating an "Indian" science. Such statements can only be made if the word "science" is used to mean the *origin* of a body of knowledge. If they mean that any one group or nation can have its own unique methods of evaluating and understanding information or phenomena. then they couldn't be talking of the situation in 1982. In the middle ages it may have been possible for different communities to use different methodologies. Not so today. All of us, all over the world, use similar "tools of thought" to test theories and evaluate information. These tools can be induction, deduction, statistical evaluation, modelling, systems analysis. etc., to corroborate or falsify theories. Even if Indians came up with newer tools, it would hardly be an Indian science, because if it worked it would become international immediately.

An argument against science often offered is that sometimes modern science initially rejects traditional knowledge only to accept it later on. We would have thought that willingness to change would be a point in favour of science! We are sure that most would not argue in favour of everything that is traditional. It would then justify pouring hot oil in children's ears, putting cowdung on the newborn's umbilical cord, binding women's feet, making women untouchables during menstruation and so on. I am sure that the proponents of plural sciences do not approve of these practices. If they don't, why not?

What tools of thought do they use to make their decisions?

It is possible that the unhappiness with "science" stems from people's discomfort in living with uncertainty. Unfortunately the universe is complex and all "proofs" are tentative and we cannot reduce our world to a set of transparent laws. On the other hand, one of the greatest joys of a scientist is to occasionally show "common sense" and existing theories to be wrong.

The nature of the debate so far shows that the concerns of the debaters are not so different. In a sense, everyone is upset with the way things are — our misery, the exploitation, and powerlessness as poor ex-colonials in a world controlled by the superpowers and the multinationals.

Somewhere in this muddled-up world we have to make choices. Assuming of course that time will not run out on us. We have to understand that some of the traditional ways of understanding reality are just too slow and we may not be left with any choices to make unless we use all possible modern tools of thought to shape our future. We are not making a plea for a free hand for our super-scientist-bureaucrats. On the contrary, we are quite aware of the rot in our scientific establishment and "elite" institutions. We are also not rejecting all traditional knowledge. All we are asking for is a reasonable *evaluation*, otherwise we will end up buying *our* traditional knowledge from foreign multinationals and academics who do this evaluation instead of us. We are also very clear that as a continental economy, sooner or later we will have to come up with *some* knowledge and technology which is competitive with that produced elsewhere. We will need this in exchange for the goods that we need from abroad. We cannot go on exchanging jute, tea and handicrafts for Boeings, Xerox machines and fertiliser. Our labour rates will have to remain low unless we can compete in some areas of technology.

Such technology and knowledge particularly suitable for India's needs cannot be produced without the application of the current tools of reason and analysis. How can we be autonomous as a people if we are weak in an inter-dependent world? Retreating into the past would be admitting defeat. And this, in spite of their protestations, is what we think Nandy and his supporters have done.

We are still left with the problem of making choices and decisions. Being urban, middle class, and aware of happenings elsewhere in the world, all we can say is that we would rather go by what we can assess, test and verify for ourselves. If we are wrong, it would be useful to have an ethos which permits civilised debate and change of opinion.☐

A Political Question

RAJENDRA PRASAD

If the Statement on Scientific Temper, issued last July by a group of eminent public men, is a muddle-headed, logically contradictory attempt to understand the process of growth and development of science and society, Ashis Nandy's counter-statement is both phoney and pernicious. The former, paying lip service to the significant role of science in creating an egalitarian society. believes that the Indian ruling classes can deliver the goods provided only that the logic of planning and the logic of our socio-economic structures are "scientifically" harmonised. The latter is an unashamed defence of the status quo which couches its glorification of obscurantism in a presumptuous philosophy.

Regarding the Bombay Statement, a crucial question is why despite the political thrust provided by Jawaharlal Nehru, the attempt to 'inculcate a scientific temper' not only failed, but led to the phenomenal growth of superstitious beliefs and obscurantist practices. The Statement does not explain this fact, but identifies two apparent causes for this failure: firstly the lack of appreciation of the relationship between means and ends and secondly, a "lack of systematic and sustained effort". The first is a lapse on the part of what the signatories would have us believe is the whole of science: the second is attributed to the role of prevalent pro-and anti-scientific ideologies. For at one point the Statement refers to "deep-rooted structures of an ancient society with superimposed colonial structures". But this is no explanation at all, but simply describes a situation in which scientific attitudes have not been socially imbibed.

The failure of the Statement to come to grips with the question can be understood at two levels. The Statement presents a totally ahistorical perspective within which the process of social development is sought to be understood. Social advances and transformation are claimed to be a product of "the spirit of enquiry" while periods of stagnation result from the deadening of this spirit.

Where no attempt is made to identify the social groups or classes benefiting from the maintenance of the structures of an ancient society with its superimposed colonial structures, no attempt can obviously be made to pin down those social forces responsible for the visible variance between professed objectives and actual realities. A simple fact which has escaped the men of learning is however evident to a field-worker like Anil Sadgopal who, in his Sarabhai Memorial lecture, unambiguously stated that the ship of scientific temper flounders on the rock of vested interests.

The Statement presents a totally ahistorical perspective. In what amounts to a reversal of causal relationships, "the spirit of enquiry' acquires an idealised and unrealistic independence from the social forces of which it is in fact the expression. The theoretical weakness impairs understanding of the significance of both social policy and the direction of social chages. While it is correct to assert that British Imperialism encouraged revivalism and obscurantism to suit its interests, it would be a travesty of truth to claim that the national movement was the outcome of "a critique of traditional society". The national movement witnessed not only a struggle against social obscurantism but also conscious with it. Some of its outstanding leaders invoked obscurantist ideas and symbols to mobilise the people. To overlook this duality, to neglect to identify the class interest behind this apparent vacillation. Is to lose the capacity to grasp the nature of the drift of policy in Independent India.

The authors of the Bombay Statement in trying to skirt the basic issue that the scientific temperament is a component of the ideology of the class which can revolutionise society (as it was with the bourgeoisie in its struggle against feudalism), avoids what is in fact the crucial point. A correct political perspective is essential if scientific attitudes are to be inculcated in the great mass of the people. The present statement is so far from this that it lands itself in a vicious circle. "The inculcation of scientific temper in our society would result in our people becoming national and objective, thereby generating a climate favouring an egalitarian, democratic, secular and universalist outlook. Consequently scientific temper cannot flourish in a grossly inegalitarian society ... social justice, widespread education and unrestricted communication are, therefore, pre-requisites for spread of scientific temper." From this chaotic formulation one could logically conclude that India today has no room or need for "scientific temper" as this has no role to play in the struggle for a rational, egalitarian social order, being only the hot-house flower that blooms when the struggle is over.

Nandy's counter-statement arguing for a more humanistic temper (the problem of quantification presents no difficulty, for Nandy's is a purely "ideological" argument), is based on a single categoric statement: "Oppression never ends. When one form of oppression ends, new forms emerge". His 'humanism' thus consists in seeking palliatives and not solutions. The entire exercise is spurious, for Nandy cannot distinguish between elections and witches, each myth being no worse than the other. On such myths, Nandy grounds 'human dignity', making a mockery of the struggle of the human race to advance the parameters of understanding and control. Nandy's status quoism forces this posture, for "astrology is the myth of the weak; modern science that of the strong. If you have the latter you have to have the former". Since Nandy does not question this division, far less join forces with those struggling against it, what could be better than to provide a 'justification' for it?

The real control which scientific knowledge offers human society of its environment and therefore its destiny is discounted by Nandy, while politico-administrative policies which have exploited this to the detriment of humanity are placed at the door-step of science. If science demands that other 'systems of thought' be criticised from its point of view, Nandy demands that science equally must be open to criticism by the standards of faith. This is ridiculous, for scientific ideas must be open to scientific criticism and so indeed they are. It is the worst kind of opportunism to deny this in the name of 'equality of cross-criticism'. It leads poor Nandy to the absurd conclusion that incantations are perhaps better than vaccines and anti-septics for the latter provide psychological satisfaction.

Of course, this pseudo-philosophic posture is not without important political or intellectual support. US President Reagan during his election campaign argued in favour of treating both the evolutionism of Darwin and the creationism of the Bible as 'scientific.' At a far more sophisticated level Feyerabend, the self-proclaimed anarchist and flippant dadaist whom Nandy holds in such esteem that he feels every "literate" should be familiar with his arguments, has provided intellectual currency for this trend.

Nandy drops names of Western philosophers of science. It is on the authority of a person like de Santillana that he claims that in the case of Galileo, "It was the Church which proved itself more open and sought to have plural images of the Cosmos. Galileo, like the signatories to the Statement, thought he knew the truth and wanted to oust all other concepts of truth." It is worth noting that de Santillana himself contrasts the relative 'openness' of the Church not with Galileo's attitude, but with the posture of the Committee on anti-American activities which subjected Oppenheimer to investigation in the fifties. That Nandy is being dishonest and not merely incompetent in overlooking this fact is evident from de Santillana's views regarding Galileo: "Galileo had no advocates in court, nor was there any discussion of the Copernican theories as such. Galileo was not allowed to defend his scientific work: the only question was, had he disobeyed the Church or not?" Further, he observes that "all efforts were bent towards keeping social forces under the firm control of a consistent philosophical motivation." (*Reflections on Men and Ideas*).

The two statements which appear to be irreconcilable at the level of ideas alone, are compatible in that both fit into the ideological framework of the ruling classes.

On the one hand, these classes are interested in utilising science both for production and the management of society to the extent that this furthers their interests. But on the other hand their capacity to modernise Indian society while retaining their political and social dominance is severely limited, which leads increasingly to the need to ally with obscurantism and reactionary socio-political trends and offers itself as the best solution to the problem. Within this perspective the Bombay Statement can be seen as an idealised and, given the reality of Indian development in the last few decades, nostalgic expression of ruling class interests, Nandy's counter-statement is an unabashed attempt to legitimise the war against scientific advance of social life and values unleashed by the bourgeoisie in both developed and developing capitalist countries.

Abolition of oppression and inequality, and the urge for modernising society are feasible social goals only when science is allied to the social forces capable of revolutionising society at the present historical juncture. Hence the question of the spread of the scientific temperament is fundamentally a political question to which there can be no voluntaristic solutions.□

Should India Go Nuclear? — II

KRISHNA KANT

THE next point — that unity of the nation and strength of will are adequate to meet a nuclear threat, hence we should not go in for nuclear weapons even if our neighbours make them or we are surrounded by nuclear weapons all round — has been substantially dealt with earlier. In 1962, when our forces had a setback in the Kamang division mostly because of failure of the local military leadership, there was wide propaganda in the country that our failure was mainly due to the Indian Army not having self-loading rifles and mortars of adequate range. Yet, there are people, even generals, who advocate that India should be able to face a nuclear China and a nuclear Pakistan without our own nuclear arms just by being united and having the strength of will. It was not that in 1962 the country lacked either the unity to face the Chinese or strength of will to resist them. Yet it was quite clear that these qualities were by themselves not adequate to resist the enemy in the battlefield. Similarly at present it does not make sense to advocate that the Chinese or the Pakistani or other nuclear threat can be resisted by unity and strength of will. It would further mean that we have not learnt any lesson from our long history.

Lt-Gen S.K. Sinha, the Western Army Commander, in his recent lecture at Kurukshetra University on the Three Battles of Panipat, while referring to the lessons to be learnt from them said:

> "We must not allow the invader to have the better of us in either equipment or tactics. Babar had firearms which Ibrahim Lodi lacked. Bairam Khan's horses and archers greatly surpassed those of Hemu. The camel-based light artillery of Abdali was far superior to the heavy and crude cannons of Bhausaheb. All this implies that we need to keep a watchful eye on development in equipment and technical doctrine in a fast-changing modern world. Our armies facing the aggressor should not be allowed to be handicapped on this account."

May I deal with two more aspects before looking at India in world affairs. In the first instance may I refer to the point made by some that nuclear weapon capability will make the government dictatorial and more ruthless, taking away civil liberties and human rights. This again is what our elite have learnt from others. Bertrand Russell in his *Which Way to Peace*? written in the thirties has argued that the chaos caused by the air raids would make martial law essential: "A war in defence of democracy would necessarily begin with a military despotism, and there is no reason to doubt that it would end with one. The end of all the deaths and destruction will be the substitution of an English Hitler for the German one". History proves that neither Churchill nor Roosevelt turned dictatorial. The British electorate voted out Churchill within three months of his winning the war against Germany. Our elite and many so-called Gandhians have only taken this Russell argument further after the coming in of the atom bomb and other nuclear weapons.

The fact is that neither the British became Nazis nor democracy came to an end. After the war the British colonies became free and Britain continues to be governed by a two-party system with Liberals and a new Social Democratic Party trying to form a third coalition. Nuclear weapons have not changed the ideology of either the USA or the USSR. We may add they have not changed either France or China. Development of nuclear weapons is as much neutral to the structure of the state as conventional weapons. To put down civilians even ordinary bombs are not required. The Shah of Iran had remarked after losing his throne that sophisticated radars, tanks and aircraft were useless to put down the popular upheaval. What he lacked was the water cannon. Rifles and machine-guns are the most effective weapons for terrorising the population. Only this simple equipment was used by Yahya Khan, Idi Amin or Pol Pot for repression and genocide. Zia ul Haq, who is hailed by many of our doves as a great peace-maker, has added whipping and amputation to the instruments of terror.

Another question being constantly asked is whether the nuclear weapon option will not very much add to defence expenditure at a time when serious attention needs to be concentrated on economic growth and poverty removal programmes.

It must be realised that raising the quality of life is as important as the nation's capacity to safeguard economic growth. But both are not possible unless the security of the country is first ensured. Immediately after the Second World War, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union went in for nuclear weapons when their economies were recovering from the ravages of war. If Pakistan with one-tenth of our resources can go in for a nuclear weapon programme, there is no reason why India cannot. When China went in for its nuclear weapon programme, its resources were roughly of the order of what we have today.

THE gap in the cost of conventional and nuclear weapons is narrowing. A reactor to produce plutonium for fifteen bombs per year will cost less than Rs 100 crores. A rocket or a missile to carry the warhead will cost slightly more than Rs 4 crores

The author is a former Member of Parliament. This is the second and concluding part of the Capt. G.V. Modak Memorial Lecture delivered by him under the auspices of the Ahmedabad Military and Rifle Training Association at the Military Education Campus, Khanpur, Ahmedabad, on February 19, 1982. The first part was published last week in *Mainstream* (April 10, 1982).

to 5 crores each, like our SLV 3, while a conventional aircraft like Jaguar today costs more than Rs 9 crores, and the new Mirage-2000 may be twice as expensive. We were prepared to spend nearly Rs. 1500 crores on the Jaguar programme. The Mirage-2000 programme will be far more costly compared to these. Nuclear weapons are therefore comparatively cheap. Following the Chinese attack, Morarji Desai, the then Finance Minister, agreed to raise the country's defence budget to nearly four per cent of the GNP. At that stage the country's savings was only 11 per cent of the GNP and with another 3 per cent of foreign aid, the country was investing 14 per cent in the development programme in 1963-64. Today India spends around 3.8 per cent on defence. Last year's estimate of Rs. 4,200 crores for defence is likely to be just the same four per cent that Morarji Desai had given.

Our savings have gone beyond 20 per cent with more outlays on investment. Still our growth rate remains the same mainly because of adverse capital-output ratio which is due to mismanagement, corruption and inefficiency.

There are many areas of defence in which there can be savings. A new strategy has to be worked out to meet the challenge of new strategic environment. That will require an appropriate balance between nuclear and non-nuclear forces. Our defence establishments have to be reoriented. They have to be constantly balancing our conventional requirements with the nuclear deterrent at different stages of its development to get the optimum advantage out of our capacities and resources. For example, our basic Rohini Rocket has to be considerably improved to carry adequate payloads over required distances. But the Jaguar can serve as a credible delivery system for the time being as in Europe. We have to reassess our requirements of Jaguar and Mirage-2000 in the new context. It is possible to meet the whole defence expenditure within the modest estimate of around 4 per cent of GNP. Compare this to Pakistan's expenditure which is said to be around 6 per cent. But even the US Congressional document says that Pakistan's defence expenditure is heavily subsidised by foreign donors. China spends not less than 5 to 7 per cent of its GNP on defence.

Therefore the nuclear deterrent programme need not divert much money from poverty removal projects. Every one knows that poverty removal is handicapped because of political reluctance to implement land reforms, remove black money and increase efficiency in economic management.

HAVING looked at the various aspects of the nuclear issue, let us examine the basic question as to how we look at India's destiny. It is not merely a question of relationship between India and China or India and Pakistan which is the real question. What has to be India's potential role by virtue of its size, population, resources, history and geography? Have we every time to place ourselves in the position of Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, and determine our role? It is an irony that instead of looking realistically at the problem as Indians, arguments are articulated and propositions put out as if they are being advanced on behalf of the Chinese, the Pakistanis, the Americans, the Russians, the Bangladeshis, etc. When we fought the battle of freedom Gandhiji's idea was the liberation of mankind, the brown, the yellow and the black peoples. All nations big or small struggle have to grow according to their potential. The idea should be to grow ourselves and help others to grow so that the have-not nations also acquire power and status to stand up to the industrialised nations. This does not and should not mean that we in India should accelerate or decelerate our programme so that no neighbours or littoral states of the Indian Ocean feel concerned about our bigness or advancement. Such concern should originate from the attitudes and policies of this nation as well as our historical behaviour, our moral and political traditions. During the last 35 years after Independence we have never initiated a war. On the other hand, our neighbours have attacked us and captured our territories — and large areas of the country are still under occupation. This has been the result of doubts and confusion as to our destiny and goal.

We wanted to play a moral role in world affairs and defence preparedness always occupied a very low place in our thinking and planning. Is it not a fact that India had very modest defence capabilities till 1962 while China with Russian support and Pakistan with US support were arming themselves? It was only after 1962 we started building up our infrastructure to support a modern army. Up till then we had only what we were given by the British. The MIG agreement was signed in 1962.

When China occupied Tibet, India, instead of resorting to confrontation, signed the Panchsheel agreement in 1954. Though China had started claiming border areas in 1956, and first border intrusions took place the same year, India did not exert itself sufficiently to modernise the defence forces to meet the threat. Neither Bertrand Russell nor other pacifists helped India when China attacked India, except for giving the advice not to continue fighting and to save human lives and even leave the territory under Chinese occupation. But they never dared to give such advice to the Chinese.

In 1965, when Pakistan attacked India, in the Rann of Kutch, India produced proof of use of American weapons and yet the Americans did nothing to stop Pakistan. That encouraged Ayub Khan to send infiltrators into Kashmir. He was preparing his infiltrators even as India and Pakistan were signing an agreement for arbitration over the Rann of Kutch. This is what happens when one does not learn the lessons of history. Our decision-making elite are not power-oriented and they always find it difficult to understand the role of power. Rajaji and Acharya Kripalani used to be critical about India's defence expenditure before 1962, but were the first to criticise Nehru and the Government for non-preparedness when the Chinese attacked.

The role that India and Nehru could play after independence was born out of the image of India during the freedom struggle as leader of the upsurge of the entire colonial world and the image of the Indian Army during the Second World War. That image waned when the Chinese invaded India. The global power struggle is a reality and in that power plays a crucial role. The role of Nehru and India changed after the Chinese attack in 1962. As long as the world is divided into sovereign states and each state is committed to furthering its own interest, the power game among the nations will continue. This is regardless of the economic imperatives which have been forcefully demonstrated in recent times and there is a much greater degree of inter-dependence among nations. The growth and development of non-alignment is a solid expression of the urge of all independent nations to assert their identity even along with their dependence on the super-powers and industrialised nations for economic and technological help.

The only destiny or aim for India can be to become an independent centre of decision-making in the current international environment. That is possible only by strengthening our strategic defence which includes strategic nuclear defence. No foreign policy can be independent if we are not capable of dealing with potential adversaries. We are not independent even in conventional weapons. Independence in defence technology is a long-term process, and the process has to start with a clear perspective. China was way behind India in nuclear technology and is probably behind us in civilian nuclear technology even now. But it has surpassed India in nuclear weapon technology by 7 to 10 years and it was with this advance that it made its debut in international affairs when Nixon had to say that China with a population of 800 million and nuclear weapons could not be ignored. The China factor cannot be ignored in our calculations, for strategic defence. The gap that has come about is not insurmountable.

At a recent secret seminar in Brookings Institution in the USA, experts from a large number of institutions and official agencies discussed the question of developing military relations with China. During their assessment of China's present military capability some experts expressed the view that "India appears to have a slight edge over China in a conventional weapon computation though lagging considerably behind the People's Republic in nuclear capabilities ... The Chinese air force is considered inferior to that of India although China has the advantage of number of planes. China's logistics system is also inferior to that of India. By contrast, however, China's nuclear weapons and delivery systems are judged far superior."

According to an assessment made by the CIA and US intelligence experts, China is the only developing country possessing a strategic missile system capable of reaching both super-powers.

China, after having achieved nuclear weapon capability, will take at least ten years, according to experts, to carry out modernisation of army and conventional weapons. But it has already drawn up its perspective plan and taken political decisions relevant to it.

SO INDIA has to make a start with a clear political decision. But the Indian political academic and even economic elites have already started drumbeating with Western-inspired doctrines that high defence expenditure is not good for the country. Here one is reminded of Indian history. It was not a very large number of Britishers who conquered India for Britain. Hardly a few thousand had come to India. India was conquered by the Bengal Army, the Madras army and the Bombay Army made up of Indians serving the East India Company and was handed over to Britain. Similarly, at present our own people want to keep this country in a servile position vis-a-vis the Western countries. Our elite are now only reflecting the spirit of India of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. When the British came to India, the Indian industrial level was not very much lower than the British level. Some of the ships used by England to win the battle of Trafalgar (1805) against the French were bulit in Mazgaon Docks in Bombay. To bolster Lancashire industry the British cut off the thumbs of Dacca muslin weavers. Those who are now propagating a Sane Nuclear Policy, and against development of nuclear weapons, or for signing NPT are like those who supported the cutting off of Dacca weavers thumbs.

Some people are worried about world reaction to India going nuclear. All five nuclear powers may oppose it since it would be an act of assertion by India of its independence and a measure of India's self-confidence and willingness to defy the present international power system. But it would also compel the rest of the world to pay attention to the legitimate role India is seeking to play in the world. In the past the big powers have shown such accommodation. The rest of the world, whether of the East or the West or the Third World, needs India much as India needs them. Chinese development of nuclear weapon capability brought more recognition and support to that country, both technologically and economically rather than diminish them. The door slammed on China's face was opened wide and the Chinese were given a red-carpet welcome.

In India two types of criticism are to be faced by those who advocate nuclear weapons for national defence. The Left was opposed to it inspired by the World Peace Council and for them Soviet nuclear weapons alone are enough guarantee for our security. The others feel that India acquiring nuclear weapons will lead to proliferation — a development opposed particularly by the West and also by the Soviets. Both are wrong.

No nation has built up its nuclear weapon capability with the tacit help of others except South Africa and Israel which have been clandestinely helped by the West; Russia did help China in the earlier stages but not for the bomb, but only in enrichment technology. The United Kingdom and France became nuclear weapon powers on the basis of their own technological capabilities. Much more so the Soviet Union. After the Second World War Bertrand Russell advocated a pre-emptive surgical American nuclear strike on the incipient Soviet nuclear facilities to prevent a communist country becoming a nuclear power. If the Soviet Union has become a nuclear weapon giant it is solely on its own strength and capacities. Once the Soviets had achieved nuclear weapons capability Bertrand Russell argued it was better to be Red than Dead! Today we have the infrastructure and the technological capabilities and we will have to exercise our option on our own without the help of any nuclear power.

It is true that the Soviet Union has been our consistent friend, whether it was the issue of Kashmir, Goa or Bangladesh. Our friendship is dictated by our mutual geo-strategic interests. But all countries keep their options open. After the Tashkent agreement the Soviet Union opened its arms window to Pakistan. That was because the Soviet Union felt that India was weak and it could deal directly with all countries of the sub-continent as it liked. If India is strong then no other nation outside this area will be able to ignore our sensitivities in dealing with other countries of this region.

So, there is no other alternative available to India except to keep the country prepared for any eventuality as nuclear weapons have become the current currency of international power. The Chinese could free themselves from the Russians when they had nuclear weapons. France could follow an independent policy when it had a nuclear arsenal.

In conclusion, India in the 1980s is surrounded by nuclear weapon states, China and the Soviet Union in the North and the US nuclear fleet in the Indian Ocean with a nuclear base at Diego Garcia. Pakistan is about to achieve nuclear weapon capability, Pakistan was 20 years behind India in 1971-72 but it has galloped to a point which has placed it only five years behind India now.

China was behind India in the fifties but is now ahead by 7-10 years in nuclear weapons and missiles. It has deployed IRBMs and MRBMs at Nagchu in the Tibet region targeted towards Soviet Union. With any change in the Chinese perceptions they can be swung around to threaten vital Indian targets. Can India afford to be overtaken by two of its neighbours to such a significant extent in nuclear weapon technology? India cannot become a Switzerland or a Finland with its geography, size, population, resources and scientific and technical manpower. If we try to do it, this country will be broken up into a number of Switzerlands and Finlands.

India after Gandhiji has slid back and not gone ahead with the development of moral non-violent force. On January 30, 1948, just a few hours before Gandhiji was killed, Margaret Bourke-White, the American correspondent, asked Gandhiji, "How would you meet the atom bomb....with non-violence?" He replied: "I will not go underground ....I will not go into shelter. I will come out in the open and let the pilot see I have not a trace of ill-will against him. The pilot will not see our faces from his great height, I know. But the longing in our hearts — that he will not come to harm — would reach up to to him and his eyes would be opened."

Then probably guessing what was passing in his interviewer's mind, he added, "If those thousands who were done to death in Hiroshima, if they had died with that prayerful action — died openly with that prayer in their heart — their sacrifice would not have gone in vain". (*The Last Phase*, pp 808-9). If Gandhiji's statement is interpreted in modern parlance, he appears to have meant that if the philosophy of peaceful co-existence is accepted by all nations of the world, then the atom bomb will become irrelevant.

Are the Government of India, the political, academic, social and economic elites along with some percentage of the Indian population, ready to face the atom bomb with that prayer in their hearts under an open sky? If they are, then India will be in a position to renounce the atom bomb. If not, let us not make a joke of our shaky faith in the moral approach which can expose the patriotic Indian soldier to undeserved danger and death. Today we do not have any Gandhian to undertake the kind of healing task that the Mahatma undertook in Noakhali, in Assam and in riot-torn areas. The present-day self-appointed Gandhians write articles sitting in air-conditioned comfort in Delhi or elsewhere or some genuine ones trot on the dotted line without evolving themselves to meet the challenge of new and changing situations.

To sum up: Nuclear deterrence has worked after the dropping of the bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and nuclear threats continue to be effective in asymmetric situations. The nuclear umbrella is neither, feasible nor reliable. It will be, in any case, cutting at the very root of non-alignment and Indian dignity. Possession of nuclear weapon by the state will not make it more authoritarian than it is with sophisticated or other conventional weapons. Possession of them has not made any change in the character and ideology of the UK, the USA, France, China or the USSR. The costs of production and development have been reduced with the development of technological infrastructure and the investments we have already made. The gap in costs between sophisticated conventional weapons and nuclear weapons have been narrowed. The conservative estimate for India is it that would not go beyond 4-5 per cent of the GNP, while 5 per cent is broadly accepted as legitimate defence expenditure in many countries. The expenditure of China and Pakistan is much more.

The nuclear option will strengthen our non-alignment and be a great support to the movement. It will not in any case lead to our being pushed around either by the Western countries or the Soviet Union or China.

So, the nuclear option is necessary to preserve our independence, independent decision-making power, independent foreign policy, to strengthen our non-alignment, dignity and honour. I am not opposed to Pakistan or any other nation going in for nuclear weapon option. Recently the London based International Institute of Strategic Studies has brought out a study by Prof. Kenneth Waltz: *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More may be Better:*

We have paid the price for neglect of our national defence in 1962 and have not got back the status which India had before that in world affairs. If we neglect our nuclear defence, the danger of fragmentation of our country of secessionism near our borders cannot be ruled out.

An African scholar on international affairs, Prof. Ali A. Mazrui, himself an Arab Muslim, in an article in the Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs muses, "Would India under non-Hindu leadership have produced satyagraha? The answer is probably No. Would India under non-Hindu leadership have invented non-alignment? The answer is ambivalent. Would India under Muslim leadership have pursued a nuclear status? The answer ir 'possibly sooner'." Let Indians ponder over this.

It is true that the Indian thought and culture spread by its inherent strength and not military might. Christianity, Islam and their culture spread through arms and territorial occupation. But we must not be oblivious to the sea-change that has taken place in the global environment through technology in thousands of years of human existence on earth. Radio, TV and Satellite are enabling the West to dominate the culture and values of the world. In this competitive world, we cannot preserve our unity or cultural integrity by closing our doors. Science and technology are the keys to power in the present. The issue has to be tackled at two levels. While we must intensively think out our civilisational problems to meet the restlessness of Indian society, it must be realised that our culture and identity will be overwhelmed if we do not have the strength and capacity to stand on our own.

Technology is value neutral. It depends on the values of the men who use it. Orientation to the use of technology has to be given by man. Our commitment to peace, friendship and cooperation in the world will rest on how we utilise the ultimate weapon that we possess. Indian history and tradition show that we are not an expansionist power. We do not believe in converting people. There is a story of an Indian delegate in the UN who told the Soviet delegate, the famous Andrei Vyshinsky, when he failed to get his proposals on disarmament accepted, to be patient, and try again. The Indian delegate added that may be, if not now, at some future date they would be accepted. Vyshinsky retorted it was all right for an Indian to say that since the Indians believed in rebirth and therefore if a thing did not succeed in this birth it might in a future birth. As a Marxist he was impatient.

We do not believe in imposing our ideology, our culture, our values on anyone. It is because of our inherent patience and our unwillingness to impose our views that Gandhiji evolved the slow and steady Satyagraha as preferred strategy in the liberation struggle. When we were at war in 1971, Nepal and Sri Lanka voted against us to stop war. They continue to vote year after year against us in respect of the Pakistani proposal for a South Asian nuclear weapon free zone. But we do not impose our views on them, unlike the way the US has been attempting to do on its allies on recognition of China, Moscow Olympics boycott, the Kampuchean issue or the Polish crisis, or as the Russians try to do on their neighbours or Communist parties in other countries. The Gandhian technique of non-violent struggle was to persuade your adversary to see that it was in his own interest to arrive at a settlement and not to take coercive action.

We have been attacked by bigger and smaller neighbouring countries and suffered. We had to go to liberate Bangladesh to send back the ten million refugees who had been pushed inside our border. The nuclear weapon in India's hands will never be used for offensive purposes but only for deterrence. It will be a symbol of resistance against the cultural, economic and political hegemonic offensive of advanced industrialised nations and foreign ideologies of all hues. The dividing line is not between making and not making atomic weapons but between having a nuclear arsenal and using it. That is also the spirit of Geneva Protocol of 1925 and the Biological Weapons Convention more recently concluded.

Of the five ostensible nuclear weapon powers two, China and the Soviet Union, have now subscribed to the Non-aligned Resolution that use and threat of use of nuclear weapons will be a violation of the UN Charter and a crime against humanity. The Western countries believe in fighting wars with nuclear weapons. They are not likely to use the weapons against the socialist bloc which can retaliate effectively but only against non-nuclear weapon countries. The Neutron Bomb is an ideal weapon for such use. If countries like India and Pakistan go nuclear, then the Western countries too will be compelled to accept a convention to ban nuclear weapons as they did in the case of bacteriological weapons.

The real problem is therefore how to reconcile the advancement of the cause of peace and denuclearising the whole world, not parts of it with simultaneous legitimisation of nuclear weapons which is what the so-called nuclear weapon free zones mean, with the plea for nuclear weapons for India. We are living in a lawless world. Even the law provides for the right of private defence. It is a grave offence if you murder somebody. But if you kill somebody in an attempt to save yourself from the killer, even the law does not consider it an offence but very legitimate. We all believe that the people should not have guns. But gun licences are given to protect life and property. In UP, Harijans are demanding guns to save themselves and the UP Government is considering it. Either the Government will have to take full responsibility to safeguard the life of the weaker sections or they will have no right to reject their demand. The underground gun market is already booming. If one is living in an area of dacoits, it becomes necessary for a person who may believe in total gun control also to carry a gun. There are not only five nuclear weapon countries. In fact all industrialised countries excepting a few rely on nuclear weapons for their defence, on nuclear weapon doctrines for their security. There are 35-40 such countries. Unless the nuclear and crypto nuclear powers destroy their nuclear weapon capabilities, they have no moral right to dictate to the non-nuclear nations to adjust to their world system and not to make nuclear weapons themselves. Similarly, the non-nuclear nations can consider all the industrialised nations which rely on nuclear weapons for their security as dacoits. To have themselves from such nuclear dacoits, the non-nuclear nations have to carry the nuclear gun.

We should not use the nuclear gun like the dacoit. The majority of those who have licensed weapons are law-abiding citizens who would prefer to have all guns taken away and have an orderly government which can enforce law and order. Till such a stage is reached it becomes necessary to have private arms for self-defence and exercise deterrence even while supporting the efforts to create a climate of law and order. So also in the current international environment, while we should strive hard towards banning and delegitimising nuclear weapons, India should also develop a nuclear arsenal without any further delay. (*Concluded*)

Saving Sick Small Industries

Rehabilitation of Small Sick Units

ODEYAR. D. HEGGADE

INDUSTRIAL sickness has been a growing menace in India for several years now. The problem has spread to all types of industries — large, medium and small-scale units. Industrial sickness is always reflected in high 'debt-equity ratio' of the units. If uncontrolled, the sickness may endanger the overall stability of our industrial economy due to high bankruptcy of plants, high unemployment of industrial workers, output loss, colossal wastage of resources invested, etc. All these likely adverse effects have far-reaching implications for future economic growth and social stability.

In the last decade (1970s) several measures have been initiated to hold the growing industrial sickness and eliminate it in a phased manner by a series of steps to rehabilitate sick units.

Industrial sickness in India is taken to refer to "concerns with liabilities substantially in excess of assets and suffering at the same time cash losses for three consecutive years" (P.C. Mahanti). Industrial sickness by and large represents the weak spots of our modern industrial economy. It has grown phenomenally over the last decade and spread fast to almost every part of the nation. Various high-power committees of Central and State Governments, banks and financial institutions have examined the causes of industrial sickness in this country. The general causes often cited are "incompetent and dishonest management, financial indiscipline, old and worn-out machines, technical obsolescence, demand constraints, labour relations problems and shortages of inputs". (*Commerce*, August 22, 1981).

A clearer picture can be obtained of the factors causing industrial sickness in terms of two broad categories — internal and external — drawn up by the workshop on reviving sick units sponsored by the FICCI some time back. It lists the internal factors as (a) choice of wrong location; (b) under-estimation of capital costs; (c) over-estimation of demand; (d) delay in implementing the project and escalation in costs; (e) faulty management accounting; (f) failure to introduce proper financial and cost control methods; (g) managerial deficiency and lack of proper plant maintenance and replacement. The external factors are enumerated as: (a) Government policies regarding production, prices and distribution; (b) inadequate availability of essential inputs including raw materials, power, transport, etc; (c) decline in public sector investment; (d) demand recession; (e) shortage of working capital; (f) adverse industrial relations; and (g) surplus labour.

The Statewise spread of industrial sickness among small-scale units in India, as at the end of December 1979, is given below. The total number of small-scale sick units was 20,841. Sickness among small-scale units has reached an all-time record.

Statewise number of sick small-scale units as at the end of December 1979: West Beagal 6,948; Maharashtra 2,763; Tamilnadu 955; Uttar Pradesh 1,152; Gujarat 856; Karnataka 1,039; Andhra Pradesh 1,323; Bihar 802; Rajasthan 323; Madhya Pradesh 525; Kerala 653; Haryana 225; Orissa 772; Punjab 403; Assam 1,045; Delhi 530; Pondicherry 3; Goa 75; Himachal Pradesh 51; Jammu and Kashmir 71; Manipur 186; Nagaland 3; Meghalaya 25; Tripura 70; Chandigarh 43. — Total 20,841 (Reply to unstarred question in Rajya Sabha, March 5, 1981).

It is seen that such sick units are predominant in States like West Bengal, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Assam, whereas Tamilnadu, Gujarat, Bihar, Orissa, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab have between 400-900 units. In the rest of the States and Union Territories sickness among small-scale units has been small. Thus, it is very high in large and fairly developed States.

Due to the high level of industrial sickness among small-scale units, Rs. 262 crores was blocked in the form of credit outstanding by the end of December 1979. The number of small-scale sick units and credit outstanding at the end of June 1979 were 16,805 units and Rs. 181.75 crores. The

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increase in both in a six-month period is indeed shocking.

The increasing sickness in the small-scale industrial sector calls for a comprehensive, speedy rehabilitation programme. The new strategy for rehabilitating sick units announced in the last week of June 1981 is unfortunately silent on the question of small-scale units. But the Reserve Bank of India has issued several new guidelines to banks to take necessary action for rehabilitating small-scale units (March 1980). They may be briefly stated as follows:

(1) The banks have been advised to strengthen their organisational structure at their regional offices and in large area concentrations of small-scale units to effectively monitor and implement the programmes of rehabilitation.

(2) Filing of returns about their performance to the respective lending bank by all small-scale units enjoying a total bank credit of Rs 10 lakhs and more is made compulsory. The lending banks have been asked to carefully watch their performance and initiate necessary remedial measures to health.

(3) Banks have also been advised to consider reduction in margin and rate of interest and rephase the repayment schedule or fund a portion of the working capital finance for recovery in a phased manner from out of future cash generation. "If any bank proposes to stipulate a level of margin or rate of interest lower than the levels prescribed by the Reserve Bank, it may refer such cases to the Reserve Bank with necessary data for considering grant of exemption."

As a result of the above guidelines, various "State-level Inter-Institutional Committees under the convenorship of regional heads of Department of Banking Operations and Development of the Reserve Bank have been or are being set up in selected centres. Representatives of the Industrial Development Bank of India, State financial corporations, commercial banks, State Governments, etc., are the members of these committees. Beside providing a useful forum for exchange of information and discussion on the problems faced by small and medium industrial units and small entrepreneurs, the committees deal with problems relating to co-ordination between banks and financial institutions, provision of adequate infrastructual facilities to industrial units and grant of credit to such units."

The RBI guidelines have been in effect for more than a year, but not much headway has been made either in holding the growing menace of sickness or in rehabilitating a large number of sick units. This is so because the guidelines provide basically for financial concessions, extension and rephasing of recovery of loans, etc. Mere financial assistance and concessions do not always bring about discipline and efficiency in management. Therefore, there is need for evolving a more comprehensive rehabilitation programme for self-sustained growth of small-scale industries.

In some official circles of the Union and State Government it has been suggested in recent times that all small sick units having high debt-equity ratio for more than three years should be exempted from payment of bonus and minimum wages. But it is forgotten that any such policy will reduce labour welfare and lead to labour unrest. Appro- 'nursability' strategy should be developed on pragmatic grounds and implemented by involving all the concerned agencies.

About the concept of 'nursability' it has been emphasised that mere administration of doses of financial help by financing institutions does not solve the problem. The institution has not only to put in finance in appropriate doses during critical situations but also suggest the removal of inefficient employees from the rolls, apart from suggesting necessary changes in production planning, material control, marketing perference and such other matters. It has been noted that concessions alone will not solve the problems; close watch on day-to-day working-capital management and fixing up of priorities in the matter of payment are essential.

Care should be taken to avoid establishment of new small-scale units without proper project planning, cent per cent feasibility and a high degree of social relevance. This can be done efficiently at the Small-scale Industries Department and funding bank level. To do this, some type of responsibility should be shifted to both these agencies; only then it will be possible to avoid proliferation of small units which may become defunct in a very short time.

In the Sixth Plan, it is intended to implement a scheme to "improve and restore the borrowing capacity of small-scale units through provision of margin money, with other inputs and active involvement of financial institutions ... to deal effectively with the problem of sickness."

The foregoing analysis shows the need for comprehensive rehabilitation programme. Such a strategy is indispensable to protect employment levels in such sick units, to ensure the wise utilisation of scarce productive resources, to promote small-scale production and dispersal of industrial activities. Therefore all possible efforts should be made by the Government, banks and the managements of the small units to tackle the problem of sickness more efficiently.

A large number of small-scale industrial units are located in and around the large cities as well as medium-size towns like district headquarters. A more healthy and highly productive agglomeration of small-scale units will be beneficial. This will help to some extent the efforts to scale down the widening rural-urban disparities in growth. ☐

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Samora Machel : Symbol of New Era

BAREN RAY

THE five-day official visit by a 40-member inter-ministerial delegation led by President Samora Moises Machel and the Indo-Mozambican talks in New Delhi leading to a number of mutual cooperation agreements are a major international development that will have significant long-term effect not only on bilateral relations but on the larger geo-political situation in the entire Indian Ocean region.

Mozambique is one of the frontline states in Southern Africa, an active member of the non-aligned movement, a country pursuing the path of socialist orientation following a successful though protracted revolutionary armed struggle — a people's democratic revolution based on a worker-peasant alliance. The FRELIMO — Mozambican Liberation Front — will be celebrating in a couple of months the twentieth anniversary of its foundation in 1962. One of the oldest colonies of the European powers in the Afro-Asian world — Mozambique had suffered more than five centuries of the most ruthless Portuguese colonial rule — whose population had been left the most backward, it was amazing how this comparatively young movement not only achieved complete success in its difficult national liberation struggle, but along with it laid down the basis of an advanced egalitarian democratic social order.

Among the frontline states, together with Angola, it is one of the major sources of support for the liberation movements in Southern Africa — in Namibia and in South Africa itself — against the fascist apartheid regime, and in turn it is among the major targets of constant and continuing South African military raids and aggression across its frontier (on its roads, railways, bridges, installations, etc.), pursued with the objective of destabilising the progressive regime and retarding its economic development. But today this aggression is not by the South African apartheid regime alone; the latter has the full political and military backing of the Reagan Administration. As recently as a month ago the US government supplied massive quantities of sophisticated military hardware to South Africa.

It was these escalating attacks on its territory by the South African regime that prompted the People's Republic of Mozambique last year to seek military support from the Soviet Union on the basis of the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed in March 1977. Following this, Mozambique had an effective Soviet naval presence outside Mapto harbour with on-board helicopter and air force support to repel South African air attacks or raids by saboteurs air-dropped on its territory. Such is the extent of confrontation the Reagan Administration has imposed against progressive states by using the fascist racist regime as its cat's-paw. In the South of Africa it is the apartheid state, against the Arab countries it is Israel, coordinating with its new Rapid Deployment Force stationed in a number of countries.

The escalation of conflict in the South of Africa is part of the Reagan Administration's global strategy of increasing military build-up all over the world, of challenging the forces of national liberation and independence, of subjecting them to all kinds of pressures, threats and blackmail. Directly, it fits in with the USA's own programme of massive military concentration in the Indian Ocean area. Mozambique which has an almost 2000-mile-long coastline washed by the Ocean is thus doubly threatened. Against this background of an aggravating international situation, it is imperative that the member-states of the non-aligned movement begin some joint moves to work out a collective response. The beginning of many-faceted cooperation between Mozambique and India, the latter not only a weighty member of the non-aligned bloc but the major power in the Indian Ocean region, is a most significant international development that can tilt the balance in favour of peace, stability and security in the region.

There was V.K. Krishna Menon's famous characterisation of colonialism as permanent aggression. Bringing the analogy up to date, the hated apartheid system in South Africa and the ever-mounting resistance it arouses including organised armed struggle, was rightly described by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi as a form of "civil war". This "civil war", however, is not an internal matter affecting South Africa alone, it impinges directly not only on the independence and territorial integrity of the frontline states but even on the peace and security of countries bordering the Indian Ocean. The question therefore is one of rendering all-round material and military assistance to the freedom fighters in this very special civil war, and particularly to those frontline states which are being sucked into the vortex of the conflict.

It is not merely a matter of abiding moral sympathy and solidarity; India must offer this in pursuit of her national self-interest, in defence of peace and security in our strategic environment. India must render such assistance to the very best of her ability. While bilateral economic cooperation is bound to be helpful to the Indian economy too in the long run, the objective of helping Mozambique overcome the destruction inflicted on her and enabling her to rapidly build her economy, for which assistance is sought from India, is in India's own immediate political and strategic interest.

The beginning of this cooperation is therefore to

The author was till recently Deputy Secretary-General of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO).

be welcomed by all freedom-loving and democratic forces in the country, and it may be hoped that this is the beginning of such cooperation with other states which together will constitute the basis of multilateral cooperation among a nucleus group of states acting in harmony in pursuit of common objectives. The much-sought-after South-South cooperation also can emerge from such all-round cooperation and joint endeavour by like-minded states.

The cementing of close ties of friendship and cooperation between our two countries is not only for channelling assistance from India to Mozambique; there is much that India can learn from Mozambique's short but glorious freedom struggle. Under Portuguese colonialism, the African population had not only been kept undeveloped, illiterate, poor and backward, they were brutalised and subjected to conditions of forced labour and near-slavery. There were numerous ethnic and tribal differences fragmenting the population in addition to the terror and rapine and cruel repression by the Portuguese.

It was against this background that the FRELIMO was founded on June 15, 1962, to unite and mobilise the masses. They began by trying to conduct political struggles, but it was soon found that under conditions of Portuguese colonialism and its alliance with the fascist apartheid state in South Africa there was no scope for conducting the struggle by peaceful means. The FRELIMO began to prepare for a protracted armed struggle for the total liberation of the country.

After adequate preparations both by way of mobilising the people and creating the necessary logistical and practical conditions (at a time when there was a total of only 200 cadres trained for armed combat against the 30,000-strong Portuguese army), the struggle was finally launched on September 25, 1964. The dramatic measure of FRELIMO's achievements in the following years was the fact that by 1968, it was able to hold its second congress on liberated territory inside Mozambique. The enemy was powerless to prevent the congress or interfere with its proceedings though two months before it was held, FRELIMO had announced that it would take place.

But as the struggle expanded, a profound crisis hit the organisation in the years 1966-69, involving a fierce struggle between two political lines. The victory of the popular revolutionary line resulted in the struggle for national independence being converted into a struggle against all forms of exploitation. This involved a definition of the enemy in terms of a system not a people, so that targets were identified not as the whites or even as colonialism, but as colonial capitalism and traditional feudalism.

In the liberated zones it was soon realised that the mere elimination of the Portuguese colonial presence left unanswered the question of what kind of society should be constructed in its place. Opportunist and ambitious elements inside FRELIMO, using a combination of racist and traditionalist arguments, attempted to establish personal power bases in the liberated zones, subjecting the mass of

MARTYR'S FULFILMENT

Speaking of Samora Machel's life and of the Mozambican Revolution, one must mention the name of Josina Machel, his first wife and herself a leader in the struggle. She was the Head of the women's detachment of the Armed Forces as well as Director of the Section of Social Affairs and of the Feminine Section of the Department of Foreign Affairs. She was killed in battle on April 7, 1973 — the date was later declared Mozambican Women's Day. Of her people's struggle and of the impending victory. which was already beginning to be visible on the horizon, she had earlier written the following, perhaps anticipating her own end. We print these two poems as giving an insight into the temper of the Mozambican Revolution as well as to the character of its leading personalities.

This is the Moment

This is the moment we were waiting for
Our guns are light in our hands,
the motives and objectives of the struggle
are clear in our minds.
The blood shed by our heroes
makes us sad, but resolute.
This is the price of our liberty.
We keep them close to our hearts
and from their examples the new generations
— revolutionary generations —
are now surging to life.
We see bitter sufferings along the road
but we also see
our children running free
and our homeland, no longer plundered.
This is the moment to be ready
and firm.
This is the moment to give ourselves totally
to the Revolution. — *Josina Machel*

On her death, Samora Machel had written:

Josina — You Are Not Dead

Josina, you are not dead, because we have assumed your responsibilities, and they live in us.

You have not died, for the causes you defended have become totally our heritage.

You are not beside us, but the gun and the pack you left, your work tools, are a part of our load.

The blood you shed is only a tiny drop in the cascade we have already given and will still have to give.

The earth must be nourished, and the more fertile it is, the better the trees grow, the greater the shade they give, the sweeter their fruits.

I will make a spade in your memory, to turn over the earth enriched with your sacrifice. And new fruits will grow.

The Revolution renews itself from its best and most beloved children.

This is the meaning of your sacrifice: it will be a living example, to be followed.

My happiness is that, as a patriot and as a woman, you died doubly free in this hour in which the new power and the new woman are arising.

In your last moments, you begged the doctors to forgive you for not being able to help them.

The way you accepted sacrifice is a source of inspiration and courage.

When a comrade so completely adopts the new values, she gains our hearts and becomes our banner:

And so, more than wife, for me you were my sister, my friend, my comrade-in-arm.

How can we weep for a comrade, except by grasping the fallen gun and continuing the fight?

My tears flow from the same source that gave life to our love, our revolutionary will and life.

Thus these tears are both a token of love and an oath to fight.

The flowers that fall from the tree must prepare the earth so that more flowers, and more beautiful ones, bloom the next season.

Your life continues in those who continue the Revolution. — *Samora M. Machel* the people to new forms of domination and exploitation. It was in opposition to this reactionary group that the FRELIMO Central Committee, led first by the Founder-President of the organisation, Eduardo Mondlane, and following his assassination in January 1969, by his successor Samora Machel, now President of the Republic, developed the distinctive FRELIMO approach to popular mobilisation and state construction. The FRELIMO went beyond eliminating the colonial state apparatus, based on a system of magistrates, forced labour and taxes, to destory also the traditional tribal structures. The struggle was broadened to include economic emancipation, the liberation of women and an end to subjugation of the young.

This was a brilliant period in African and world political history, the sudden flowering in the bush and forests of northern Mozambique, amongst people kept for centuries in ignorance, of the most advanced and revolutionary ideas of mankind. Based on its experience of creating a new consciousness as it created new institutions of popular rule in the liberated zones, FRELIMO developed a clear view of the principles which should govern state development when the whole of Mozambique was liberated.

By 1974, FRELIMO had liberated large parts of the country. The hammer blows of the liberation movements in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau also hastened and facilitated the work of the progressive forces in Portugal itself to bring to an end the 50-year-old Salazar-Caetano fascist rule. FRELIMO then was able practically to take over the whole country till full formal independence was achieved on June 25, 1975.

President Samora Machel was born in the Gaza province in southern Mozambique in 1933, and he learnt the lessons of colonial oppression quite early. His own grandfather had been wounded in earlier resistance to Portuguese occupation. His eldest brother was recruited for work in the South African gold mines and did not return. In 1950, land in Gaza area was seized by the colonialists to make way for a fresh wave of white settlers and the Africans were moved to infertile areas, their villages were destroyed without compensation. Samora Machel began his education at a mission school but found further studies blocked, and it was only after he started work that he was able to proceed with his secondary education, paying the fees out of his wages. As the resistance movement developed, Samora Machel left Mozambique in 1962, immediately underwent military training, and was in the army when FRELIMO opened its assault in 1964. He had risen to the rank of Commander of the People's Army when he was elected President of FRELIMO in 1969.☐ *(April 11)*

ITALY

The Weary Path to Socialism

BELA BUTALIA

On March 18, the Italian Communist Party newspaper, *L'unita*, published a letter purporting to be authentic as it bore the file number of the Italian Home Ministry. The letter, which turned out to be false, had given the names of two Democrat Christian (DC) politicians, as the key men who had approached jailed Mafia boss, Rafaele Cutolo, to solicit him to mediate for the release of their kidnapped colleague, Ciro Cirillo.

Cirillo, till recently the regional

further proof had come to light. No wonder when the Italian Communists received this letter, brought to the paper by party member and correspondent Marina Maresca, there was little reason to doubt its authencity. Its falseness cost the party considerable loss of face, as well as the resignation of the paper's editor, newly appointed Claudio Petruccioli who resigned after owning complete responsibility for the error. The correspondent, who was suspended from the

Unity Government formed by the two majority parties, the Democrat Christians and the Communists. The recent uproar has been caused by the very ambiguous circumstances leading to the release of Cirillo last year (while Aldo Moro was murdered after nine months of captivity and as a result of the intransigent attitude of the two majority parties towards negotiations for his release). Again, both times, Red Brigade terrorists were involved.

stoop to negotiations with the terrorists when it came to Ciro Cirillo, while for the release of Aldo Moro there had been an intransigent attitude of refusal? Then again, who is afraid of the Italian Communist Party, which after all has demonstrated its independent stance as regards Moscow, by condemning the Soviet Union in the Polish crisis as well as not accepting its 'model' of socialism? Even the concept of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' has been reversed, and the party has enlarged its revolutionary base to include white-collar workers and public-sector employees.

The embarrassment caused to the party has also resulted in confusion within the rank and file: Accusations were hurled that it was the doing of Berlinguer's rival, Giorgo Napolitano, who heads the Communist group in the Senate. The fact that Napolitano has been replaced by Perna may strengthen this charge.

As though to complicate issues, a few days after the publication of the false letter, another letter reached *L'unita* office, written by noted criminologist, neo-fascist and Rome tribunal psychiatric expert, Aldo Semerari. Semerari claimed to have been the author of the false letter, and mentioned a secret meeting he had with Mafia boss Cutolo before taking the initiative of writing the letter. The following day, Semerari's decapitated body was found in the railway station of Ottaviani, a small village near Naples, noted fief of boss Cutolo. To lend weight to the theory of a Mafia revenge killing, the head was wrapped in a plastic bag, and the letters 'LZ' (Libera Fratellanza or Free Brotherhood) found near it, in true Mafia style. Semerari's woman friend, Maria Fiorella Carrara, was found dead, in her Rome penthouse with a suicide letter mentioning her fear of facing the fate of Semerari.

Investigations revealed that Semerari, just before being killed, had a meeting with Cutolo's rival, a certain Pupetta Maresca, to whom Semerari owed allegiance, though he held Cutolo in great admiration. What then is the connection between a Mafia feud and the Italian Communist Party?

Though stories of Mafia (Camorra as it is locally known around Naples) killings and feuds are part and parcel of Italian political and cultural life — no political party is absolutely immune to infiltration of small-time 'mafiosi'—the Italian Communist Party is generally reputed to have cleaner hands than other parties. Besides, even if occasionally entangled in minor scandals involving some party member or the other having contacts with the Mafia, the Communists have never been taken to task so heavily before. Though dedicated contemporary writers have based their novels on possible Mafia infiltration of the party (for instance, Leonardo Sciascia's *Il Contesto* and *La Palma va al Nord*'), there is no concrete evidence for their suspicions.

The Italian press has spoken of the involvement of Red Brigades, the fascists, the secret Masonic Lodge P2, the Italian secret services as well as certain protected clients of the Democrat Christian Party as probable culprits in the war of dossiers raging in Italy currently, but nothing has been proved. Some things seem to have occurred without any ample explanation being given to the public. It is known that Italian secret services belonging to both the civil services (SISDE) and the military intelligence (SISME) are known to have visited Mafia boss Cutolo in jail. Though the Home Ministry has averred that these visits were for routine enquiries, there is speculation as to why the military intelligence need intervene — military intelligence intervenes only when it is a question of defence security. Scamarcio, Under-Secretary for State in the Ministry of Justice and a member of the Socialist Party, has declared that negotiations for the liberation of Ciro Cirillo "have witnessed the participation of secret services linked up with particular interests of the Democrat Christians themselves". However, though this time the game is being played entirely in the parlours of the Democrat Christians, no opportunity is being lost to make the opposition Party, that is, the Communist Party once again the victim in the struggle for power, as in early 1978. ☐

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Time to Recognise Western Sahara

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE recent developments over the Western Sahara issue have added a new dimension to the entire dispute.

In the beginning of February this year the seven-nation "Implementation Committee", set up by the Organisation of African Unity at the 18th OAU summit in Nairobi last June to help prepare the ground for negotiations between Morocco (which is in occupation of the former Spanish colony for the past six and a half years) and the Polisario Front (a genuine people's movement for total decolonisation and liberation of the 2,60,000 square kilometre mineral-rich territory in North-West Africa) to (i) effect a ceasefire and (ii) hold a referendum on the question of self-determination of the 1,50,000 populace (according to conservative estimates), declared in Nairobi that its efforts to convince Morocco of the need for direct negotiations with the Polisario Front has failed.

This was a blow to all peace-loving elements in the African continent and the world at large (including India) who are eager to see a peaceful negotiated settlement of the Western Sahara problem which has defied such a solution since it cropped up with the withdrawal of the Spanish troops from the area and their immediate replacement by the Moroccan forces in 1975.

In less than a fortnight since this declaration by the "Implementation Committee" (comprising representatives of Kenya, Nigeria, Sudan, Tanzania, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Mali) the Government of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), established as the sovereign regime of the Sahrawi people (as the inhabitants of Western Sahara are popularly called), received an official invitation from the OAU Secretary-General to attend the Organisation's 38th Ministerial Council meeting of Foreign Ministers at Addis Ababa (February 22-28, 1982). Accordingly, a 12-member SADR delegation headed by Hakim Brahim, the Sahrawi Foreign Minister, attended the meeting. On February 25, the SADR flag was officially hoisted at the OAU headquarters along with the flags of the 50 other members.

It needs to be mentioned that the SADR's admis-

(and not political) matter concerning neither the OAU summit nor the "Implementation Committee" which had been entrusted with the question of decolonisation of Western Sahara.

Thereafter, the OAU Secretary-General issued in due course a notification to the effect that the SADR had been admitted into the OAU as the Organisation's 51st member. The SADR Government received the notification (as is the procedure according to the OAU Charter's Article 28) at the end of summer last year. However, since the SADR Government sincerely wanted the efforts of the "Implementation Committee" for the Morocco-Polisario negotiations to succeed it displayed rare maturity and desisted from publicising the OAU notification granting membership to the SADR. As a result, it was only after several months that the OAU decision on this score became public in the normal course of events with the SADR's natural response to the official invitation for attending the OAU Ministerial Council meeting at Addis Ababa.

The reaction from Morocco to this development was along expected lines. It was Morocco which had frustrated the moves of the OAU "Implementation Committee" for negotiations with the Polisario Front on the ground that it had never recognised the Front (it desired negotiations with Algeria which it alleged was just propping up the Front); and this even after it has been conclusively proved that 90 per cent of the territory of Western Sahara is under the Polisario Front's control (only a small phosphate rich "triangle" with the capital El Aiyun, the phosphate mining area of Bou Craa and the religious centre of Smara forming its three cones is where the Moroccan troops are now confined. So it was quite in conformity with what had been anticipated that Morocco walked out of the Addis Ababa meeting in protest against the SADR's presence. The fact that it was followed by 16 countries — Senegal, Gambia, Tunisia, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti, Comoros, Mauritius, Zaire, Gabon, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Niger and Equatorial Guinea — in the walk out was not much of a surprise either. But the Addis Ababa with all the means at its disposal to divide the OAU and bring about a split within its ranks on this question. Economic pressure is being brought to bear upon a large number of African states which in their primary stages of development are quite vulnerable particularly to threats of food aid cut. Indeed this is a form of US interference in the affairs of Africa. And coupled with this have come reports of direct American intervention in Western Sahara: already US military advisers and experts are in the "triangle" (linking Smara, El Aiyun, Bou Craa—popularly known as the "triangle of shame" among the Sahrawi people) helping the Moroccans to fortify the wall dividing the triangle from the rest of the territory with radars and other sophisticated military equipment. But still the wall and the triangle are being continually subjected to bombardments and military operations on the part of the Polisario freedom-fighters. The magnitude and regularity of these attacks are presently on the rise.

While this US military intervention in Western Sahara alongside American interference in Africa in general is a matter of grave concern, it is also becoming clear that the Reagan-Haig approach to such issues has failed to yield the desired result. Indeed if the reports from Zimbabwe are to believed, the OAU Labour Ministers' Conference held in Salisbury on April 5-6, found only eight countries joining Morocco in the walk-out. This in itself is a testimony to the sharp dwindling in the number of Morocco's staunch supporters. Also noteworthy is the postponement of the Dakar meeting of OAU Information Ministers in mid-March because there was no quorum due to the non-participation of most of the OAU member-states in solidarity with the SADR whose representatives were not allowed to come to the meet by the host country, Senegal, which still remains one of the few trusted allies of Morocco.

In this context one has to realise the importance of several major Western countries — France, Greece, Italy, FRG, UK, Sweden, Switzerland, Belgium — permitting the Polisario Front to open either its official bureau or its information office in their respective capitals. Particular significance is attached to the manner in which the Mitterand Government of France allowed the Polisario office to be set up in Paris: the decision in this regard was announced precisely when Moroccan King Hassan II was in the French capital.

So far the SADR Government has been recognised by as many as 50 countries, the bulk of which are non-aligned countries including some with socialist orientation like Cuba, Vietnam, North Korea, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique. But the USSR and the East European socialist countries have yet to accord recognition to the Sahrawi Republic. The list of the 50 countries which have forged diplomatic links with the SADR is as follows: *Africa* — Madagascar, Burundi, Algeria, Benin, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Togo, Rwanda, Seychelles, Congo, Sao Tome & Principe, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Cape Verde, Ghana, Uganda, Zambia, Lesotho, Sierra Leone, Libya, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Chad, Mali, Botswana; *Latin America* — Panama, Granada, Guyana, Dominique, Saint Lucia, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Mexico, Cuba, Costa Rica; *Asia* — Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen), Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Kampuchea, Laos, Afghanistan, Iran, Syria; *Oceania* — Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Tuvalu.

It is in this setting that a three-member delegation of the SADR headed by Sadik-Bachir Malainin (member of Polit-Bureau and head of the Asia-Oceania Department of the Polisario Front; as well as SADR Ambassador to Iran) recently visited India and held discussions with senior Indian officials of the External Affairs Ministry on the latest situation in Western Sahara. Following the talks, Malainin had this to say: "The Indian officials have expressed sympathy with the cause of our people. We take this opportunity to thank India for its position of support, in international organisations, especially in the UN and the non-aligned movement, to the legitimate rights of the Sahrawi people for self-determination and independence.

After the SADR's admission into the OAU, the Chairman of the OAU Ministerial Council meeting at Addis Ababa had at the concluding session of the meeting on February 28 called upon all countries of the world to recognise the SADR. The SADR people and Government as well as the OAU are, therefore, sincerely hoping to see India accord due recognition to the SADR as a logical culmination of its consistent support to the Sahrawi people's legitimate rights and struggle for self-determination and independence."

India's recognition of the SADR brooks no delay especially when it had been earlier conveyed through official channels to the SADR representatives that such recognition would be forthcoming as soon as the issue was settled at the regional level, that is, the OAU. Now that the OAU has admitted the SADR into its fold the issue has been settled once and for all. If India could recognise the PLO when Palestinians have yet to get back their territory, there is no reason why the SADR and the Polisario Front (which has liberated 90 per cent of the territory of Western Sahara) should continue to await Indian recognition. In fact, since February, 1981 ambassadors of five countries—Mexico, Cuba, Nicaragua, Vietnam and Iran—have presented their credentials to the SADR's Head of State Mohamed Abdel Aziz at the liberated town of Hausa in Western Sahara (which is the headquarters of the Polisario and the provisional capital of the SADR), a town which this correspondent visited during a trip to Western Sahara in January last year.

India may be dragging its feet on the subject because of the apprehension of Morocco's reaction to recognition of the SADR. But notwithstanding all its threats, Morocco has not yet snapped ties with the 50 countries which recognised the SADR. The SADR, on its part, not only enjoys the backing of a majority of the OAU member-states, but is also keen to see Morocco's return to the OAU so as to facilitate the process of Morocco-Polisario negotiations for a ceasefire and referendum in Western Sahara. The Polisario and the SADR have all along advocated such a referendum in the territory, but Morocco doggedly opposed the proposal before accepting it at the Nairobi OAU summit last year only to torpedo it at a later stage.

When the SADR and the Polisario Front are striving their best to fight for peace and stabilise the situation in the region in contrast to the Moroccan plans for war and destabilisation at the behest of the US (which is providing massive armaments to Rabat while Morocco is eager to provide RDF facilities to Washington, a suggestion made during US Secretary of State Alexander Haig's recent visit to Rabat), India needs to resolutely stand by the side of the forces of peace and stability in North-West Africa. This assumes added significance in the wake of active attempts on the part of the Reagan Administration to prevent Libya from hosting the forthcoming OAU summit at Tripoli in June this year and to break the OAU's united as well as cohesive entity.

If France being a NATO member can let the Polisario Front open an office in Paris, India as a leading figure in the non-aligned movement can and must go a step forward in recognising the SADR now. At a time when the American shadow is looming large over Africa, such a step by India will earn admiration of the non-aligned world as yet another gesture in support of the cause of peace, non-alignment, independence as well as self-reliance of peoples, and also serve as a token of solidarity with the OAU which is facing a Washington-inspired diversion within its ranks. ☐ *(April 14)*

COMMUNICATION

CPI Gen Secretary on Magarwara Massacre

AN article (by Amiya Rao) on Magarwara massacre in Unnao district of women belonging to Tata Chemical Factory appeared in *Mainstream* (April 3, 1982), in which some incorrect facts appeared about me and our Party. I could read this issue only on April 7 after I returned from Varanasi.

In order to put the record straight, I am giving below what happened:

A massacre of workers belonging to Rallis-India (a Tata concern) by the police took place on January 3, 1982, after dark when the workers were on a sit-in strike over their very just demands. When I was on my tour of UP in connection with fund collection for the Party Congress, I went there on January 13 along with Comrade Sarjoo Pande, Secretary of the CPI State Council and Comarde Bhikhalal, leader of our Party group in the State Assembly. We took along with us a number of correspondents from Lucknow to see that enough publicity was given to this ghastly incident.

When we went to visit the factory, it was closed. We were not allowed to see the premises where the massacre took place. The police also blocked the roads leading to some villages beyond the factory. But we went, along with correspondents, to Dayalkhera, a village near the factory where the police had launched repression after the firing. We visited the entire village, noted down the statements of people who were beaten up and whose family members had been shot by the police. We held a meeting in which we promised them that this issue would be taken up by us. Our Party units in both the U.P. Assembly and Council, along with other opposition parties, raised the issue on the floor of the legislature and created a furore. The correspondents who accompanied us had done their duty and had given enough publicity in the Lucknow papers.

Later, a detailed report of the incident, describing the atrocities, was circulated by our Central News Service which was published in *New Age* and other journals of our Party, as well as by *Patriot* daily.

I would request you to publish this letter of mine in your journal so that your readers may know the truth.

C. Rajeswara Rao
General Secretary,
Communist Party of India
New Delhi

Protest Against Forest Bill

WE are shocked to learn about the proposed new forest bill (the Indian Forest Bill, 1980) of the Government of India. The stated objective of the bill is the protection of the fast depleting forests of our country.

In effect, the new bill (a) empowers the Government to declare any area as forest area and thus bring it under the purview of this bill; (b) establishes the authority and control of the forest official over not only reserved forests and protected forests but also village forests and private plots of tribals; (c) lists a number of acts, which include the customary practices of the tribal communities, as offences: the comprehensive list of offences includes even gathering flowers and leaves of grass; (d) makes all such offences cognizable and punishable with imprisonment up to six months and/or a fine up to Rs. 500; (e) gives forest officials magisterial powers and authorises them to make arrests even without warrant; (f) makes all acts of forest officials immune to challenge in a court of law unless given permission by the authorities.

The far-reaching implications of the bill to our economy, environment, and polity can be summed up as follows:

1. It denies any direct role to the tribals in forest management; instead, it establishes the mono-

poly of the state and of the private interests in forest economy, thus destroying the democratic character of tribal economy.

2. It is likely to lead to further destruction of our forests and environment as it gives vast powers to the Government to decide the nature and extent of plantation and its exploitation of the forests which will only result in further indiscriminate commercialisation which is the chief reason for the deforestation in the last thirtyfive years.

3. It deprives the tribals not only of their communal rights but also of their normal democratic rights and reduces them to a state of total dependence on the forest officials.

4. It violates the letter and spirit of the Constitution as it threatens the tribals' fundamental rights, goes against the Directive Principles, violates the principle of judiciary independence from executive, and abrogates state autonomy.

5. It seeks to create a permanent schism between the tribal communities and the rest of India, thus further threatening the social fabric of our society.

In fact, the manner in which the Government has brought the bill has established its undemocratic character. No representative of tribal organisations or communities was ever involved in the process of preparing the bill. Further, their opinion is not being sought on a bill so significantly and harmfully affecting their lives. Only a few cyclostyled copies of the bill are being circulated in very select circles.

This clandestine manner coupled with the repression now going on against various tribal-based movements in Singhbhum, Jharkhand, Adilabad, Bastar and parts of the North-Eastern Region makes it clear that the Government of India is on an undemocratic course towards a deprived section of the population.

We, the undersigned, express our unambiguous protest against the introduction of such a bill. We appeal to democratic sections all over the country to build public pressure for (1) the immediate withdrawal of the bill, and (2) the involvement of the representatives of tribal communities and organisations in the process of evolution of forest policy.

—Dr. V. Sivalinga Prasad and others, Osmania University; Dr. K. Haragopal and 8 others, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad; Dr. V. Ramakrishna and 50 others, Venkateshwara University; Dr. V. Bhaskara Rao, and 25 others, Kakatiya University, Warangal (all Andhra Pradesh); Dr. Gail Omvedt and 10 others, Kasegao; Bhavasaheb Desai and others, Peasants and Workers Party; Dr. Bharat Patankar and others Sharmik Mukti Dal; Sharad Kulkarni and others, Pune; R.K. Mutatkar and others, Maharashtra Association of Anthropological Science, Pune; M.D. Sathe and others Development Group, Pune (all Maharashtra); Dr. G.S.R. Krishnan and six others, Bangalore University (Karnataka); Nirmal Sen Gupta and two others, AN Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna; Ajay Kumar Mitra and others, Singhbhum Ekta, Chaibasa; Bahadururao and others, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (all Bihar); Udoyan Misra and others, Dibrugarh University, (Assam); Gobinda Mukhoty, President, PUDR; Dr. Manoranjan Mohanty and forty others, Delhi University; Dr. Ashwini Ray and seven others JNU; Sanjay Santhnam, Rajiv Raman and 200 others, St. Columbus School, St. Xaviers School, Delhi Public School; C.P. Ramachandran and 10 other journalists; Debi Prasad Singh and 10 others, IARI; Jogen Chowdri and 10 other artists; Devaki Jain, Institute of Social Studies; Jagdish Krishna Swamy and 10 others, Kalpavraksh (all Delhi); Ramachander Guha and 25 others, IIM, Calcutta; Javed Alam and 10 others, CSSSC. Tapti Roy and 8 others, Calcutta University (Calcutta); Abhir Padhy and 12 others, Berhampur; Brijnath Rath and 16 others, Balasore; Rabi Dash, Cuttack (all Orissa), Anil Sadgopal and 8 others, Kishore Bharati; Suresh Diwan, Mitti Bachao Abniyan (Madhya Pradesh); Mihir Shaw and 32 others, Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum; Chandran and others, Janakiya Samaskritika Vedi (Kerala); Gautam Bhattacharya, Kumaon University, Nainital; Subrata Roy and 30 others, University of Roorkee; Chandi Prasad Bhatt and others, Chipco, Gopeshwar; Jagroop Singh and 15 others, Vigyan Shiksha Kendra; Hiranmay Dhar and others, GIRI Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow (all UP); K. Manoharan and 72 others, PDRI; M.D. Srinivas and others, University of Madras; K. Sivakumar and 55 others, Sriram Fibre Ltd., K.K. Thakappam and 22 others, EID, Parry Ltd. (all Tamilnadu).

COATS' BULGING POCKETS : AT WHOSE COST?

ONE of Scotland's largest multinationals, the thread production company Coats Patons, is guilty of de-industrialisation at home and exploitation in the Third World, according to a new report from the pressure group, Scottish Education and Action for Development.

Coats started over a century ago in a room and a kitchen in Paisley near Glasgow, and now operates in over 30 countries manufacturing about a fifth of all the thread sold in the world. In 1960 the Paisley workforce was 14,000: today the figure has declined to 1,400 and there are plans to cut a further 700 jobs over the next two years. At the same time the company's activities in Asia and South America have been expanding, so that for example the associated Madura Coats company now employs 22,000 people in South India.

The main reason for this trend is that the rate of return on investment in the Third World is nearly three times as profitable as in the UK. In 1980 the 35 per cent of Coats Patons assets in the UK produced only 20 per cent of profits, while the quarter of the company's assets in the southern hemisphere yielded almost half of total profits. Recently Coats Patons released figures which showed that labour costs in India were 13 per cent of those in Britain, while comparative costs in the Philippines and Indonesia were even lower. In the future, as British manufacturing shrinks, the company intends to import more thread produced abroad for sale in this country (UK).

The report's author, Alan Sinclair, spent two months last year in India investigating the activities of Madura Coats and alleges that working conditions there are dangerous. Health and safety records are not kept but even the firm's Personnel Manager, Mr. P.G. Menon, admitted that conditions were 'very poor' compared to similar plants in Europe. The three main trade unions are accused of corruption, largely because of management's policy of giving union officials a certain number of jobs to sell at their discretion. Indians anxious for a job have been known to pay the equivalent of three years' wages in return for work.

Although the wages of Madura Coats' shop-floor workers are reasonable in comparison with other Indian industries, the differentials between junior and senior employees are immense. The boss earns well over a hundred times as much as trainees, a ratio at least five times worse than in Brritain. The chasm is widened by the existence of special walled-off compounds reserved for senior management, containing air-conditioned bungalows with servants, chauffeur-driven cars, gardens and a shared swimming pool.

In 1980-81 Madura Coats is estimated to have repatriated £ 500,000 profits to Coats Patons in Scotland — a sum equivalent to half of Oxfam's total relief effort in India over the same period.

Rob Edwards in New Statesman, *March 12, 1982*

We have accepted in India as our objective a socialist pattern of society. That means not only economic organisation but something deeper which involves a way of thinking and living. The acquisitive society, whose chief aim is profit-making, not only brings conflict in its train but is opposed to the basic urge of modern man for social justice. Socialism is based on the growth of material resources as well as social justice and a co-operative method of working.

Jawaharlal Nehru

LET US SHARE OUR GREAT LEADER'S CONCERN AND ACT ACCORDING TO OUR CONSCIENCE

SAH BROTHERS

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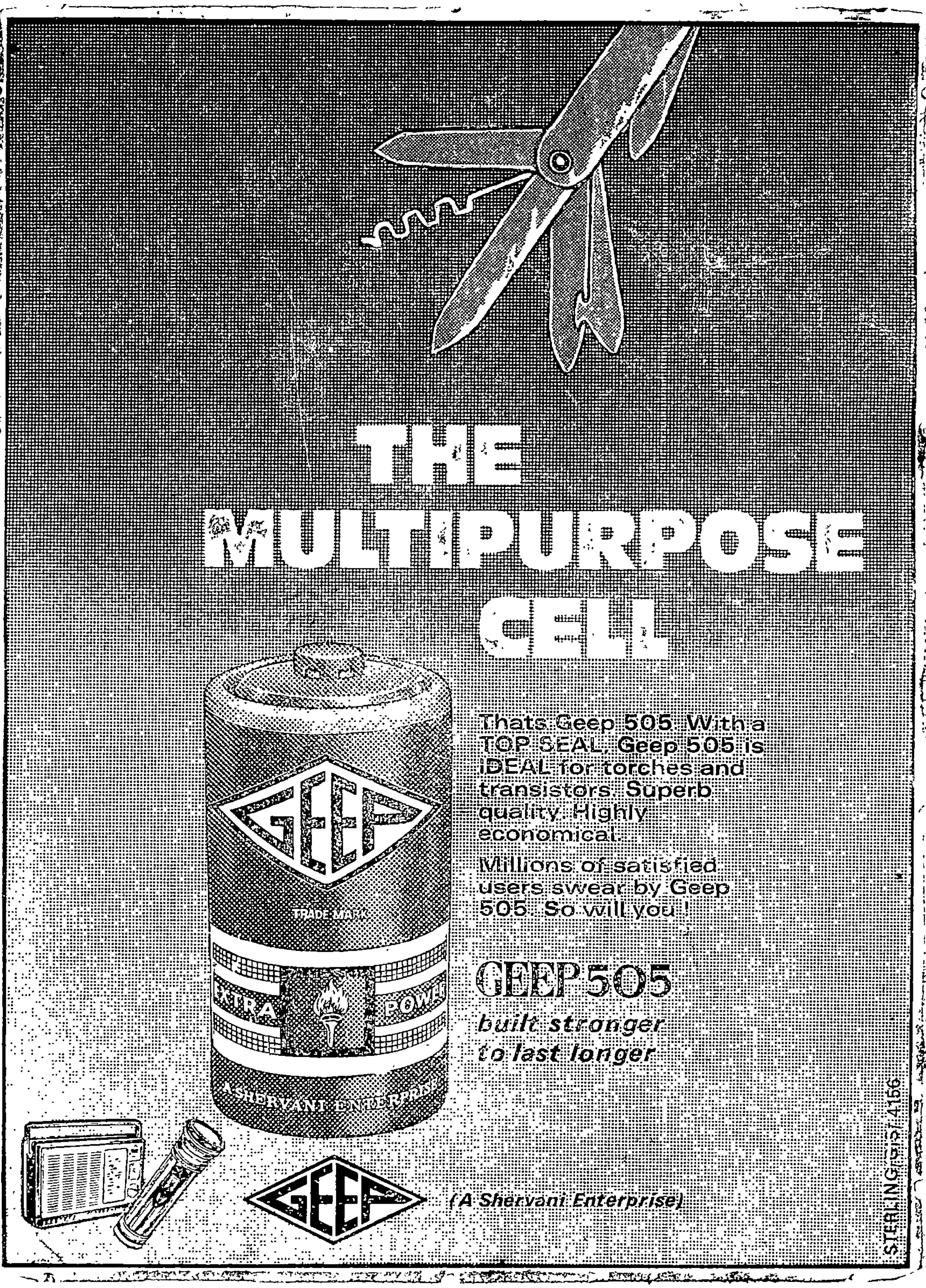

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The Saudi Arabian Connection

Mainstream

VOL XX NO 34 SATURDAY APRIL 24, 1982 Re 1

POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

Poll Antics

THE credibility of the "non-Communist Opposition", never very high, has tumbled down to a new low in recent days, thanks chiefly to the Chandigarh unity convention farce of two-and-a-quarter parties and the octogenarian Lok Dal chieftain's astounding acrobatics which have left the Janata and Congress-S Presidents looking quite foolish. All the mighty thunder about shaping a national alternative to the Congress-I has dwindled into the whimper of a whipped cur.

The unity convention was a misadventure from the start. In the Janata ranks there were misgivings, but Chandra Shekhar would not face the facts. In the Congress-S too there were rumblings but Sharad Pawar, cocksure in new-found company, paid no heed. And the three musketeers from the Lok Dal, heroes for a brief while, were seen as the cement that would make the unity mansion hold together. No one seemed to see the difference between cement and sand.

No one, that is, except Charan Singh. Apart from initiating and backing out of the unity move earlier, he decided to deal with the defiant trio: nine-day political *sanyas*, suspension of the "rebels", revocation of the suspension on the basis of unconditional surrender buttressed by a statement pledging loyalty to the leader. Then, two voices: George Fernandes, the irrepressible, talking of negotiations with all parties for electoral adjustments, including the Janata and the Congress-S, and Secretary Rabi Ray rejecting talks with the two parties without any qualification.

In between, an understanding between the Bharatiya Janata Party alias RSS and Charan Singh's Lok Dal. But even after the filing of nominations begins, nothing is clear about seat adjustments, with the BJP announcing a non-negotiable list and the Lok Dal announcing its own firm list. Who will back out where, if at all, is not clear at the time of writing, though a 'joint campaign' by Charan Singh, Vajpayee and Jagjivan Ram is talked about. What is clear is that everybody is hell bent on adding to confusion. The concentration is on two of the four States which are to have Assembly elections on May 19 — Haryana and Himachal. There is not much that these brave warriors can do in West Bengal and Kerala, though the BJP hopes to

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'Two Better Than One'

strengthen itself a little in Kerala where it has gained a foothold mainly because of Marxist mismanagement of affairs. The BJP-RSS danger-potential need not be minimised unduly, however.

No party's image is very bright in Haryana and Himachal, not excluding the ruling Congress-I. If the "non-Communist Opposition" displays a rare capacity to avoid any understanding that can at least minimise triangular and quadrangular contests—which are what Indira Gandhi and her lieutenants pray for—the Indira Congress is beset with internal problems, accentuated by the proximity of elections and choice of candidates. In a swift move, the Haryana and Himachal Assemblies have been dissolved, leaving Bhajan Lal and Ram Lal as caretaker Chief Ministers, with ornamental Ministries that can do no damage by way of promoting dissidence and pressure tactics using official authority. At least it betrays the Congress-I leadership's worries about its own cronies even in States under its rule.

While no one will mourn the demise of the hilarious "unified command" set up by the inglorious Chandigarh convention — the personalities involved would not have cut much ice anyway — the way Charan Singh has asserted himself and the way the Lok Dal "rebels" knuckled under, including the pompous Biju Patnaik who owes little to Charan Singh in his home State of Orissa, do have lessons for the Opposition. They cannot forge an alternative in a hurry merely for electoral purposes, and they cannot achieve even a united front at short notice with no objective other than to fight Indira Gandhi. The public is generally sick of talk of revival of what is described as "the 1977 spirit"; it only reminds people that the same old lot of political operators are at work still, and bereft of the aura of JP's 'Total Revolution' in the wake of Emergency excesses, they are in no position even to hold talks, not to speak of forging unity or reviving an imaginary "spirit".

The contrast between what is happening in Haryana and Himachal on the one hand and developments in Kerala and West Bengal on the other, is too glaring to be missed. Kerala is under President's rule and by the Haryana-Himachal logic the absence of the Assembly should be an advantage to the Congress-I. The reality is different. The trickery by which the Nayanar Ministry was pulled down and the Karunakaran Ministry was installed, abjectly dependent on the Speaker's casting vote, has come home to roost. The United Democratic Front floated by the Congress-I is in quite a mess already, even after the prescribed period for filing nominations has begun. The dozen parties, mini-parties and factions that make up this patchwork Front do not at the moment show signs of purposeful or united functioning, or even of basic mutual understanding. The Left Democratic Front, with a clear programme, is in far better shape, even if the outcome of an electoral battle in Kerala will always remain a matter of guesswork till the votes have been duly counted.

As for West Bengal, the Left Front, which now happily includes the CPI also, is certainly in a strong position while the Congress-I led opposition, again a medley of disparate groups, is in deep turmoil. Unlike in Kerala, where the BJP claims it is capable of emerging as the "third force" and is reported to be making overtures to all and sundry, the RSS outfit is not a factor in West Bengal.

In the midst of all the electoral comedy to which most of our parties are contributing, the byelections to be held on the same day — May 19 — seem to have been forgotten. For example, the Garhwal byelection, postponed twice earlier for no valid reason, is important, even if Bahuguna has not remained as glamorous as he used to be. That even this time the UP Chief Minister is not happy at the holding of the byelection speaks for itself. It is strange that a national party which boasts the only leader with national mass appeal, should feel scared of the possible entry into the Lok Sabha of one individual whose only asset is a once bright and now somewhat dim image among the minorities and the Harijans, apart from sections of the Left.

There is nothing so far to indicate that choice of candidates will be with the public good in view — at least, partly — and not merely to strengthen the number of yesmen. Much has been said about "defectors" and "late-comers" whose loyalty is doubted by the entrenched coterie of sycophants. How will Indira Gandhi exclude the lot without intensifying dissidence which is already rampant in her party? Is she really in a position to clean the Augean stables? Again, Maneka Gandhi may not be a big factor, but the mischief potential of the forces making use of her for propaganda — ranging from rank communalists to angry members of Indira's own party — can hardly be brushed aside.

As for any "alternative" emerging, let us wait. It will be a long wait, even given the state of disarray in the ruling Congress-I, judging by the refusal of doddering ancients to quit the political scene and by the failure of youthful and honest people to get into the ranks of active secular, democratic, progressive parties and forces.

Nothing short of total reorganisation of our political establishments can answer national needs, whatever the alignments in the coming elections and whatever the outcome. Beyond pre-poll acrobatics is the nation's future. There is no room for complacency, especially among Left and democratic sections.

C.N. Chitta Ranjan

April 20

COMMENTARY

The Saudi Arabian Connection

THE Saudi Arabian media comment that Indira Gandhi's visit to the Kingdom filled a "communication gap" between the two countries that has existed for a quarter of a century, merely reflected a reality. The absence of mutual warmth in Indo-Saudi relations was sought to be erased only a couple of years ago when both realised the potentials of economic cooperation. The Saudi response was particularly heartening in that the realisation was linked with the discovery that it was possible for an Islamic monarchy to share with a non-aligned, secular republic the responsibility of promoting economic inter-dependence. But on the political plane, a few bridges had to be built before bilateral relations could be vested with flesh and blood. That the process of building such bridges was assisted by no less a person than the PLO leader, Yasser Arafat, who prepared the ground for Indira Gandhi's visit, is testimony to the esteem in which India is held by the Arab world. In the larger context of India's relations with the Arab world as a whole, Indira Gandhi's visit to Saudi Arabia and its fall-out may eventually transcend the limited objective of filling the 26-year-old "communication gap".

In a sense, the 26-year interregnum was a waste. King Ibn Saud, who visited India in 1955, was perhaps a believer in sustaining traditional Indo-Saudi friendship despite the birth of Muslim Pakistan. But right from the days of King Faisal, who succeeded his brother, the Pakistan factor has tended to cloud and sour mutual understanding. There appeared to be no common basis for friendship between a pro-West, feudal and conservative monarchy (and a dominant leader of the Islamic Conference to boot) and a non-aligned secular republic, notwithstanding or perhaps because of the 100 million Muslim population of India. The clash between theocracy and secularism was only one of the aspects of Indo-Saudi relations; the other was undoubtedly the conflicting perceptions of regional stability. The inter-action of superpower strategies ever remained a hurdle in the way of a meaningful relationship based on mutual confidence and respect.

Indira Gandhi did not journey to Riyadh as a supplicant for petro-dollars. The beginnings of technical and economic cooperation had already been laid in 1977, and reinforced in 1981. The Saudi Fund for Economic Development had loaned 100 million dollars for financing the Srisailam and Nagarjunasagar power projects. Yet another loan of 32 million dollars came through for the Koel-Jaro hydro-electric project in Bihar. The 1981 agreement provided for the setting up of a joint commission for consolidation of economic and technical cooperation. Meanwhile, a sizable and significant Indian presence had been established in Saudi Arabia through participation by and involvement of Indian expertise in Saudi development and the opening up of the means of livelihood for as many as 150,000 skilled and semi-skilled Indian workers who are currently employed in the Kingdom. As many as 42 joint ventures flourish there and both public and private sectors are involved in them. There have been satisfactory arrangements for crude imports by India, albeit the quantities imported continue to remain small.

So, if Indira Gandhi's trip became necessary, it was to establish a political framework in which mutually beneficial economic inter-dependence can thrive in a suspicion-free political scenario buttressed by shared perceptions on larger global and regional issues of immediate concern and relevance to the two countries. A basis for developing such a framework was readily available. India's strong backing for the Palestinian cause and its refusal to forge diplomatic links with Israel evoke responsive chords in the Arab mind. The significance of Indira Gandhi's support for Crown Prince Fahd's plan for resolving the West Asian crisis could not have been lost on Saudi Arabia. Secondly, India had much cause for satisfaction in the stand of the Gulf Cooperation Council that the security of the region is a responsibility of the countries concerned and not that of either superpower. Saudi Arabia is admittedly a supporter of the American strategic consensus concept, but the support falls short of permitting American interference in the region or allowing US belligerency to dictate the policies and options of Arab oil diplomacy.

Both India and Saudi Arabia have also conceded the usefulness of parallel initiatives by the Islamic Conference and the non-aligned movement to bring about peace between Iran and Iraq. Consistent with its non-aligned position and outlook, India has also refrained from involving itself in the conflicts between Islamic fundamentalism and Arab socialism, which in a sense lie at the core of the current West Asian crisis.

Indira Gandhi's objectives can therefore be seen to be two-fold. In the first place, her Saudi hosts had to be convinced that India is not only fully reconciled to the reality of Pakistan but is desirous in its own self-interest to ensure a strong and stable Pakistan as its immediate neighbour. Secondly, India welcomes Saudi-Pakistani fraternisation as part of the consolidation of Islamic solidarity. But if such fraternisation leads to a tilt in the sub-continental balance against India and consequently to an arms race in which Pakistan is financed by Saudi Arabia and its Western allies, regional stability would be adversely affected. In such a case, even Saudi Arabia could hope for no long-term benefits for its own regional influence. This is why Indira Gandhi cautioned her hosts that the induction of sophisticated arms into Pakistan might spark an arms race and pleaded that whatever the nature of Saudi-Pakistani relations, Riyadh should not give the impression of taking sides with Pakistan merely on the ground of Islamic closeness ignoring the fact that India is sparing no pains to normalise bilateral relations with its neighbour. The Crown Prince's cryptic comment that Saudi Arabia was appreciative of the Indian efforts gives room for the hope that she had made out a convincing case.

On the even larger issue of external interferences hindering regional economic development, Indira Gandhi and King Khaled and Prince Fahd appear to have reached a measure of agreement which can only be described as highly encouraging. Prince Fahd is reported to have commented: "The vested interests of super-powers ought not to be allowed to distract us from our duty towards development." That the guest and her hosts were in a position to advance identical assessments of the dangers of foreign intervention indicated that both identified such interventions as sources of the current tensions, not only in the Arab world but also in South Asia. King Khaled, according to newspaper reports, was particularly impressed by Indira Gandhi's expression of opposition to all external interventions and by her disclosure that she had had occasion to point this out to Soviet leaders vis-a-vis the Afghan crisis.

Apart from this, there seems to be good reason to feel satisfied at the outcome of the Prime Minister's visit. Her decision to take a delegation of ministers and high-ranking officials has paid rich dividends in that they have been able to carry conviction with the Saudi leaders that the hundred million Muslims in India are an integral part of our people and have the same rights and responsibilities, the same advantages and disadvantages, as the rest of our people. This is indeed a great gain.

The Prime Minister and her party

have also succeeded in explaining to the Saudi leaders the immense scope for widening economic cooperation and extending it to areas hitherto unexplored. Areas where new complementarities can be built were identified, and the Saudis displayed commendable willingness to invest in new projects out of the Saudi Development Fund. Indira Gandhi is reported to have responded promptly by assuring them that there would be no tardiness in follow-up action on the part of India. A list of projects along with an expert team is to be sent to Saudi Arabia in the immediate future. Prince Fahd also invited Indian participation in a larger number of joint ventures in fields like construction, manufacturing and contracting. Of even greater significance was his assurance that Saudi Arabia was trying to bring about stability in oil prices and would, at the same time consider putting oil exports to India on a more regularised basis. Indira Gandhi's Saudi visit has once again underlined that the interests of the Gulf countries and the sub-continent are interlinked. Practically every Gulf and Arab country has come to acknowledge this position, including Egypt.

These are all gains which need to be noted in favour of a visit that was long overdue and which has ended on a mutually satisfactory note. The exchange of an elephant and camels and horses may symbolise the restoration of warmth in relations, but more than this, the rapport that has obviously emerged on the human plane between Indira Gandhi and the Saudi leaders ought to usher in a new era of relations.

S.V.

April 21

Sense on Language

LANGUAGE has always been a sensitive issue, and the Karnataka Government's handling of it can hardly be commended, though finally — and after needless delay — it seems to have arrived at a sensible solution that can help assuage feelings if fanatics and politically motivated operators can be held at bay. As these lines are written the preparations for a Karnataka bandh are in full swing, which is unfortunate in a State known for long as one capable of accommodating diverse languages, religions and opinions. Linguistic fanaticism is certainly not part of the tradition of Mysore earlier or Karnataka in subsequent years.

It can hardly be disputed that Kannada should enjoy pride of place in Karnataka, even as other regional languages should in the respective areas concerned. That is the whole point of reorganisation of States on a linguistic basis, not the promotion of linguistic chauvinism, though the latter has been the consequence in many parts of the country. So far as Karnataka is concerned, the sentiments and needs of the linguistic minorities, forming one-fifth of the State's population, can hardly be brushed aside without dangerous consequences for people's unity within that State and for national integration.

The Gokak Committee, whose report is the basis of the current agitation which has taken a violent turn, was appointed because of the controversy between protagonists of Sanskrit and Kannada. But the Committee sprang a surprise by recommending that (a) Kannada should be the sole first language with the existing weightage of 150 marks for all students at high school stage; (b) one of the following should be the second language with a weightage of 100 marks: Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Marathi, Gujarati, Urdu or Hindi or English or Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Latin, Greek; (c) any one of the above languages not chosen as second language should be the third (50 marks weightage) with a compulsory examination. That is the gist.

Chief Minister Gundu Rao, without studying all the implications of the new formula, hurriedly announced acceptance in toto of the Gokak report. Reactions of the linguistic minorities, coupled with sober second thoughts on the part of the Government, led to caution, but not before the chauvinists and their friends had had time to organise agitations with increasing tempo.

It is not easy to see why Kannada-lovers should get agitated over the State Government's latest decision which appears to be a sensible compromise. While not accepting the idea of making Kannada the sole first language, the Government has made its study compulsory for non-Kannada students in schools. The first language group will consist of Kannada or the mother-tongue (Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Urdu, Marathi and English) carrying 150 marks. The other two languages to be studied will be from among Kannada, Marathi, Hindi, English, Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian — with 100 marks in each of the two. That Sanskrit has been pulled out of first-language status — which was really the issue over which controversy originally began — should satisfy Kannada lovers. And that Kannada is to be compulsory for the linguistic minorities would ensure mutual adjustment among all sections in the State.

Why then the hue and cry and the violent agitation? It is sad that even intellectuals and litterateurs, who should have been in the vanguard of a movement to bring about unity and integration among different sections of the State's population, have preferred to join the chauvinist bandwagon. The film star who has jumped into the fray no doubt felt he could get quite some mileage out of the populist slogan to buttress his proposed political career. Communal politicians and sectarian leaders may find it convenient to be in the agitation or to be openly against it. None of these evidently has the interests of Karnataka, short-term and long-term, in view.

It can be argued, quite logically, that even if under the Gokak formula Kannada is made the only first language, the Committee's silence on the medium of instruction can be taken to mean that the medium can be another language, perhaps the mother-tongue of the persons concerned. But surely these are not problems that are solved on paper. Emotions, handicaps, family backgrounds and a host of other relevant factors intervene. These have to be taken into consideration. The example of Hindi as national language has lessons, even if the regional language stands on a different footing, being confined to the State and being part of life in the region concerned. The idea of imposition is what creates problems. No formula that fails to take into account as far as possible the needs and difficulties of different sections of the community can have smooth-sailing.

At the back of many of such agitations — like the one in Assam, for example — is the question of employment. It is widely accepted — indeed it is part of national policy enshrined in the Constitution — that people from any part of the country should be able to work in peace in any other part of the country. The present agitation in Karnataka — like the anti-Hindi agitation earlier in Tamilnadu or the Maharashtra-for-Maharashtrians campaign led by the Shiv Sena or the sons-of-the-soil theory exploited by self-seeking leaders in some parts of the country — can have harmful consequences for the State as well as for the country. There are Kannadigas in other parts of the country, even as there are linguistic minorities in Karnataka. The people from other States who have settled down in one or other State and have been working there, have made their own valuable contribution to development and culture. These truths should not be ignored for the sake of populist and transient gains.

It can only be hoped that the agitation in Karnataka will cease and that the way will be cleared for discussion, if necessary, on any outstanding questions in this sphere. Dialogue, not confrontation, is the need. Can it be honestly said that the Karnataka Government, whoever may be running it at the moment, is less interested in Kannada, the State's language, than those who are shouting themselves hoarse over the Gokak report and its modification by the Government? Let us be fair — and honest to ourselves.

C.N.C.

April 20

Offshore Exploration and India's Security

SAILENDRA NATH GHOSH

THE Union Government's decision to entrust exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons in Saurashtra offshore region to a foreign company is fraught with danger to Indian security. Evidently the decision has been taken without consideration of all aspects.

It is an open secret that oil exploration companies operating in the seas keep in close touch with the Departments of Navy in their home governments. What remains to be appreciated is that offshore exploration rights give scope for certain intensive studies and hence collection of certain strategic information, which are not available by any other means.

There is a misconception that all the critical information, in which an alien power could be interested, is already available to the super-powers. It is often argued that the satellites orbiting in space, the international oceanographic expeditions and the submarine movements that have taken place have yielded all vital information. This is just not true.

Undoubtedly, enough harm has been caused by allowing foreign companies to prospect for oil in offshore Kutch, Kaveri basin and the Bay of Bengal. These lease-periods gave the companies opportunity for *continuing* studies which might have yielded some most important strategic information. But the argument that "harm has already been done" cannot be a justification for allowing the harm to continue.

It is necessary to note the limitations of satellites in space and the submarines in hurried movement. The advantages that an operating company can reap from its opportunities for systematic, persistent and repeated studies of certain phenomena are enormous in comparison.

Satellites can take pictures, in separate bands of ultra-violet, infra-red and micro-waves. Hence these cannot yield the most crucial information about the ocean layers. Among the pictures that a satellite can take, those in ultra-violet are not of much use. Even air can attenuate these. Pictures in infra-red cannot penetrate up to the sea-bed because water attenuates the pictures. Infra-red pictures can at the most detect some gross phenomena at, or very near, the water surface. The micro-waves get reflected back from the water surface.

That the pictures taken by the satellite are not all-inclusive can be proved by an instance. Before the Pokhran "implosion", the satellite did definitely sense a rise in local temperature but it could not be sure that it was not due to some economic activity. The potential of the satellite to help plan offensive activity *under sea water* is even more limited.

The author is former Director, Bureau of Petroleum and Chemical Studies, New Delhi.

Then, the idea that an alien power is interested only in the sea-bed configuration and that it is only a depression in the sea-bottom that gives opportunities for submarine hideouts is simplistic. An alien power is also interested in knowing the ocean profile, particularly its sound propagation characteristics and the zones of sound barriers. It is interested in knowing at which point of the sea, at which depth, between which hours of day or night in which season, an inversion layer develops to bend the sound energy and hence to leave the object beyond virtually free from detection. These data enable an alien power to know between which hours of the earth's diurnal rotation in which season, a submarine can enter into a layer impervious to sound energy and stay there for how long. To minimise the chances of its detection, it would like to know the limits of "active" and "passive" detection systems in the different layers of the sea at different points. This means, it would seek to know the limits, at each point of the sea, of sound energy transmitted by sonars and the limits of detection by static hydrophone arrays.

Detection range of the active as well as the passive system depends principally on:

(i) the temperature profile of the sea, *from the surface to the bottom*, for different times of day and night in different seasons;

(ii) the salinity profile, from the surface to the bottom, of each zone;

(iii) details of the sea-bed configurations in which the variations over small areas and the specifics are far more important than the generalities and broad features.

Undoubtedly, salinity and the depth variations affect the temperature profile and hence the studies overlap to a certain extent. But each has to be studied in depth, because the ultimate purpose of an interested power is to locate:

(i) the inversion layer, that is, the layer below which the transmitted sound energy will not travel to cause detection; and

(ii) the zone which can elude the hydrophones.

The inversion layers are both space-dependent and time-dependent phenomena.

Alien powers can get information about these layers by enlisting the support of an oil exploration company which has the licence to operate legally in an offshore area and thus to mask its practice of taking regular observations in the above direction.

Moreover, lately, certain highly sensitive instruments in micro-miniature forms have been developed. If installed on the operating platform or even on barges — or may be, on the hydrographic survey ship — these will be able to collect the acoustic signature of each member of our merchant and naval

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Defence in the Eighties

P.K.S. NAMBOODIRI

LAST week in Delhi, the Commanders of the armed forces sat together in a South Block conference room in their periodical exercise to give shape to the nation's defence plans. True to military style the meeting was a simple and quiet affair, which largely went unnoticed.

From whatever little appeared in the press and particularly certain pointed remarks made by the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister in their addresses to the Army and Air Force Commanders, it appears that the political leadership also shares, partly at least, the apprehensions raised in some quarters about the growing burden of defence. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi told them on April 15 that while the Government was conscious of the importance of modernising the army, it was important that the defence problem should be viewed in the larger global politico-economic context. The Defence Minister, R. Venkataraman, elaborated this when he spoke to the Army Commanders the next day. He said: "While it is necessary for us to acquire necessary weapon system to match the capabilities of our potential adversaries, we should be conscious of the impact of a large defence burden on development finance and foreign exchange resources."

It may be noted that such counsel of restraint came at a time when the multi-billion dollar deal for 40 (plus option for 100) Mirage-2000 aircraft was being signed in Paris; the first batch of HAL-assembled Jaguars had taken off a week back; and new possibilities for weapon acquisitions had been opened up following Soviet Defence Minister Marshal Ustinov's visit to Delhi last month.

The country's approach to defence has undergone a tremendous transformation in the last three and a half decades since Independence. The decade of the fifties was a period of relative neglect as far as the security of our northern borders are concerned. While the nation's effort was concentrated on Five-Year Plans to build up internal strength, China easily encroached into Indian territory and carved out large chunks. Following the 1962 shock, Indian defence entered a period of moderate build-up during the sixties. Here again the focus was on raising and equipping mountain divisions to meet the Chinese threat and in the process the Pakistan front was largely ignored. Ayub Khan took note of this weakness and tried to overwhelm Indian forces in a surprise move in 1965. We barely managed to escape another major military reverse.

The re-equipment programme, which began soon thereafter, proved to be of decisive value in the 1971 conflict. With that victory the Indian defence effort seemed to have once again relapsed into a state of complacency. It was only in the late seventies that we began really implementing the modernisation plans.

Since the mid-seventies India's defence plans have assumed larger dimensions than the traditional China-Pak syndrome. This is partly because of a new security threat arising from the Ocean front due to increased militarisation of the Indian Ocean and its littorals. It may also be due to an increasing understanding of India's role in the South Asia region and the need for continued updating of the country's defence apparatus to give credibility to such a role. The Defence Minister gave notice of such thinking in Government when he said in the Rajya Sabha last month that "India's defence preparedness would not slacken irrespective of a threat or no threat from across the borders...Defence plans are prepared to meet contingencies which may arise from continuous assessment of the possible adversaries' capabilities rather than intentions". This is a logical approach since a country's defence is as much a function of its real and potential strength as it is of meeting the capabilities of its immediate and potential adversaries.

It is also a controversial approach and could be interpreted as being chauvinstic and hegemonistic. Events in the second half of the seventies appear to have profoundly influenced the thinking of many Indians, often to the extent of even distorting this perception of national security. Some of the more experienced of them have begun doubting the need and even the desirability of having modern armed forces for a poor country like India.

The end of the Mao-Zhou era in China, the unconventional nature of the new leadership under Deng, the military bashing China got at the hands of the Vietnamese in February 1979 and the improved relations between the two countries have all helped to change the popular image of China as a military adversary of any major consequence. Similarly, the developments in Afghanistan and the Soviet intervention there were regarded as having put Pakistan in an extremely awkward position, denying it incentives for renewed hostilities against this country. It is even propagated, with considerable force of logic, that since a new super-power threat to the subcontinent has arisen on the north west, both India and Pakistan should be equally concerned about it and make a joint response.

Thus, the two major adversaries — China and Pakistan — are now regarded as not posing any immediate and serious threat to India. Therefore, it is assumed that the present level of Indian defence preparedness is more than a match for them, not only now but also in the foreseeable future. It is also advocated that a militarily strong India would be a diplomatic liability in the country's dealings

(*Continued on page 32*)

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Andhra Scene : Puppet Show?

C.N.

THE recent developments in Andhra Pradesh beginning with the ouster of former Chief Minister — Anjiah, and the rise of a new regional party led by a cine idol, N.T. Rama Rao, though they might look bizarre, on proper analysis fall into the set pattern of Congress-I group politics interposed on the concerted efforts of the ruling forces at the Centre to maintain their hold on the people, defeating the efforts at consolidation of the Leftist forces on one side and the extreme Right represented by the Bharatiya Janata Party on the other.

The recent political developments in Andhra Pradesh can be analysed at three levels. First as the politics of caste groups; second as group politics within the ruling party, and third as the politics of the Central Government vis-a-vis other parties and forces. Each of these levels again should not be seen as separate and autonomous activities but as inter-connected ones; and through national level politics they could also be seen as linked to some international developments.

Taking the first aspect, of late the caste-groups in the State have become more rigid. The four dominant castes in the State are Reddys having their stronghold in Rayalaseema and Telengana, the Kammas who form a significant ten per cent in the State but are mainly concentrated in the rich districts of Guntur, Krishna and Godavari, the Harijans who have now come to be an articulate but violatile group in the State, and the Brahmins who though a minority are having support from the Centre.

In spite of the Janata "wave" which took the shape of the rise of the rich peasantry, Indira Gandhi's party emerged victorious in the 1978 election to the State Assembly with the support of the weaker sections, securing 175 seats out of 295 by polling 38 per cent of the popular vote. The Janata Party and the Congress (U) led by a former Chief Minister, Vengal Rao, secured 60 and 30 of the seats respectively, though together they had polled 45 per cent of the popular vote. The Congress-I could not get suitable candidates and there were not many experienced persons among those elected. All the Congress (U) MLAs and 44 Janata MLAs later joined the Congress-I, and some of them found berths in the Government though 'loyalists versus later entrants' is still a burning issue within the party.

The tenure of Anjiah (who was foisted on the State by the late Sanjay Gandhi for the valuable service he is reported to have rendered in getting Amrit Nahata to their side in a court case) and the long overdue elections he organised to the 330 panchayat samitis on a non-party basis saw the emergence of Reddys as a force in all districts. Several candidates for the samitis supported by the MLAs got defeated, showing a clear erosion of their hold. According to one report, 185 panchayat presidents got elected in opposition to the candidates supported by the MLAs. Anjiah was seen as a weak Chief Minister who was not able to assert himself but was submitting to pressure lobbies. Indira Gandhi seems to have seen the developments as erosion of her own authority.

Coming to national level groups, the State has the distinction of returning the President, N. Sanjiva Reddy, the Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, the Foreign Minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao, and the Minister for Petroleum and Chemicals, Shiv Shankar. Politics being what they are, the higher bodies cannot but intervene in local policies in the name of promoting the welfare of the State. When the replacement of Anjiah was decided upon, it is said that P.V. Narasimha Rao was backing Kona Prabhakar Rao who was then the PCC President, and because of that, opinion swung in his favour during the State legislature party meeting convened to decide on the leader, while Revenue Minister Janardhana Reddy was backed by the Reddys. The support of Reddys to Janardhan Reddy was however divided not only because of his background but because some of them feared him as a "strong man". The Kammas, who had not so far been able to capture the Chief Ministership, were making a determined bid to gain it. Anjiah, who had sensed it even earlier had dropped from his Cabinet Bhaskar Rao, a strong Kamma leader who was the right-hand man of Chenna Reddy when the latter was Chief Minister.

The State legislature party having left the choice of the Chief Minister to Indira Gandhi, a compromise was struck by selecting Bhavanam Venkatram Reddy whose better half is a Kamma and had been a Minister. Kona Prabhakar Rao and Janardhan Reddy were taken in the Cabinet and were given important portfolios. A Harijan leader, C. Das, was made PCC President. With the balance thus struck among all contenders and castes, the idea initially was to go in for a mid-term election along with West Bengal and Kerala though the term of the legislature is up to March 1983.

While it is said that the disappointment of the Kamma leaders over not getting the Chief Ministership has given rise to the regional party with Bhaskar Rao at its back and N.T. Rama Rao, popular Kamma film actor in the forefront, the real reasons for this new phenomenon are to be sought elsewhere. The Centre had been receiving reports of concerted efforts by the Leftists as well as by the BJP to consolidate themselves in the State. The Lok Dal also has been making inroads. Charan Singh drew larger crowds in Guntur and Krishna than Rajiv Gandhi when they both visited these areas about the same time recently. The BJP leader, A.B. Vajpayee, had also been attracting crowds during his recent tour of the State. The Lok Dal, BJP and Janata have 16 legislators while the CPI and CPM have 15 in the present Assembly. More disturbing to the Centre than the efforts of these parties has been the rise of extremist Naxalite groups, particularly in districts where Kamas are dominant. Home Minister Zail Singh, in an interview to a Hyderabad-based paper, had referred to increasing Naxalite activity in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka aided and supported by some international agencies. Added to that, the weak State leadership of the Congress-I with a tarnished image had led to a political vacuum in the State. The Centre feared that all the opposition groups would take advantage of the situation.

The trend of Opposition consolidation was also evident in the elections to the local bodies. The prestigious Vijayawada Municipality has gone to the Communists and Visakhapatnam to the BJP. In the panchayat samiti elections also the Communists have fared well in Khammam and Nalgonda districts.

There is strong reason to believe that N.T. Rama Rao has been prompted by the Centre with the twin objectives of filling the political vacuum and diverting the people's attention, and also as a check against the rising power of Reddys. This is not the first time that this type of tactics has been adopted. A former Central Minister who was an eye-witness to the deal has confided that Indira Gandhi had prompted the Telengana agitation launched by Chenna Reddy in 1970. The noted political scientist Prof. G. Rami Reddy in his article "Andhra Pradesh — the Citadel of the Congress" states that the "Telengana Praja Samiti which was opposing the State Government was, however, pledging support to Mrs. Gandhi on national issues. In September 1971, with the resignation of Brahmananda Reddy as Chief Minister, it changed its strategy and decided to merge with the Congress". It seems that similar tactics are being adopted now. N.T. Rama Rao had also been pledging support to Indira Gandhi at the Centre.

Will the NTR ploy succeed? NTR's Party, as the new party has come to be known, is already being dubbed a Kamma Party and is bound to get most of the Kamma vote in Guntur, Krishna and Godavari where the Lok Dal and the Leftist parties were gaining strength. According to reports, the intelligentsia, disappointed with Congress-I politics, is also increasingly giving support to the new party, thereby taking away part of the vote which might otherwise go to the BJP. With his matinee idol image NTR may also succeed in drawing away part of the popular vote. But if Congress-I projects NTR as a sectional leader belonging to the rich Kamma clan, then the role of NTR would be limited and would just serve the purpose of preventing the opposition from gaining strength and it would at the same time remain amenable to the Centre. NTR's Party thus just suits the needs of the Central Government and the Congress-I leadership. (*April 19*).

Ershad's Problems and Promises

PARTHA S. GHOSH

By any reckoning, the four weeks during which Hossain Mohammad Ershad has been in power in Dacca is too short a period either to make predictions about the stability of his regime or to assess his performance as the deliverer. From a careful stock-taking of developments during this period one can however reach a hesitant conclusion that Ershad has come to stay. There has been no report of any opposition to the regime worth the name, not even a token demonstration. As for the eventual success of the regime, there are naturally many ifs and buts.

Ever since the military takeover at least one trend is clear, that the Ershad regime is serious about weeding out corruption. The General has again emphasised that the main reasons for the military takeover were "corruption, maladministration and a very bad law and order situation". As the roots of corruption are both political and economic, Ershad wants to deal with it at both levels. To what extent he will succeed will depend on variables only a few of which he as Chief Martial Law Administrator is in a position to influence directly and effectively. The rest have their roots in the past, and this would require him to adopt long-term strategies with a clear perspective and identified goals. They will encompass issues ranging from domestic ones like legitimisation of the regime to international ones like foreign aid or Bangladesh's international linkages.

Drive against corruption being the prime motto, the Ershad administration has decided to plug the first identifiable source of it, namely, politics. One can get a glimpse of the political rot that the country had been subjected to from the fact that there existed, according to the special branch of Bangladesh police, 74 political parties before the Martial Law Government banned them.

The Damocles sword has fallen on "corrupt" individuals. More than 300 people including six former ministers, top bureaucrats including four secretaries, industrialists, student leaders, besides politicians, have been arrested. To deal with their crimes five special Martial Law courts, each headed by a Lt.-Colonel, have been constituted. In their very first judgement, former Deputy Prime Minister Jamaluddin Ahmed has been sentenced to "rigorous imprisonment until the rising of the court" and fined taka 350,000 for corruption and criminal misconduct.

By far the worst victim of the regime's wrath has

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been the BNP. Of course it is logical that a military junta which has wrested power from a political party should identify the latter as its chief enemy. History has several instances to show that a military regime always tends to build its tower of power over the grave of its predecessor.

There is however another dimension to this development. As it is imperative in Bangladesh politics for any ruler to register mass support for his rule, the anti-BNP stance may be one of Ershad's first steps in that direction. It may be noted that there has been a subtle change in his posture. The General had orignally said he had no political ambitions. But later he qualified it by saying that he did not want "to do politics in army uniform". Reading between the lines of these statements along with his reference to framing a new Constitution etc., one can get an idea of his future plans. In a statement in Dacca before the divisional and deputy commissioners, Ershad reiterated his conviction that "power really rests with the people" and said: "Such a people-oriented system must be free from personal ambitions and will apply even to the Constitution which hitherto has been tailored to suit personal needs rather than national aspirations". In these there is a clear reference to the tailor-made Constitution adopted by Ziaur Rahman. It appears that Ershad has two long-term future objectives — to launch a political party of his own and adopt a new Constitution to suit his future political needs.

As a short-term strategy, Ershad recounts the circumstances that necessitated the military takeover and reiterates his commitment to restore democracy in due course. As part of the same strategy his regime maintains, as far as possible, a low profile. Unlike in the case of new military regimes elsewhere, not many army personnel patrol the streets in Bangladesh; nor has the facade of a civilian administration concerned with day-to-day life been done away with.

Indications are that Ershad has succeeded in meeting the immediate challenge. Both direct and indirect evidences show that people have generally approved of his takeover. But the long-term stability of his regime and his political future will ultimately depend on two factors — his popularity with the people in uniform and his economic policies.

In the absence of hard data nothing much can be said about Ershad's base in the military. No military regime can afford to allow opposition to it among its ranks, much less reporting of any such development. A countercoup is always news and not the culmination of a series of reported events.

Informed speculation about his position in the military being not possible, we have to be content with an analysis of his economic policies that would ultimately influence his political future. What attitude he adopts to the institution of foreign aid will go a long way to influence his political style and alignments and determine his support base.

External aid is one single factor which has a tremendous bearing on Bangladesh politics. Although Bangladesh does not influence the world economic system, developments in the latter invariably cause ripples in the former. Rehman Sobhan, an eminent Bangladeshi scholar and former member of the Bangladesh Planning Commission in charge of the Divisions of Industry, Power and Natural Resources and Physical Infrastructure, has characterised the developmental process in his country as "crisis of external dependence". "Bangladesh policy-makers", Sobhan writes, "must wait upon decisions in Washington, London, Tokyo, Bonn and Paris before they formulate their annual development budgets, announce an import policy, formulate a food policy, or even decide how many children should be born. The decision-makers of the developed world hold the lifeline of any regime in Bangladesh...and can create havoc in the life of the country in a way that would have been inconceivable two decades ago. *The sovereignty of the Bangladesh nation state, in its prevailing social configuration, is therefore a polite fiction which is perpetuated by the courtesy of the donors as long as Bangladesh does not challenge their current strategic assumptions and ideological preconceptions.*" (Emphasis added).

The origin of Bangladesh's crisis of dependent development can be traced to the massive injection of foreign aid that was necessitated after the liberation war to rehabilitate the ten million refugees displaced by the war and restructure the war-ravaged economy. Ever since, it has been a tale of ever-increasing dependence on foreign aid, establishing Bangladesh's image as an international "basket". It has been estimated that in 1980, 85 per cent of the country's development budget, 60 per cent of its investments and 63 per cent of its commodity imports depended on foreign aid.

In the absence of an indigenous capitalist class, a situation which was the legacy of Pakistani "colonialism", external aid inflow has created a dominant class whose prosperity is directly and indirectly dependent on it. With limited control over productive assets, this class primarily works as an intermediary between the world system and the Bangladesh ruling elites through functions ranging from such direct ones as representing foreign suppliers as commission agents to such indirect ones as distribution of goods imported by the state trading corporation. As the volume of external assistance has systematically increased (from 198 million dollars in 1973-74 it rose to 6,469 million dollars in 1977-78) the prosperity of this class has also grown. In 1975, there was only one millionaire in Dacca; in 1978, the city could boast of at least 200.

Besides this class of intermediaries, there are also others who have over the years developed vital stakes in the foreign aid regime. Many state functionaries seek more aid to serve as shock-absorbers for their own managerial failures. The aid structure has also resulted in a consumption pattern among the affluent sections which can be sustained only by perpetuating the system.

The aid syndrome has its most visible impact on the food front. Besides the aid-supported rationing system in urban areas, it concerns the rural poor too. Bangladesh now imports about 12-15 per cent of its consumption of foodgrains. This constitutes about 30-35 per cent of the marketed grain. It may be noted that at least 50 per cent of domestic output is not marketed. By analysing these figures against the background of the fact that about 75 per cent of the rural households (including 50 per cent of functionally landless) find it difficult to ensure subsistence from their cultivable land and seek supplementary sources of income, one realises the extent of dependence of these people on food aid. As opposed to subsistence cultivation, these people depend fully or partly on the market economy which is heavily dependent on foreign aid.

In short, the very existence of Bangladesh has over the years come to depend on the inflow of external aid, and here lies the crux of the malaise that now grips the country. The institutionalisation of corruption against which Ershad has launched a crusade largely gets its sustenance from this structure of dependence. Hence, unless he ventures to root out the disease itself, treating the symptoms will be of little use.

It is naive to expect overnight changes. The process has to start with better management of aid money in the first place, culminating eventually in the development of a self-reliant economy. There are indications that Ershad has both short-term and long-term perspectives in this regard. While on the one hand he has sought to impress upon the Aid Bangladesh Consortium, which will meet for three days from April 20, that his Government is committed to better management of aid money, on the other by dissolving the 53-member pool of envoys he has more or less declared that foreign aid should not form part and parcel of the country's way of life. Formed two years ago, the pool was supposed to work in liaison with the donor countries to ensure a constant flow of aid.

On April 10, in a major policy initiative, the Ershad administration announced an eight-point economic programme with the basic thrust of promoting and protecting indigenous industries. Consumer goods that can be produced at home to meet domestic need are not to be imported any more. This is of no mean significance. Ever since Ziaur Rahman's coming to power Bangladesh was flooded with imported consumer goods and the middle class life-style had come to depend to a large extent on these goods. In this respect Ershad's step is a bold one which seeks to serve larger national interests even at the cost of alienating an influential section of the population. One will have to watch its impact for it is not merely policy that matters but implementation.

Where do relations with India figure in Ershad's scheme of things? His recent references to New Moore and sharing of Ganga waters make it necessary to watch his future moves carefully. He is reported to have said in this connection that his Government would "never compromise national needs and interests under any pressure, however small (a country) we are". Maybe making such statements is a political necessity. As long as the dichotomy between Bengali nationalism and Bangladeshi nationalism (see author's article in *Mainstream*, August 29, 1981) is not resolved, such statements about India would be politically relevant. But while this determinant of Bangladesh's India policy is very important, what probably would ultimately determine it is Bangladesh's external linkages.

So long as aid dependence persists, Bangladesh would have serious constraints in following an independent course of action in its foreign relations. But in Ershad's drive towards self-reliance one can expect new policy initiatives in this sphere. Seen from this perspective, Indo-Bangladesh relations might enter a new phase. Events such as overnight detention of Indian newsmen in Dacca by the Bangladesh police must not lead to prejudice about

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DISCUSSION

Press Commission Report

Discussion on the Report of the Second Press Commission — which is yet to be officially published at the time of going to press — began in these columns last week (*Mainstream*, April 17, 1982) with a contribution from G.N. Acharya. This week we publish two more articles, one by S. Viswam, member, Press Council of India, and the other by A. Raghavan, President-elect, Indian Federation of Working Journalists. Further contributions on other aspects will appear in subsequent issues. —*Editor*

'Teeth' for Press Council

S. VISWAM

"TEETH" is the word that has haunted Press Councils all over the world. Should Press Councils depend for their effectiveness on their moral authority or on sanctions? Would not a Press Council without "teeth" be defied with impunity because it would then have neither the power to punish nor the force to deter? And if such institutions like Press Councils which basically discharge "watchdog" roles have to be invested with penal powers, should there be limits to such powers?

Such questions have been dealt with by Press Councils in the context of the concept of freedom of the press prevalent in their own countries. There is perhaps only one Council in the world which enjoys the power to levy fines. By and large, other Councils have been content to depend on their moral authority to entrench themselves in the esteem of their country.

The erstwhile Press Council of India was dissolved by the Government in 1976 in circumstances not particularly happy to recall. The Second Council which began functioning in terms of the Press Council Act 1978 was also inevitably faced with the question of "teeth". After a number of sittings and fairly wide exchange of views, it decided in favour of suggesting to the Government that it be empowered in slightly broader and deeper terms than those provided for in the 1978 Act to enable it not only to become more effective but, more importantly, *to give the impression to the community at large that it was in fact so.* The Press Commission, which laboured for more than a year under the chairmanship of Justice K.K. Mathew, has just submitted its report. It has endorsed the Council's demand for more powers and in addition made a few other recommendations vis-a-vis the role of the Press Council of India which need to be examined, if only because some of the recommendations have been made on its own and not at the behest of the Press Council. The Commission's report comes at a time when the Third Press Council, reconstituted on March 1, 1982, is about to begin its three-year term. It will be doubt study the implications of the Commission's recommendations and offer appropriate reactions.

A number of Press Councils in the world have been modelled on the British pattern. The question of "teeth" figured in the hearings of the three successive Royal Commissions on the Press in Britain. In his well-known book, *The Press Council: History, Procedure and Cases*, H. Phillip Levy refers to the evidence led before the Second Commission. "The Commission was told in evidence that a sense of responsibility in the Press could only be achieved by putting behind professional standards a sanction sufficiently strong to deter journalists from violating them." Later on, he says that when those who urged strong-arm discipline realised that the Press Council was to have no power of punishment they immediately assumed that it would have no authority. A reprimand, however severe, was no substitute for a penalty that would punish and deter. But according to Levy, the critics completely underestimated the strength and effectiveness of the Council's censure.

"The obligation and moral duty of a newspaper to publish an adjudication of the Council against itself had the effect of reinforcing the Council's condemnation with the condemnation of the public which the publicity ensured. Nothing can be more disparaging and unwelcome to a newspaper which values its good name than to be obliged to publish to its readers a judgement of the Press Council that it has infringed journalistic standards" (p. 466).

When the Press Council of India was seized of the question of "teeth", the issue that inhibited it considerably was this: what would be its position in case "the obligation and moral duty of a newspaper to publish an adjudication against itself" is not met by the newspaper censured? What would be its position if in spite of its admonitions, the erring/defaulting newspaper(s) cocked a snook at the Council's decisions? Would this not have an adverse impact, not only on the morale and influence of the Council itself, but also on the community at large?

The Press Council of India has followed a healthy tradition of reaching decisions by consensus. This was as it should be. But there were some in the Council who argued, in terms of Phillip Levy's thesis, that the Council should neither seek nor acquire more powers than already vested in it under the 1978 Act (which was an improvement over the previous Act of 1965 since Article 15(4) empowered it to make observations against the conduct of any authority including the Government), that its moral authority, was a strong sanction in itself and that the very concept of penal powers was repugnant to the concept of a free press. Levy sums up such a point of view admirably. He says: "The role of the Press Council is that of educator not inquisitor; its method is persuasion not force; its weapon is publicity not punishment; its appeal is to conscience and fair play. In a free press sanctions would be an incongruity". (p. 466).

There was, however, a strong section within the Press Council which felt that without some minimum powers, its effectiveness would be limited. There was no point in the Council adjudicating a case against a newspaper if it did not have the power to enforce its adjudication particularly on the erring paper. Secondly, it was argued that there ought to be a mechanism to "put the fear of the Press Council" into the erring newspapers if they attracted censure from the body repeatedly. In his foreword to the First Annual Report of the Council (1979), the Chairman summed up the sense of the Council in the following words:

> "The question of sanctions and sharper teeth for the Council is exercising many minds. It has been considered inadvisable to lay down a tariff of fines for recalcitrant newspapers for various offences. One form of bite can be to suspend a newspaper or a journalist from publication or professional practice respectively. The still sharper bite can be to send an editor occasionally to jail. But it has been said quite rightly that there are more than enough people doing that under other laws without much result in decrease of commission of offences. Perhaps some other sanctions may be more appropriate. In Turkey the Press Council can recommend stoppage of release of Government advertisements for a specific period in case of habitual offenders. Additionally, the Press Council can recommend reduction in the supply of newsprint or at least stoppage of growth rate of newsprint for specified periods, where the conduct of a particular newspaper is contumacious and other sanctions have totally failed. In the prevailing climate, when moral values stand eroded, some sanctions which will affect the erring newspapers financially, may turn out to be more effective than the punitive measures emenating from the ancient idea of 'tooth for a tooth'."

The eventual decision of the Council was in effect a compromise between the differing points of view. The additional powers demanded were sought to be made applicable to erring newspapers "which were indicted or censured repeatedly". Later on "repeatedly" was clarified to mean censured "thrice". The contemplated punishment? The discontinuance of Central and State Government and public sector advertisements for a period not exceeding six months; disallowance of any growth rate in the allocation of newsprint for a period not exceeding two years; the suspension for a period not exceeding one year of the concessional postage registrations by the P&T. In the case of erring editors and journalists, the punishment proposed was the denial of accreditation and related facilities for a period not exceeding six months.

The initial reaction of the Government to the Council's suggestions was not positive. The Government contended that legal advice was manifestly against such legislation. Denial of advertisements on the grounds that a newspaper has been censured thrice by the Council for offending against the standards of journalistic ethics or public taste, it was held, would amount to blacklisting, and any such action shall be legally sustainable only if the ground on which the newspaper has been censured related to Article 19 (2) of the Constitution. Similarly, it was held by the Government, disallowing growth rate of allocation in newsprint would directly restrict circulation of newspapers and thus abridge freedom of speech and expression. It was, however, suggested that a "reasonable restriction" could be imposed on such freedom, provided such restriction was made on the grounds mentioned in Article 19(2) of the Constitution. The withdrawal of concessions on postage granted to registered newspapers was also observed to attract a similar objection. It was argued that such a penalty would not be on fiscal grounds but on the ground that what a newspaper publishes is not considered desirable. Apart from the fact such action might not be justified or within the scope of the Post Office Act, this could also be considered to be a direct infringement of the freedom of expressiom of opinion, for there was no purpose in publishing or printing a newspaper unless it could be despatched. Moreover, it was argued that it would be necessary to prescribe an appropriate time-limit within which the alleged infringement may have been committed by the newspaper to attract imposition of penalties in the form of withholding of advertisements.

The Council considered the Government's point of view and offered clarifications. The Council felt that the suggestions made by it earlier were intended to be given effect to only to the extent permissible under the provisions of the Constitution of India and that it was precisely the case of the Council that any suspension or denial of advertisements to a newspaper which is censured thrice by the Council for offending against the standards of journalistic ethics or public taste shall be directed only when the grounds of the censure clearly fell within Article 19(2) of the Constitution. The Council felt that a reasonable restriction could be imposed in regard to disallowing of growth rate of newsprint allocation strictly on the grounds mentioned in Article 19 (2). Withdrawal of concessions on postage granted to registered newspapers was not suggested as being within the scope of the Post Office Act but by way of an amendment to the Press Council Act 1978. In the opinion of the Council, the argument that such a restriction would be a direct infringement of the freedom of expression was not well-founded in that, while the withdrawal of concession on postage would involve some additional expenditure, it would not result in paralysing the whole process of despatch and distribution of the newspaper. At any rate, its validity could be sustained under Article 19 (2) if it was confined to those matters that are mentioned therein. The Council also conveyed its acceptance of the suggestion for prescription of appropriate time-limits within which the alleged infringement may have been committed by a newspaper to attract imposition of penalties.

The matter rests there, but meanwhile, the Press Commission has endorsed the Council's plea. It is possible that the Commission was not aware of the arguments advanced by the Government in expressing reservations over the Council's suggestions; it is equally possible that the Commission thought the Government's objections are mainly legal and technical and can be overcome through discussion. Now that the Council's views have been reinforced by those of the Commission, it remains to be seen to what extent the Government would be willing to bring about enabling amendments to the Press Council Act 1978. The Commission has, however, come to the conclusion that in the event of the additional powers sought by the Concil being given to it, "it would become essential to expressly provide in the Act that the Chairman of the Press Council of India have a judicial background and should preferably be a retired judge of the Supreme Court." Significantly, three members of the Press Commission (Girilal Jain, S.K. Mukherjea, and H.K. Paranjape) did not agree that the Press Council should be given penal powers.

The dissenting voice of the three members reflects the views of those sections in the Second Press Council who felt that the only sanction the Press Council should enjoy is the moral one. It had been argued within the Council that the institution's efficacy should and would be reflected not in the deterrence of its penal sanctions but in the quality of judgements it would be called upon to deliver from time to time.

Taking the case of the British Press Council, for example, it can be argued that it had at no time power beyond that of persuasion and publicity, but if the force of public opinion meant anything, these should be among the most powerful of all. The Council depended on the cooperation of editors and on being taken seriously by the press and the public. It relied upon newspapers publishing rebukes against themselves, however harsh they might be, and it did not rely in vain. In the whole history of the Councill there have been only two cases of editors refusing to give space to adverse adjudications. But naturally, all this took time. The Council was accepted as something to be reckoned with but as month by month and year by year it built up its code of "case law" it became less of an irritant and more of a refuge for aggrieved members of the public, besides being a useful guide to and corrector of the press.

The New Zealand Press Council, for instance, has no powers to punish or to impose any sanctions against newspapers; it exerts its influence purely by the exercise of its moral authority; where admonition or censure is applied, the publications concerned (as is the case with Britain) are considered morally bound to publish the Council's rulings. The Council functions essentially as a court of honour. The Swedish Press Council (probably the oldest tribunal of its kind, set up in 1916), on the other hand, has different rules. A newspaper which has been found to violate "good publishing usage" is expected to publish the finding of the Council in the matter, and also pay an administrative fine of between Skr. 1000 and Skr 3000.

In endorsing the Press Council of India's demand for additional powers, the Press Commission probably visualises contingencies where newspapers in India could repeat violations of accepted norms occasions after occasions and attract penalties. Such a contingency probably need not be ruled out altogether, although it is extremely doubtful if the majority of newspapers, invested with a sense of responsibility, would defy both the Council and public opinion in such a blatant manner as to single themselves out for earning the stigma of a censure three times in succession. It might perhaps be more correct to say that the Council was only attempting to arm itself against such contingencies. Unless the detailed arguments backing up the Commission's endorsement are gone through (this article is based on a summary of the Commission's recommendations) it may not be possible to fathom its rationale.

In almost all the Press Councils of the world, it has been accepted as a matter of convention, if not principle, that the presiding authority should be a judge. When a new Council came into being in Britain in 1963 in pursuance of the Second Royal Commission's report, there was an important change in its composition. The most obvious difference between the old and the new council was the infusion of the lay element, particularly in the person of the chairman. The earlier Council contained no representatives of the public. The British Press Council was however fortunate to have obtained the services of Lord Delvin, who brought to the body a quality of forensic adjudication." His nomination had at that time been interpreted as the first admission by the press that outsiders had the right to say what was, or was not, proper for the newspapers to print.

The merit of the Press Commission's recommendation in favour of a retired judge of the Supreme Court to head the Press Council lies in the fact that the Commission wants the principle to be sanctified by parliamentary approval rather than let it be observed as a convention. This is all to the good since the functions of the Council are quasi judicial in nature. Article 15 (1) gives the Council the same powers throughout India as are vested in a civil court while trying a suit under the Code of Civil Procedure 1908 in respect of summoning and enforcing attendance of persons and examining them on oath, receiving evidence on affidavits, requiring discovery and inspection of documents, requisitioning public records and issuing commissions for the examination of witnesses or documents etc.

The omission on the part of the Commission to comment on the current procedure for the appointment of the Chairman of the Council can be taken to imply that it does not find anything wrong with the prescribed machinery — the appointment being made by a committee consisting of the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha and a member elected by the Council. There is however a body of opinion in the Country and within the Council that the prescribed procedure is perhaps not the ideal one since it does not preclude the possibility of the selection of the Chairman being subject to political considerations. (The inclusion in the Committee of a nominee of the Council is presumably aimed at neutralising any attempted politicisation of the procedure). Had the Press Commission thought more deeply on this matter, it could have rendered a useful service in suggesting an attractive and more satisfactory mechanism.

The Press Commission has not found it desirable that the Press Council should draw up a code of ethics for newspapers. This conforms to the opinion within the Second Press Council which had occasion to examine this question, in exercise of its role as a self-regulatory body for the Press.

law as provided in clause (b) of sub-section (2) of Section 13 of the Press Council Act 1978, speaks of "building up" a code of conduct for newspapers in accordance with high professional standards. Even though the First Press Commission had recommended the formulation of a code of ethics as one of the prime responsibilities of the Council, when Parliament actually came to enact the legislation in 1965, it made a departure from this and laid down that the Council should only "build up" a code of conduct. It was therefore decided by the Council that a discussion should be called for on the usefulness of building up, in course of time, a body of case law gathered from the principles formulated in the adjudication in the several concrete cases coming up before the Council. It is a matter of satisfaction that even during the brief three-year span, the Second Press Council has laid down some vital guidelines through its adjudication on a variety of themes. The Council has been able. to endorse the validity of principles tacitly acknowleged and observed by journalists as the unwritten ethics of their profession, and the concerned adjudications have already become part of the "case law."

The Press Commission has also made the following four recommendations:

(*a*) enactment of legislation to curb the influence of foreign money on the press: this calls, inter alia, for submission of annual accounts to the Council by newspapers giving details of revenue obtained from advertisements from foreign sources, and names of the top 100 shareholders with their nationality and address;

(*b*) an amendment to the 1978 Act to enable the Council to review the adequacy and quality of journalism training facilities in the country;

(*c*) monitoring of the performance of newspapers in respect of important issues by the Council; and

(*d*) representation of the Council in the proposed Newspaper Development Commission.

The Council has good reason to welcome all these recommendations (provided of course they are implemented by the Government) but it needs to be said regarding (*b*) that it is doubtful if the Council, with its existing limited financial resources, can undertake a venture of this kind and regarding (*c*) that notwithstanding its limited resources the Second Council had in fact launched an exercise in this direction by arranging for a study on the trends of reporting on developmental activities in the language press. In regard to (*a*) the only comment that can be made (without a perusal of the full report of the Commission) is that while the Commission had chosen the Council to be the instrument for detection of the influence of foreign money on the press, it does not seem to have recommended any precise deterrent powers for the Council to prevent, arrest or remedy such influence.

There will be general agreement with the Commission's view that the Council's approach to complaints involving allegations of foreign money in the Indian press should not be technical but substantive. In practice, however, the Council is called upon to function strictly within the four corners of legislation, and insofar as such legislation enables it to undertake "substantive" investigation of the role of foreign money, it ought to consider it its duty to do so.

The experience of the Council has been that the limits set by the legislation frequently act as a constraint on the speedy disposal of complaints brought before it. This cannot perhaps be helped. The Council can only retain the hope that as the general awareness among the public, and more importantly, among established authorities like the State Governments, in regard to its usefulness spreads, its functioning would be rendered easier. It ought to be a matter for gratification that the Commission should have recommended the continuance of the institution because in its opinion "within the limits set by the legislation it has done useful work". Because the earlier Press Council was dissolved by the Government abruptly and arbitrarily, suspicions have not entirely been erased in regard to the recurrence of such an action. The Press Commission's recommendation needs therefore to be doubly welcomed. The Commission has suggested an amendment to the Act to provide for the retirement of members by rotation in the interest of continuity. The rationale behind this suggestion is not clear. Under the law, no member, including the Chairman, can continue beyond two terms (each term is of three years' duration). Is the Commission advocating mid-term voluntary retirement by members? Perhaps the perusal of the full report may provide an answer.☐ (*April 19*)

Delinking and Diffusion

A. RAGHAVAN

Freedom of the press usually means non-interference by Government but there is such a thing as interference by private interests. I am unable to understand how a small group represents the freedom of the press. The fact of a big industry by itself owning a newspaper and owning chains of newspapers cannot be said to give the press the kind of freedom which the public should expect of it.

— **Jawaharlal Nehru** (*at All India Newspaper Editors' Conference, New Delhi, 1963*).

THESE were bitter words uttered frankly by the first Prime Minister of free India after 16 years of varied experience ranging from ecstasy to anguish on the concept and practice of freedom of the press, guaranteed by the Indian Constitution. The denouement came nearly a decade after the first Press Commission made its recommendations on the reform of the press, especially its structure of ownership and control.

After an exhaustive study, the first Press Commission, in its Report presented to the Government in 1954, came to the conclusion that "there already exists in the Indian newspaper industry a considerable degree of concentration. There is a danger that this tendency might further develop in the future. We are of the opinion that it would not be desirable in the interest of freedom of choice that this tendency should be accentuated." Therefore, the Commission suggested diffusion of ownership to bring about diffusion of control of editorial policy. It also suggested transfer of management of newspapers to public trusts. But these remedial measures mooted by such a high-powered commission headed by Justice G.S. Rajadhyaksha and whose members included Dr. Zakir Hussain, Acharya Narendra Deva, C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar and M. Chalapathi Rau, have been ignored by the newspaper industry all these years, the default being connived at by the Government.

And today, when the second Press Commission, headed by Justice K.K. Mathew, has picked up the thread and submitted a set of specific recommendations on the ownership and control of the print media the so-called national press has kicked up a rumpus. Columnists have started ringing the alarm bell, calling the people to arms, so to say, to save the press, now in the custody of a few barons, which is supposed to be truly free.

How free is it? One distinguished writer tells us that for the first decade and a half after Independence our Parliament was the effective forum of official accountability; now it is the press, especially what is self-financing; the big press, in other words. It is this press which is supposed to be uncovering things on which Opposition MPs have been going to town.

Every heard of Justice Vivian Bose Commission's Report? That was presented to Parliament in that decade-and-a-half, considered ideal. According to that Report, the second largest chain of newspapers in this country was bought over from the British by an Indian business house with funds, partly acquired by defrauding the national exchequer and partly by cheating the unwary share-holders. The Indian Federation of Working Journalists had submitted to the second Press Commission the relevant portion from that Report. Leave alone the "uncovering", how many newspapers had dared report those hair-raising revelations which were and continue to be part of the Parliament record? Again, in 1975 the two stalwarts who headed the same Indian business house were convicted and sentenced to jail terms for shady dealings in an aircraft company, one of the firms that figured in the Vivian Bose Commission Report. Who published the report of that conviction?

The most cacophonous is the *Express* group of newspapers, controlled by Ramnath Goenka. Goenka boys disrobe all. Three cheers for that. Except, of course, themselves. There was that case of plain cheating of the Punjab National Bank to which was mortgaged a huge consignment of non-existent newsprint bought from a non-existent Calcutta firm for a tidy sum of money drawn by one of the Goenka companies. After prolonged litigation a Goenka was sentenced to two years' imprisonment. We had looked, in vain, for a thundering piece from the prima donna of that group on the result of the court case. The *Express* seems to have got hold of the whole of the minute of dissent and started howling days before the Report was actually presented to the Government. It knows precisely where the shoe pinches. For, according to the IIPA study, one of those relied upon by the Press Commission, the *Express* is the largest chain in the country which brings out newspapers in six different languages and in 1979 controlled 27.7 per cent of the daily circulation in Telugu, 22.7 per cent in English, 20.1 per cent in Tamil, 19.7 per cent in Marathi, 13.5 per cent in Kannada and 11.7 per cent in Gujarati.

Readers are also sought to be pitted against the majority report, regaling them with fairy tales. One such is that the Commission has not established (*sic*) that newspapers, owned by business interests, have been biased in favour of vested interests in presenting news and views. Anyone who cares to turn the pages of these newspapers from the second half of 1969 onwards, will know what was dished out on bank nationalisation, abolition of privy purses, state trading in wheat, reactivation of the Directive Principles of the Constitution and so on. Why, Goenka even upset through court action the award which, for the first time, had evolved a national wage structure for poor journalists.

The second Press Commission has rightly dismissed all these pretensions. In the chapter on "the press as a public utility", it has dealt with the ownership pattern in the newspaper industry. As I write this I have before me only the body of recommendations on all the aspects touched upon. So elaborate comments have to wait till the full Report is available. The Commission has analysed the anatomy of the top 54 dailies listed in *Press India 1980*. Total newspaper circulation that year was 86.91 lakhs, of which dailies accounted for 65.70 per cent. Newspapers owned or controlled by companies or businessmen with interests in other industries were 27, commanding 40.87 per cent of the total daily circulation. The Commission had the benefit of the detailed IIPA study on ownership and control structure of the Indian press. According to that study, the "private industry-linked (daily) press" has a 47 per cent share in the aggregate circulation which worked out to 70 per cent in English, 73 per cent in Malayalam, 68 per cent in Kannada, 63 per cent in Tamil and 84 per cent in Telugu.

Further breakdown presented in the IIPA study is more revealing. A few national monopoly houses have cornered 30 per cent of the national circulation of the dailies. Of these, three are dominant: R.N. Goenka, Sahu-Jains and Birlas, in that order. All the three are interlocked through matrimony and/or business. There may be inter-house rivalries between them on peripheral matters but they invariably present a joint front against economic policies aimed at regulating big business. Each of the trio, in addition to enjoying a national position, has a region of its own in terms of circulation. The majority of the Commission made certain broad generalisations from the statistical layout of the Indian press as they saw it and drew certain firm conclusions. A few of their observations are well worth setting out here, for without them the recommendations they made on restructuring of the ownership and control of the press may appear to be populist, as one critic put it.

> Press is a public utility discharging the basic social function of informing the public. When newspapers are controlled by other business, they become the vehicle of expression of the ideology of their owners, and the selection, presentation and display of news in such newspapers would be dictated by that ideology. The newspaper industry in their hands becomes involuntarily the cultural arm of vested interests for maintaining the existing socio-economic system.
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> Odd exceptions apart, commercial newspapers do not normally find a word to say in sympathy with the legitimate demands of the working class. They become naturally antagonistic to the implementation of certain key Directive Principles. Legislative measures intended to ensure that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good or that the operation of the economic system does not result in concentration of wealth to the common detriment (Article 39) run counter to their economic interests.
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> Those who control the means of production try to control the media not only for profit but much more so for perpetuation of power associated with their possession of the means of production. It can hardly be disputed that ownership structure determines the character and style of news report and news display as also editorials and commentaries on the events of the day.

Such an overview of the Indian press is no populist rhetoric. The relentless logic behind it has predictably led the majority to set forth the incompatibility between the press, and essential public utility discharging a vital social function, and its control mechanism which rests in the hands of the forces of status quo.

If freedom of expression has to play its basic role in our democratic polity, the majority Report says, it must be freed from the "steamrolling of the commercial process" so that it may mean maximum amount of freedom of expression for the maximum number of people. When a person's private interest conflicts with his duty to the public, there is every justification in a democracy for insisting that exercise of power connected with his public duty be segregated from his private interest. Justice Frankfurter (USA) is quoted as saying that freedom of the press can be achieved by freeing the press from the "clutches of press barons." The majority was also chagrined because the businessmen owning or controlling big newspapers "have not acted on the advice" of the first Press Commission on creating trusts for their management. So, as the majority put it, "we are obliged to seriously consider the question once again and seek other remedies." Follow the recommendations:

First, a law should be enacted making it mandatory for persons carrying on the business of publishing a newspaper to sever their connections with other businesses "to the extent indicated ..."

Second, a person (including company, trust, etc.) carrying on the business of publishing a newspaper should not have, directly or indirectly, an interest in excess of the "prescribed interest" in any other business, or be in a position of being controlled, directly or indirectly, by any other person or person having an interest in excess of the "prescribed interest" in any other business.

Third, in the first instance, it should be enforced in the case of all persons publishing one or more dailies with the same or different titles in one or more languages, the circulation of which, taken singly, exceeds one lakh copies per day.

Defining the "prescribed interest", the Report says that the aggregate interests of the person carrying on the business of publication of a newspapers in any other business or businessess should not exceed 10 per cent of the total interest involved in the publication of the newspaper. In other words, a newspaper owner should not hold more than 10 per cent of the subscribed share capital of any other business or businesses. While working this out care is to be taken that "associates" of businessmen who could be dummies do not step into the shoes of the principals.

If the divested shares of a newspaper company are not "readily purchased" by "eligible persons" from the "open market", such shares could be acquired and held by an autonomous body or agency to be specified by the legislation till they are purchased.

The Commission is of opinion that a law giving effect to these recommendations could be passed under Article 19 of the constitution. Details are being left to competent draftsmen.

The Commission has also, in the name of fair competition, recommended a price-page schedule (fixing the price of a paper according to the number of pages in an issue) along with a news-advertisement ratio. It has suggested a committee of experts to work out the schedule after going into the economics of the newspaper industry.

Four members of the Commission, Girilal Jain, Editor, *The Times of India*, Rajendra Mathur, Editor, Hindi daily *Nai Duniya*, Justice S.K. Mukherjee and H.K. Paranjape, have disagreed with the three major recommendations, namely, a law to substantially delink the daily press from other businesses, a price-page schedule and a news-advertisement ratio.

It is to be noted here that the recommendations of the second Press Commission on the reform of what may be called the basic structure of the newspaper industry have been more forthright than those of the first Commission. There is, however, one major difference, in that the second Commission has not called for diffusion of the divested shares among journalists and other newspaper workers.

In the absence of the full report it is difficult to discuss and evaluate the viability of some of the otherwise welcome proposals. For instance, who will be the "eligible" persons who may be buying the divested shares of newspaper companies from the open market? Whether or not this proposition carries any loophole which the dispossessed can exploit is to be seen.

Again, the price-page schedule and fixation of the volume of advertisement had proved tricky in the past. Under the Constitution, freedom of expression includes freedom of the press. But press freedom has a large business aspect on the rock of which many a good legislative ship has foundered. Unfortunately, the second Press Commission has not accepted the plea made by some of the professional bodies of journalists to separately enumerate freedom of the press in Article 19 to get over the difficulty of the mix-up of freedom and business.

A publisher, called upon to accept the price-page schedule and the advertisement ratio, continues to enjoy all the freedoms in Article 19 besides freedom of expression and including freedom to practise any trade or business. Although it anticipates difficulties, the Commission merely says that if a publisher claims several fundamental rights in Article 19 in respect of his business, he cannot claim exception from restrictions to which each of the rights is subject. The fact is that the publisher who carries on business would attract restrictions envisaged in 19(4), 19(5) and 19(6). These provisions empower the state to impose "reasonable" restrictions. That word "reasonable" has been the delight of the judiciary and the fly in the ointment of any socio-economic reform.☐

Land Reforms and Small Peasants

SUNIL SEN

On the morrow of Independence the Congress Agrarian Reforms Committee emphatically asserted that land reforms would be the key to "any lasting improvement in agricultural production". In Indian agrarian economy, as the Committee noted, "there is no place for intermediaries and land must belong to the tiller". Sub-letting should be prohibited except in the case of widows, minors and disabled persons. Resumption of land for personal cultivation could be undertaken by those owners who "put in a minimum amount of physical labour and participate in actual agricultural operations". Tenants who had been cultivating land continuously for a period of six years should get occupancy right. The Committee laid much emphasis on the preparation of record of rights by land tribunals with which non-officials should be associated. Instead of nationalisation of land, the Committee favoured individual peasant farming that would be assisted by "a cooperative organisation at least of credit and sale". (CARC Report, 1949).

Looking back, one may say that these recommendations could not be implemented in the face of the stubborn opposition of the zamindars and the landed middle class. In the West Bengal Land Reforms Act, 1955, the individual instead of the family was treated as the unit of landholding, so that the landlords could evade the ceiling by making paper partitions within the family. The Act also allowed the landowners to evict the tenants in the name of "self-cultivation". Predictably, eviction of bargadars continued unabated. In the 1960s concealed tenancy became widespread in West Bengal when "self-cultivated" holdings appeared to be the predominant recorded category. In 1968-69 when the United Front Government was in power, there was a widespread peasant movement which took the form of occupation of "benami" land (land transferred by jotedars to fictitious persons to evade the ceiling provision) and "vested" land. According to the Home Ministry, 346 incidents of forcible occupation of land (totalling about 3 lakh acres) were reported in 1969. The simmering discontent of the bargadars who had to pay 50 per cent of the produce as rent to the landowner could not be ignored. Under the West Bengal Land Reforms Act, 1970, the bargadar's share was raised from 60 to 75 per cent of gross produce, if he supplied the inputs. Since the law provided for eviction on the ground of "personal cultivation" by the landowner, the bargadars were often evicted.

We come now to the land reform measures undertaken by the present Government. First, the bargadar has now secured heritable right of cultivation; even when he is evicted, the aggregate area of his land will not be reduced to less than one hectare. Second, the landowner, resuming land for personal cultivation, has to live in the locality and must cultivate the land himself. Third, the Government has launched "Operation Barga" to expedite the recording of the names of the bargadars. Fourth, the Government is continuing the distribution of vested land among the rural poor. Fifth, landholdings measuring less than four acres have been exempted from revenue assessment, while landholdings of upper-middle and rich peasants are being assessed on progressive rates.

It seems that "Operation Barga" is proceeding slowly; only about 10 lakhs (the number of bargadars may be somewhere between 2 and 2.5 million) have been recorded. What needs to be noted is that the recording of bargadars has made substantial progress mainly in Midnapur, 24 Parganas, West Dinajpur and Burdwan districts (which account for about 5 lakhs, that is, half the number of bargadars who have been registered). Only a small proportion of the bargadars have so far been registered in other

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districts. One may say that the objective of the Government is to perpetuate the barga system that represents pre-capitalist mode of production. The fact is that the bargadars with greater security of tenure will increasingly assert their rights. "Operation Barga", if vigorously pursued in all the districts, will pave the way for further growth of the peasant movement.

The bargaining position of the bargadar will increase if crop share rent is abolished, and fixed rent either in produce or its value in money be established. In the Bihar Tenancy Act, 1938, *danabandi* (produce rent) was abolished, while commutation of produce rent into cash rent was prohibited in the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1928 in order to appease the middle class. In 1946-47 the Hajong peasants who launched the *tanka* movement raised the demand for commutation of *tanka* rent (a fixed quantity of produce) into cash rent; the Muslim League Ministry rejected the demand. It is not clear why the Kisan Sabha that continued to champion the interests of the bargadars hardly examined whether commutation of produce rent into money rent could improve the position of the bargadars.

It is now a commonplace that land ceiling laws were hardly implemented in many States, with the result that only 40 lakh acres of agricultural land vested throughout the country. In West Bengal the Left Front Government showed considerable interest in implementing ceiling laws and distributing land among the rural poor. The Land Reforms Commissioner tells us that 11.76 lakh acres have vested in the state, of which 6.31 lakh acres have already been distributed among 11 lakh beneficiaries. This comes to 0.6 acre per beneficiary. It is noteworthy that the beneficiaries of vested land come mostly from Midnapur (2,72,630), 24 Parganas (1,11,628), West Dinajpur (1,19,234), and Burdwan (75,739), while the number of beneficiaries is 13,497 in Darjeeling, 32,043 in Purulia, 27,625 in Hooghly, 11,161 in Howrah, 37,453 in Nadia, 38,795 in Birbhum. (D. Bandyopadhyay, *Land Reforms in West Bengal,* 1980). Apparently land distribution has made slow progress in these districts. Much of the land has been distributed among the rural poor drawn from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

What needs to be noted is that the beneficiaries of land distribution (about 11 lakhs) represent a small proportion of the agricultural labourers and bargadars. It seems that the Government with available ceiling surplus land can hardly satisfy the cravings of poor and landless peasants manifested in peasant movements. It is also a fact that the beneficiaries of land distribution have miniature holdings. This question is whether these small farms can at all be viable in a free-market economy. What we witness in West Bengal is the continuing expropriation of small peasants. One may refer to the remarkable rise in the number of agricultural labourers (from 18 lakhs to 33 lakhs) between 1961 and 1971. It appears from past trends that the number of agricultural labourers has increased during 1970-80.

At this point we turn to the problem of rural credit. As the Land Reforms Commissioner tells us: "Mere assignment of surplus land or recording of names of share-croppers really does not help people much unless simultaneously attempts are made to meet their credit needs". The per hectare credit availability is very low in West Bengal (Rs 45), whereas it is Rs 268 in Kerala, Rs 189 in Punjab, Rs 224 in Tamilnadu. What is of crucial importance is that an alternative credit system is being built in West Bengal so that the bargadar does not have to depend on the jotedar for paddy loans. It is familiar that usury helps the jotedar to retain pre-capitalist relations. It seems, however, that the new credit system is still weakly developed; the banking system is yet to be adapted to the needs of small peasants and bargadars. When we view West Bengal as a whole, the agriculturist moneylender who accounted for 28 per cent of the borrowings of the peasants in 1960-61 continues to occupy an important position in the rural economy. The cooperatives which are often dominated by the affluent sections hardly provide a positive institutional alternative to the moneylender. There is, however, evidence to show that the small peasants are now relying on institutional credit in some districts.

Land reform should be viewed as an instrument not only for agricultural growth but also for improving the condition of the rural poor. Erich Jacoby, a distinguished specialist in agriculture, has asked a few questions on the implementation of land reform and its impact on the rural poor. In the fifties and early sixties it was hoped that changes in the agrarian structure would enable the rural poor to move upwards on the agricultural ladder. In the seventies it became evident that agricultural labourers had no chance of becoming owner-cultivators, while small and medium-sized farmers moved down to the level of agricultural workers. Only rich peasants and also newcomers to agriculture like retired military officers, professionals and civil servants, adopting new technologies, came on top. In the rural areas in Asia and Latin America the modernisation of agriculture led to the ruin of small peasants. There had been an increasing exodus from the rural areas, and large cities like Calcutta and Bombay grew immensely within a relatively short period. While the Green Revolution accelerated productivity and growth, it resulted in mass eviction of tenants. As Jacoby tells us, land reform has surely not become obsolete. What is needed is to protect the small peasants from "the increasing strength of the free market forces"; and this can be done if they are organised into "large centrally farmed units which are in a position to harmonise technical advance and social progress." Collective farms will of course co-exist with small farms. The co-existence of these types of farming should be as feasible as the mixed economy in industry and banking in Western Europe. (E. Jacoby, 'Has Land Reform Become Obsolete?' in *Peasants in History,* 1980).

(Thirty-two years ago the Congress Agrarian Reforms Committee, which did not favour collective farms, pleaded for the organisation of cooperative

(Continued on page 34)

DISCUSSION

The perspective of Indian development is fast becoming a matter of crucial concern for the polity of the nation. Taking into account the need for serious discussion of the state of our political economy and the options before the country, *Mainstream* (March 20, 1982) published a contribution from a distinguished observer of the economic scene. This was followed by a response from Dr C.H. Hanumantha Rao, eminent economist, now a member of the Planning Commission (*Mainstream*, April 10). We publish here a contribution from Mohit Sen, well-known Marxist intellectual. The discussion continues, and readers are invited to participate. — *Editor*

Indian Development : Options and Choices

MOHIT SEN

THE contribution by A Student of Political Economy (*Mainstream*, March 20) and by C.H. Hanumantha Rao (*Mainstream*, April 10) are thoughtful and thought-provoking. A welcome and even somewhat unusual feature of both contributions is that even where they are critical of the Left they do not run it down but appeal to it with respect, solidarity, and even a sense of belonging. This only enhances the strength of their criticism.

Nevertheless, while accepting much of their evaluation of the present stage of India's historical journey and some of their criticism of the Left, a critique of their criticism appears to be the appropriate response one should make.

TO BEGIN WITH there is an important point of methodology which one would like the Student of Political Economy to ponder over. This concerns his raplacement of the concept of ruling class by that of ruling group. Particularly as far as post-Independence India is concerned he feels it may not be correct to identify state power with a particular class. "At a particular point of history a ruling group need not invariably and consistently represent a specific class or a permanent interest alliance."

Reference has been made to Gramsci to reinforce the concept of the relative autonomy of the superstructure, including the state, from the base in a given socio-economic system. Actually the concept of the autonomy of the superstructrue was stressed by Marx in his works of concrete historical analysis —the celebrated *Eighteenth Brumaire* for example—and by Engels in his famous letters to Schmidt and Bloch as well as in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. In the last named work mention is made of a state power existing without a specific class base and even mediating between classes. The examples given by Engels are those of the seventeenth century absolute monarchies in Europe and of Bonapartism. In more recent times we have had the example of the dual power that lasted in Russia from February to July 1917. A contemporary example could be the character of Maoist state power from around 1966 to today.

It should be noted, however, that these are exceptions, rather transient, unstable, and eventually tilt to one or another class. They arise in highly specific situations of a certain equilibrium in the struggle of classes. An exception proves the rule and should not be substituted for the rule.

The independent Indian state came into existence through a multi-class freedom movement but under bourgeois hegemony. The ideology and the role of Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru certainly cannot be reduced merely to that of national bourgeois leaders. It was much more complex than that. But in the ultimate analysis the mass national movement of which these two were the tallest leaders did put the capitalist class in power. Three-and-a-half decades since Independence has accumulated enough evidence to prove this point. India's ruling class is the capitalist class and has been fairly stably so till quite recently. Its path of development is the capitalist path which the Student of Political Economy himself recognises when he states that the "natural growth of the system" would lead to a situation where "it is the large houses and the monopoly groups that will very rapidly start to dominate the scene."

The specific features of this rule and this path can, perhaps, be traced to the following causative factors:

First, the heterogeneous character of the Indian capitalist class with developing contradictions between the monopoly and non-monopoly and urban and rural strata.

Second, the close inter-connection between the non-monopoly bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie in our socio-economic system with the latter maintaining relative stability and even expanding.

Third, the secular parliamentary democratic form of rule with its inherent pressures towards bourgeois reformism as far as the ruling class is concerned.

Fourthly, the existence and steady growth of the anti-capitalist class and political forces, particularly the Communist movement.

Fifth, the important presence of pre-capitalist survivals, forces of social inertia and reaction linking up with forces of native monopoly capital.

Sixth, the simultaneous development of the contradiction between imperialism and the nation as well as the contradiction between the vast majority of the people and the capitalist path of development, leading to a complex inter-connection between the twin tasks of the national democratic revolution.

Seventh, the growing integration of the revolutionary process in our country and that of the world revolutionary triple-streamed process at a time when the worldwide transition to socialism is on the historical agenda with the world socialist system becoming the decisive factor in world social development.

The thrust of these factors taken together pushes on the broad coalition of social forces to the completion of the national democratic revolution and exerts a very powerful influence on the stability of the ruling class, its system of alliances and forms of rule, including social manoeuvring. It also faces the ruling class with the prospect of an alternative to its rule.

It would be harmfully simplistic to reduce the complexities of our situation to one of competing pressure groups with one as the ruling group led by Nehru in the past and his daughter today.

THE Student of Political Economy does less than justice to the Left when he criticises it for failing to intervene appropriately and effectively both in the days of Nehru's Prime Ministership as well as today. He states that the interest of the Left and the ruling group led by Nehru and then Indira Gandhi largely converged and converge today as well.

Professor Hanumantha Rao writes of national imperatives and regrets that the Left has not done enough to mobilise the maximum possible support for these imperatives, including the followers of the Prime Minister, but has got bogged down in a somewhat sterile controversy over the class character of the Government and on whether to mainly support it or mainly oppose it. He wants the Left to make use of the existing mass support for desired goals and wants the ruling party or its leadership to use the potential created by the Left by its decades of selfless work in organising the working class and peasantry. In his view the Left in India should strive for more ideological Independence, give up reliance on received doctrine and orient its activities more towards trying to solve the day-to-day problems of the masses and build itself up with modesty and patience. In other respects he seems to endorse the points made by Student of Political Economy.

Both the distinguished authors make observations about the present socio-economic scene, its likely development and its desirable development which one would like to examine in the next section. Here one would like to deal briefly with the history and perspectives of the Left, particularly in relation to the dominant or leading bourgeois or bourgeois-petty bourgeois political formation.

The contributions made by the Left during the freedom struggle and in the post-Independence decades would not be denied by the two authors. Indeed one would scarcely be wrong in stating that it is because of what the Left did that they regret that it did not do more and want it precisely to do more and make up the lag in the present.

One would readily admit that, generally speaking, the present independently organised Left, among its other faults, did tend rather to follow wittingly or unwittingly a sectarian line towards other anti-imperialist forces both during the freedom struggle and in the first decade or so after Independence. Theoretical recognition of the central role of the anti-imperialist contradiction was achieved but at a rather abstract level and, therefore, neither given its due priority nor translated into appropriate united front tactics in sufficient measure at all times, including rather crucial times. The necessary struggle for hegemony was misconducted — the just criticism of bourgeois-induced compromise was not at all matched by greater independent and more militant mass anti-imperialist action along with persistent efforts and struggle for the broadest possible anti-imperialist unity. Indeed, the Left failed to emerge as a national hegemonic force. Not that mistakes of an opposite nature, of insufficient demarcation from and struggle against bourgeois or bourgeois-petty bourgeois hegemony and compromise were not also made. There were mistakes of this kind also but sectarianism was the main sin.

At the same time, it is unfortunate that both our authors say nothing about what went on from the other side — the leading or ruling group of Nehru and Indira Gandhi. Despite many substantive and qualitative differences between father and daughter, neither was at all keen on the independent growth of the Left. Indeed, in different ways they were opposed to it.

The 1939 Tripuri Congress events were a pointer. Much more damaging was Nehru and Indira Gandhi's attitude to the CPI-led United Front Ministry in Kerala in 1957-59. It has always seemed to the present writer that what could have been two historical turning points in the destiny of our country were aborted not by the independent organised Left but by those with whom it tried to unite. And it was the weakness of the independent organised Left that it was not in a position to retrieve much from the wreckage.

Much worse, of course, was the manner in which the Congress Socialist Forum was decimated and the Left was attacked by Indira Gandhi when she was at two peak points of her power.

Nor can it be forgotten that in the struggle against the independent organised Left compromises were made and alliances established with forces beyond the pale of anti-imperialism and secularism, with absolutely no pretence at being Left and progressive. Can it be precluded that this will not happen again?

If one wants to sloganise the experience of the independent organised Left it could be "Acquire Strength! Oppose Sectarianism!" The process of the implementation of this slogan would involve the building of the broadest anti-imperialist, democratic unity and constantly struggling to build and even impose such unity through struggle and acquiring strength through such struggle. At the same time, the process of the implementation of this slogan would require sustained and sharp struggle to project the Left as the Left and gain increasing mass support on this basis. This is of special and indispensable importance at the present stage of India's historical development.

THIS brings us to the issue of where we have reached. Student of Political Economy has been very correctly balanced in his appraisal of the strengths acquired as well as the tasks left undone. It would seem that he is also quite right in seeing the crisis of our development not as one of impending doom or breakdown but of a radical change in orientation which would give the dominant position to the big business landlord-multinational combine. This would replicate in our country a combination of the South Korean and Brazilian model of dependent capitalist development or export-dependent development along with extreme accentuation of already existing inequalities. This, in turn, would lead to the destruction of our democratic system and our anti-imperialist non-aligned foreign policy. This is the real danger.

It has to be faced and defeated by building the broadest possible alliance against it and for an alternative path of development. But before we deal with this issue in the next and concluding section of our comment, one would like to bring in some points which our friend seems to have missed.

First, it is quite surprising that no mention is made of what is one of our greatest acquired strengths. And that is our all-round cooperation and friendship with the Soviet Union and other states of the socialist community. This has enormous positive significance for the struggle to continue along the path of independent development and to oppose and defeat the big business-landlord-multinational combine. But to maintain and develop this friendship and cooperation would also require sharp and sustained struggle.

Second, since around 1974 and more particularly since 1980 an increasingly important component of the internal policy of Indira Gandhi's Government has been one which, to say the least, has been of immense help to the reactionary combine and its plans to convert India into a bizarre combination of South Korea and Brazil. This is a cardinal point of total divergence of interest and confrontation between the Left and Indira Gandhi's Government. What is also important is that it shows the considerable influence of the reactionary combine on and within that Government. The ruling group of the Prime Minister and its policies are not exclusively made up of nor serve the interests of the reactionary combine but it is by no means free of it either. But this significant factor has been totally missed by the Student of Political Economy. This is all the more surprising and mistaken after the acceptance of the IMF loan with all its consequences.

Third, a positive and novel feature of post-Independence India is the tremendous growth of the social base of the Left. It is not the poor as such that forms this base but more specifically the working class and the working people, not all of whom need necessarily be below the poverty line, if that is how one is going to define the poor. In particular, the leading force of the Left, socially speaking, is the working class, and it is this class that has grown enormously numerically and undergone positive qualitative changes. It is true that it is still not united on the trade union level and that it still fights chiefly on sectional issues and in a defensive way. It is, of course, politically divided and large segments are even politically disinterested. But there are significant indications of change, especially in terms of a sense of demarcation, self-confidence and readiness to act. What is more, the traditional weapons of the working class — the union and strike — are becoming increasingly popular among those whom one does not generally associate with the working class, that is, policemen and security forces. Not only does this class have social power far beyond its numbers but it is spread out throughout the country, is nationally composed and has revealed its capacity for nationwide action. If there is to be a meaningful coalition against reaction the working class will have to be fully involved and be in the van. This is its responsibility but it is also the duty of the Left to make it aware of this and for all who wish to combat reaction to be aware of it also. But can it be said by anybody that the "ruling group" led by Indira Gandhi is aware of this? Would it not be more true to say that its attitude, on the other hand, is one of suspicion and of keeping the working class tame and tamed?

Fourth, the aspirations and mood of the masses of our country are no longer what they were thirty-five years ago nor even a decade ago. They are not very clear-cut nor unanimous. There is any amount of confusion and fertile ground for creating still more confusion and even dangerous confusion. But there is plenty of sound sense as well — anti-imperialism, secularism, desire for a strong India and democratic freedom have far wider appeal than is sometimes realised. What, however, seems to be dominant or clearly on the way to dominance is the desire for change and change in the direction of greater and more equal prosperity. A new, better and more just life is not only wanted, but the feeling grows that it can be had. How? By what programme? What are the means by which it can be won most easily? On these there are many doubts and at least as many differences. It is the paramount duty of the Left, while safeguarding all the gains of the past and combating reaction all along the line, to articulate and organise this just and healthy pressure for change. It will be betrayal and suicide if the Left does not base itself on this pressure. Either defence of the status quo or joining hands with reaction in the name of fighting the status quo would mean that the Left has chosen to historically abdicate.

THERE should be no misunderstanding about the fact that the role of the Left is sought to be confined to opposing Indira Gandhi's Government, her entire range of policies and her vast mass following. The Left, above all, has to be itself and increasingly come before the people of our country as a force with an identity of its own and with solutions for their problems. And these problems, apart from very important ones pertaining to the livelihood and welfare of the masses, certainly include those of defence of the nation, strengthening its unity, increasing its progressive role in world affairs and moving it on to an anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly and anti-landlord orientation.

For the Left to be supported as such by ever-increasing sections of our working people, mere stridency and false militancy have to be strenuously combated. For the Left to be Left, it has to more and more emerge as a national force, as the spear-head of a national alternative. In the specific conditions of today it has, above all, to contend for the position of the hegemon of the nation.

This would require the strengthening of its unity and expansion of its systematic painstaking work right where the masses live and labour. It would require a qualitative increase and improvement of its ideological work and political propaganda. It would require a style of work and production of cadres and leaders who are taken by the masses as representing their own best traditions and desires. The importance of being and appearing as a force of the clean can hardly be overestimated.

At the same time, for the Left to advance and to shift the country to the Left, the programme it advances and the system of alliances it has to build have to be essentially anti-imperialist, anti-landlord and anti-monopoly, or democratic in essence. And this would surely include support of such policies, measures and pronouncements of the ruling Congress-I as are compatible with or even a part of the alternative national programme.

This is clear enough as far as the foreign policy of the Government is concerned. It is also clear when it comes to issues of national security, national unity and secularism. Extension of the public sector, making it more effective as the occupant of the commanding heights so as to push forward to greater self-reliance and push back the MNCs and the local big business would be most ardently supported in every way by the Left. This would also apply to any other policies, measures or pronouncements directed against reaction. Indeed, the demand for such an anti-reaction orientation would be mounted by the Left not just to "expose" the Government but precisely in order to secure its adoption.

The Left would welcome and readily respond to any efforts made by the Congress-I or any sections of it to move the Government in the desired direction.

Leave alone issues like the above-mentioned ones, even on other issues on which there would clearly have to be conflict and confrontation between the Left and the Government, the former's consistent endeavour would be to draw into such struggles as much of the vast mass following of the Congress-I as possible. The Student of Political Economy is quite right in pointing to the immense popular mass following of Indira Gandhi among the poor and down trodden working people though, as he would admit, this is a fluctuating following to an extent and it has its inherent limitations when it comes to moving into action, being still somewhat akin to the "dumb millions" of Gandhiji's visualisation, waiting for their tears to be wiped rather than with blazing eyes. It is true that, apart from the much smallar mass following of some secular Opposition parties, these masses are, by and large, followers of and, indeed, part of the progressive heritage of the Congress and closer in their consciousness to the masses following the Left parties. It is also true that in approaching them appropriate account would have to be taken of their loyalties. But there should be no misunderstanding if the Left seeks to win over these masses to its understanding of problems! But the stress from the Left would certainly be on moving together, as we are, into joint activities of differing kinds and winning together our common objectives. Experience of such joint activity would convey its own lessons and bring about consequential realignments.

As part of this endeavour one would like to conclude with a proposal. The Student of Political Economy and C.H. Hanumantha Rao could help the Left as well as what they call the "ruling group" led by the Prime Minister if they worked out, by themselves or in cooperation with others, the concrete details of the programme of national economic advance as an alternative to the "South Korea-Brazil model". The evolution of such a programme would itself be a form of action and a test for all concerned and could be a prelude to still more worthwhile joint endeavours. ☐

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Development, Technology and Education

BIMAN SEN

"DEVELOPMENT" is a very complex concept having a wide range of meanings, from unfolding of knowledge to a stage of advancement. It has different meanings for different groups of individuals. For a cosmologist, it means gradual unfolding of knowledge of the Universe. For an evolutionist it means evolution of life in this world. A psychologist may mean it as the process of mental development of an individual. A demographer interprets it as a movement of population from rural to urban areas. A political scientist may identify it with changes in political institutions. For a social scientist, development is primarily related to transformation of social institutions. An economist tends to equate development with modernisation and economic growth. Whichever way one may interpret development, its prime objective remains the same, namely, continuous improvement of the quality of human life and knowledge.

Viewed in the context of a country, development is an instrument of continuous changes in the socio-economic environment which is ultimately responsible for cultural transformation of a group of people constituting a 'nation'. It cannot be viewed in isolation but is an integrated system which follows a definite pattern and has dynamics of its own, guided by certain principles and rules.

Historical evidences show that economic growth forms the nucleus of all development. Social changes and cultural transformation are largely byproducts of economic development. However, the socio-cultural milieu prevailing at a given time acts as an impediment to rapid economic growth and this, in turn, delays the natural process of progress in a country. If the resistance is formidable, ultimately the society may have to face a forced change, popularly known as "Revolution".

If one analyses the development of man from mere animal existence to the modern complex society, it will be clear that economic growth has been the major factor. Major tools responsible for the change, put in proper sequence, are energy, agriculture, metallurgy, machine tools and so on, till one comes to modern sophisticated tools like electronics, nuclear devices, etc.

The outstanding achievement of the first man was discovery of fire, which differentiated man from other animals. In fact, one may say human civilisation began with fire — the first man-made form of energy. Since the discovery of fire, the evolution of various methods of producing energy may be considered the story of evolution of human society from animal existence to modern systems. Today, the index of economic progress and development of a country is determined by the index of energy consumption. According to the energy index available some time back, yearly per capita consumption is of the order of 2700 KWH in India against about 114,000 KWH in the USA, and the world average is about 20,000 kilowatt hours. That is perhaps why India is one of the poorest countries in the world.

In spite of the discovery of fire, man essentially remained an animal, with hunting for food as the prime occupation, till he discovered agriculture to produce food without difficulty. With the discovery of agriculture, man discarded his nomadic existence and settled down in a fixed habitat creating his own environment. This change was actually a quantum jump and not one of evolutionary, continuous change.

With the advent of agriculture including animal husbandry, the economy of human society underwent a drastic change from collection of food for survival to production of food according to need. Quality of life improved. The new situation released a surplus labour force which was utilised for other economic and social activities, like development of arts and crafts, construction, development of metallurgical industries, and so on.

The next drastic change in human society through a quantum jump was brought about by the Industrial Revolution which laid the foundation of the technological civilisation.

In the beginning of civilisation, the main energy source was wood — and it still remains the main source of energy for most developing countries. Gradually man's search for new sources of energy brought fossil fuels. Coal became the first fossil fuel to be used as a source of energy, and it soon became the instrument of industrial revolution. With the discovery of oil, it became a strong competitor to coal because of its low production cost and convenience of transportation. Gradually, with the march of time, other sources of energy like hydel power and nuclear power started establishing their position in the usable energy source spectrum —and this stimulated the growth of Science and Technology, the tools of economic growth and social progress.

Whether it is fossil fuel or nuclear fuel, since the sources are non-renewable and non-recycleable, they are not inexhaustible. Therefore, ultimately, if development has to be sustained, man will have to adopt renewable and recycleable energy sources like solar power, wind-power, hydro-power, biomass, etc. However, all energy sources are derived from solar energy stored in one form or another.

In the ultimate analysis, one may foresee that the choice from the 21st Century onward will have to be, by force of circumstances, renewable and recycleable energy sources. Of course, the choice will finally depend on the type of society mankind

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will adopt. Perhaps biomass energy source, over which man will have supreme control, may become the major source. However, during the transition period each country will have to adopt a proper mixture of non-renewable and recycleable energy sources according to its capability and the purpose for which they are needed. Ultimately, once again agriculture and forest products will be the main resources for man's survival. They will cater for all the needs of mankind — food, energy, etc.

'DEVELOPMENT' is closely linked with material prosperity through economic development which, in turn, brings about social change and cultural transformation. Major factors responsible for rapid development in a country are: (1) Capacity to mobilise capital. (2) Capability of harnessing natural resources. (3) Capacity to exploit science and technology to the best advantage. (4) Capability to develop human resources. Of these, the most important is development of human resources, as man is ultimately the nucleus of development. One single factor which has contributed to man's outstanding progress is his urge for good living. Man's aspiration for better and better conditions of living is the prime motive force behind all development.

In the past, the concept of accumulating wealth for good living was by exploiting others; and such wealth was enjoyed by only a few. The Industrial Revolution introduced a new element in the concept of production and distribution. It showed how man's own efforts can generate wealth without exploiting anyone and can be shared by all. In fact, the Industrial Revolution was the beginning of an altogether new era, the beginning of technological civilisation.

The Industrial Revolution, however, brought with it other problems. The nations which were the main beneficiaries of the revolution started exploiting world resources indiscriminately for their own benefit. Never before had anyone thought that development was an integrated system affecting the entire humanity and its environment. It was only after World War II that there has been a mass awakening regarding environmental protection to save the world from man-made pollution and ecological imbalances which are gradually taking it towards total destruction.

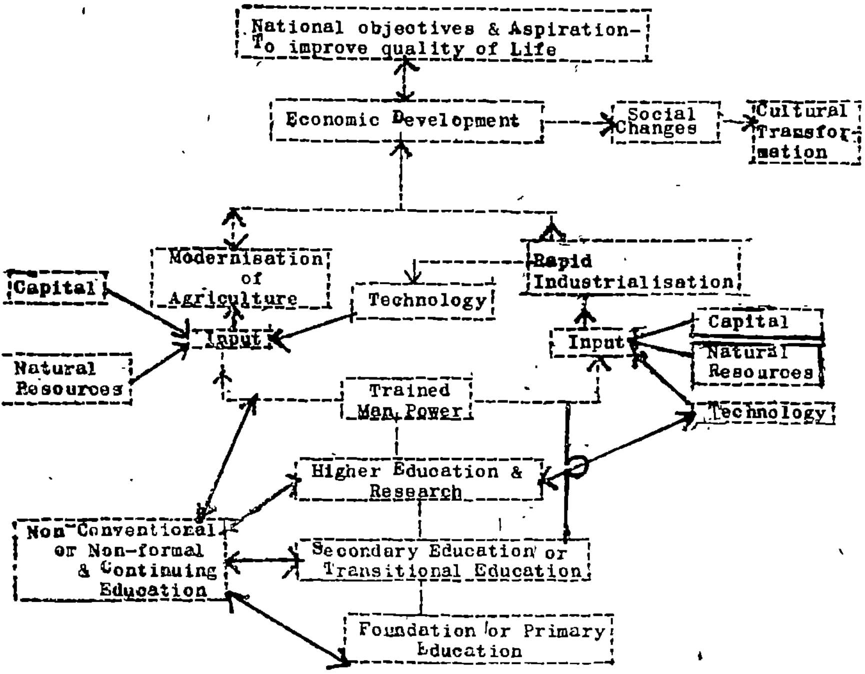
After the energy crisis created by the petroleum producing countries, there has been general realisation that development without conservation is suicidal for mankind and that the world resources need to be considered as common property for total development of mankind as a whole and conserved for effective utilisation without wastage.

Development of any particular aspect of human activity cannot be considered in isolation. Each sector is related to the others. One of the main reasons for the failure of Indian development strategies so far is perhaps the lack of understanding of the interdependence of various sectors and of the fact that development follows a sequential pattern with relative/predetermined priorities particularly at the initial stage.

For a clearer understanding of how complex and integrated the development system is, a schematic diagram of a development system in relation to national objectives and aims is given here:

It may be observed from the diagram that for economic development, there is need for rapid industrialisation along with development and modernisation of agriculture. They are like Siamese twins; one cannot be sustained without the other. For healthy growth of both, well-developed infrastructure by way of energy, education, transport, roads, etc, is needed.

Economic development can be quantified in terms of growth of agricultural production and industrial outputs. The aim of such development is to optimise agricultural production through increased productivity by application of science and technology and industrial output through expanding activities by diversification, improving techniques with proper application of latest technology and exploiting natural resources to the best advantage. For balanced economic development, there is need for modernisation of agriculture and rapid industrialisation simultaneously with building the infrastructure. Development of social services except education comes next in priority. However, education, particularly higher education and research, should be given the highest priority from the very beginning, as it is responsible for supply


National objectives & Aspiration-To improve quality of Life
Economic Development
Social Changes
Cultural Transformation
Modernisation of Agriculture
Rapid Industrialisation
Capital
Technology
Input
Natural Resources
Input
Capital
Natural Resources
Trained Man Power
Technology
Higher Education & Research
Non-Conventional or Non-formal & Continuing Education
Secondary Education or Transitional Education
Foundation or Primary Education

of trained manpower which is the most vital input for any socio-economic development.

Historical evidence shows that there is a natural gestation period for the take-off stage of the economy for self-sustaining growth. The gestation period varies according to the socio-cultural milieu and political will of a country. Most of the industrialised countries reached the take-off stage before the end of the 19th Century through evolutionary process. Japan took the least time, about 12 years, and the longest was France, about 30 years. However, India, even after 30 years, has not reached the take-off stage because of its planning strategies which failed to observe the rules and sequences of planning due to conflict between tradition and modernity, forgetting that we are not in the Middle Ages but in an age of space and nuclear technology. The weakness is reflected in all planning documents. Planned economic growth needs judicious use of resources in correct sequence, together with an efficient implementation machinery and monitoring system. The strategy of development needs to be formulated keeping in view the compulsions and constraints a country has to face and not on emotional or traditional heritage.

FOR formulating strategies for future development in India, one has to examine first the major constraints and compulsions faced by the country. There are two major constraints, which should determine the development strategy for this country; one is the large population with high growth rate and hardly any hope of controlling this to zero growth-rate within any reasonable time (it may take 50/100 years), and the other is the limited extent of land to sustain this huge population which may reach about 1000 million by 2000 AD and with moderate growth (reduced) about 1,500 million by the middle of the 21st Century with a possible drop in rate of growth.

The total area of land in India is about 328 million hectares, of which about 29 million hectares are barren and unusable, leaving only 299 million hectares to sustain about one billion people at the beginning of the 21st Century. The USA's total land under forest is 299 million hectares, which is about 30 per cent of the total land with a population of only 232 million. Due to scientific management, production and growth of forest wealth is much higher than harvesting of forest in the USA. In India, of 299 million hectares, only 65 million hectares are under forest, less than 20 per cent of total land area. Net area under cultivation is about 140 million hectares; about 13 million hectares are permanent pastures and grazing land (total 153 million hectares for agricultural use). India can hardly afford to spare so much land for agriculture and pastures. For ecological balance alone, India needs about 110 million hectares under forest against 65 million hectares today. One of the reasons for drought and flash-floods in recent years is indiscriminate cutting of forests for cultivation. One should not forget that India has long coastal and mountain areas and fourteen major rivers which need large forest areas for protection from soil erosion.

Taking a futuristic view, in order to meet part of its energy needs and use of forest products for other purposes, India should have, by the turn of the century, at least about 60 per cent of land under forest, thus leaving hardly 105 million hectares for agriculture, pastures, living accommodation, infrastructures, industrial needs, etc. Therefore, India, by compulsion, cannot afford to maintain the luxury of the present system of villages or traditional methods of agriculture or labour-intensive industry. India's development strategy should be reoriented to highly capitalised agriculture including massive development of animal husbandry and marine products, large-scale urbanisation with three-dimensional expansion to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. There is still time to correct the planning strategy and make it more scientific and pragmatic. This can be achieved by rapid industrialisation, by adopting highly sophisticated up-to-date scientific and technological methods involving economy in energy consumption, extremely high productivity through scientific management with special emphasis on large-scale development of metallurgical industry, heavy chemicals, machine tools, etc., and improving rapidly the infrastructure and energy production.

The direction of industrial development in India will also depend on another compulsion forced on it, due to geopolitical situation in the region in particular and the global situation in general. India, being part of the total global system, cannot ignore recent developments in the region and in the world. The present situation demands that India should develop highly sophisticated industry needed for self-reliance and develop nuclear or space capability, apart from meeting defence requirements.

According to UNIDO, today the entire developing world including India shares only 9 per cent of the total industrial production of the world. The UNIDO has fixed a minimum target of 25 per cent of world industrial output by the developing countries by 2000 A.D. This will need tremendous efforts on the part of both developed and developing countries working together for a just solution.

Because of large-scale air and water pollution problems and depletion of natural resources, a new dimension has been added to the development strategy; that is conservation. The 21st Century will be the age of development with conservation which will need a highly scientific approach to development, with a very efficient technological base.

Nature has endowed every animal except perhaps man with some physical qualities to protect itself from others and to survive against normal environmental hazards. Many species of animals have become extinct through ecological disturbances. But man has been gifted with a scientific mind, a keen sense of observation, power of analysis and logic and application of knowledge and experience to his best advantage to survive in this hazardous world. This quality distinguishes man from other living creatures and enables him to conquer nature.

The unique gift which gave birth to Science made man the master of nature and environment. Technology is the application of science for practical use in the service of man. Till the Industrial Revolution, technological developments were based on the use of hand tools. Productivity was low and dependent on the efficiency of an individual. Production was limited, so distribution was restricted. Although the Industrial Revolution laid the foundation of a new era of science and technology, the hangover of the past was so strong that only a few benefited from it. Soon after World War I, the pace of development became faster with the introduction of the new technology of mass production. In spite of some rapid changes in technology, however, changes in the socio-economic structure of most countries were marginal and the pace of global development was not perceptible. This situation continued almost up to World War II.

The Second World War changed the picture completely. With the explosion of the atom bomb, the old values changed. Even small countries started asserting themselves. Technological development has created such conditions today that only two alternatives are possible, either total destruction of mankind, or human society should live in prosperity and peace as one entity based on the common heritage of man.

Rapid scientific advancement and technological development have created many problems. It has changed the structure of employment which is worrying many as it may bring about large-scale displacement of labour. This seems to be an imaginary fear in the minds of those who are thinking on the basis of old concepts of employment, forgetting that the new situation needs a new solution and approach to the concept of employment itself. Employment can no more be related to 'man-day' or 'man-year' of work but should be related to 'man-production' per day. That is, with the increase in productivity due to introduction of new technology, the working hour per worker needs to be reduced keeping the man-production rate the same, to be determined according to technology used. This is at present being followed in the aviation industry, where with the introduction of faster and faster planes, the total flying hours of a pilot have been gradually reduced, though flying mileage per month has been increased. Sophisticated technology will not only create conditions for generating more employment but will increase production and relieve man from the stress and strain of work. It will also create conditions where man will be able to get more leisure. This, in turn, will contribute to more creative work for improving the quality of life. One can visualise that the 21st Century will be the beginning of a new age of creativity.

THE main malady of Indian planning is its failure to appreciate that the old order changeth, yielding place to the new. Thus, India has been trying so far to marry tradition with modernity. Thereby, it has accepted modern institutions but has failed in working such institutions.

The major obsessions born out of traditional thinking in India are: (1) Since India is basically an agricultural country and the majority of its people live in villages, the country's salvation lies in the development of the rural economy. This has created an artificial barrier between rural and urban development. (2) The bogey of unemployment: a general view seems to be that automation and modernisation will produce surplus labour force. Therefore, labour-intensive development projects should be encouraged, forgetting that in the modern world, *the fourth dimension, time, is most important.*

These obsessions born out of no logical foundation are responsible for the present general condition of the country. If the planners and politicians would have analysed world experiences and taken bold steps in time, India's economic situation would have been different, and by now, India would have been one of the richest countries.

It is time for India to discard labour-intensive methods, which are uneconomical and time-consuming — in the case of both agricultural and industrial development. We should adopt the latest technology in both areas. Up-to-date technology does not throw out labour but creates more and more jobs of a sophisticated nature. It not only saves time but ultimately saves money, thus creating conditions for better investment return and quicker attainment of objectives. Ultimately major employment will be created in the services sectors including education, health, infrastructural services, etc., which need surplus wealth that can be created only through modernisation of agriculture and rapid industrialisation. Large-scale employment should be created in afforestation programmes which are urgently needed for saving the country from desertification and preventive maintenance which can save millions of rupees for better investment.

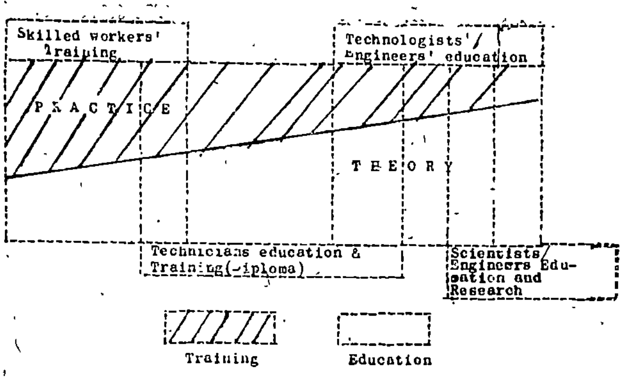
In the present circumstances, the highest priority should be given to heavy industries like steel, cement, other metallurgical industries, fertiliser, heavy chemicals, etc., and building proper infrastructures. Taking into consideration the regional geo-political situation, India's present economic situation and the future society which is taking shape, India should now prepare the base for entering into a highly sophisticated age of technology in the 21st Century. High priority has to be given to developing and manufacturing sophisticated scientific goods. It is high time for the country to prepare itself to develop its own solar technology, space and nuclear technology, agricultural technology, etc.

India's greatest asset today is its sophisticated manpower, that is, highly capable engineering and scientific manpower. It is the third country in the world in producing such manpower; what it needs is to gear up the development system to utilise them and update its educational system to meet future challenges.

ALL human activities or actions are inter-related in the highly sophisticated age of science and technology. Education is responsible for development of human resources which are the most vital and essential input for all development activities in a country. Modern education system is a sophisticated learning process developed over centuries for acquiring knowledge through a scientific system based on documented information and sequential method of transfer of skills and learning. However, modern education is only one of the processes of learning.

Prior to the invention of language, the learning process was based on observation of natural phenomena and behavioural patterns of other organisms and the experience gained through continuous practice. Even in this age of science and technology the process of learning through observation is still in vogue. The invention of aeroplanes, submarines, etc., is the best example. With the advent of language, gradually man learnt to transfer his personal experience to the next generation — a process involving rigorous training and practice. With the invention of writing and keeping records, man entered the realm of a highly sophisticated communication system. Man's success in the field of science and technology is due to this ability to develop a scientific communication system in the form of records of all experiences and experiments responsible for continuous expansion of his horizon of knowledge.

The Industrial Revolution introduced a new element in the concept of production and distribution, as already mentioned. The old process of learning skills through observation and practice became too time-consuming to keep pace with technological development. The learning process needed fundamental change. To understand machines and their working, knowledge of science and mathematics was essential. Thus, the concept of modern technical education system was born. The new learning process was institutionalised towards the end of the 18th Century through the introduction of a regular education component in the training system. Since then, with industrial development, the concept of technical education underwent continuous changes. However, the basic structures remained more or less the same. Practical training at the institution level remained the backbone of the learning process till the end of the first World War (1914-1918). Gradually, after that war, the emphasis shifted more and more from the training of the educational component in the total learning process. Major changes in the concept of technical education came after World War II (1939-1945) which reduced the time-lag between scientific invention and technological development. One may represent the total learning process in the field of technical education as in the following diagram.


Skilled workers' Training
Technologists'/ Engineers' education
PRACTICE
THEORY
Technicians education & Training(Diploma)
Scientists/ Engineers Education and Research
Training
Education

Production of scientific and technical manpower which is the key to economic and industrial development in a country; needs a long lead time. It takes about 10 to 15 years to develop highly-sophisticated skilled manpower like engineers, research scientists, managers, etc. The type and quality of such manpower depends on the basic education and training given in the technical and scientific institutions. Therefore, for scientific planning of technical and science education, there is a need for futuristic studies of requirements of technical personnel in terms of number, types and quality which, in turn, needs proper perception of the probable industrial and socio-economic environment of the country in the future. Past experience and the present situation may give clues to failures and shortcomings but can hardly give any solution to the problems and challenges of the future.

In planning any educational system in proper perspective, one should not forget that science and technology are universal and not a monopoly of a set of countries. What differentiates developed from developing countries is the capacity to apply science and technology for improvement of the quality of life. What a developing country lacks is ability to develop and utilise its human resource to the best advantage due to ineffective and inefficient education system which tends to develop in isolation. Since science and technology are universal, the types and quality of manpower required for their development and application to economic and industrial growth cannot be basically different. In addition, one should not forget that the world is moving toward unification of human society and that development of International understanding toleration should be the basic objectives of education in future. Therefore, logically, the basic structure and content of technical and scientific education cannot differ very much from country to country. Unless this is clearly understood by the developing countries, the gap between the developed and developing world will never be reduced but may widen.

In this highly sophisticated age of science and technology, it has been almost universally accepted that initial schooling should be at least of twelve years, before any student is permitted to enroll at the tertiary level of education (university level). Greater emphasis should be given to development of communication system at all stages of education. Science and mathematics should be compulsory for all school-going students.

The twelve years of schooling must be divided into basic foundation education, popularly known as primary education, and transitional education, known as secondary education, depending on the needs of a particular country because of its specific environmental situation. Transitional education should be at least for two years and diversified as it has a dual function, as a passport to the tertiary level and for entry into the world of work.

In planning a proper system of education, there should be a built-in mechanism which can provide life-long education to an individual to upgrade knowledge and skills through provision of either part-time or collaborative system of education.

Higher education to serve its purpose should be planned on the basis of overall policy for long-term development of the country. The contents and needs of higher education should determine the quality, type and standard of secondary or transitional education at school level which, in turn, determines the contents and types of foundation education the country should have. However, the essential objective of education — development of total personality in an individual — should not be missed at any level. This throws a very difficult challenge to the education planner as he/she has to satisfy twin national needs — on one side to satisfy the fundamental right of access to education of every individual, and on the other, to satisfy the national need of trained manpower for economic and industrial development. To satisfy the first need, the educational system should be flexible and environment-based, but to meet the second need, a well-balanced formal system of institutionalised education comparable to developed-world standards is to be designed. Therefore, at the foundation stage, there should be two parallel streams — a formal institutionalised stream to meet the needs of trained manpower for industrial and national economic development, and a non conventional system to meet the universal demand of education to improve quality of life through wider access to modern knowledge and information. However, there should be provision for multi-stage entry from one system to the other in order to tap the best talents of the country.

THE technical education system developed in India after Independence was based on the then prevailing needs of industry which was basically dependent on foreign know-how, manufacturing machinery under licence, fabrication and maintenance activities. These were of a routine nature. There was hardly any R & D activity in industry. Therefore, no serious trouble was faced by the technical education system. It served its purpose to the satisfaction of the authority promoting or using such education. However, whenever any new situation arose, special training programmes had to be arranged for training technical personnel either here or abroad Such arrangements are time-consuming and costly. That is one of the main reasons why, after 30 years of planning, the country still has to depend on foreign collaboration for manufacturing sophisticated equipment. In some cases, the country has to depend on collaboration arrangements even for maintenance or servicing, although India has a well-organised infrastructure for promotion of scientific and technical education.

Technical education should be tuned to the changing requirements of the industries and to meet the challenges of the future. For planning technical education on a scientific basis, the planners should have a clear perception of future needs on the basis of national commitments both internally and externally and studies of existing trends of deveolpment in a continuously changing industrial and economic environment. Transitional phase of development of technical education would take care of existing technological needs.

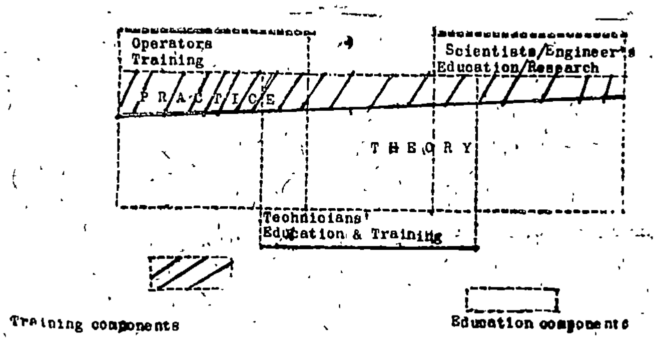
India has already opted for high technology oriented development. It has no option but to do so for mere survival in the fast-changing global geo-political situation. The country has entered in a big way highly sophisticated technological areas like aerospace technology, computer technology, satellite technology, etc. It is also committed to strike a balance between conservation and development and to solve the problem created by the energy crisis. In addition, India will have to enter into new fields like genetic engineering, human engineering, social engineering, etc. These will need large-scale expansion of R&D activities and post-graduate education. Technical education planners are now faced with a peculiar dichotomy, as these sophisticated technologies demand on the one hand highly competent narrow specialists, and on the other scientists and technologists with inter disciplinary knowledge and competence.

These sophisticated technologies need people with knowledge of miniaturisation, computerisation of information/its application and retrieval, new materials, economisation of energy consumption, ecology, environment, etc. Unless the future engineers, technicians, scientists acquire basic knowledge of all such matters, it would be impossible for them to function effectively. Electronics and communication, the core discipline in the future, will form the bedrock on which all technologies are likely to be developed. In addition, the social roles of engineers and scientist are fast changing. They are gradually assuming leadership of the community.

From the trends of technological and scientific development, one can visualise that in future, manual skills will be taken over by machines except in the field of maintenance. It may also be visualised that in future, replacement of machines may be cheaper than maintenance. Moreover, machines will go obsolete in no time. Since the thin line dividing scientists and technologists is vanishing fast, in future (21st Century) one may visualise the technical manpower spectrum and their training components as follows:

The skilled worker may be replaced by operators with a high degree of scientific and mathematical knowledge who can be trained in the industry only with good higher secondary education (10+2 system).

Taking everything into consideration, it is felt that there is urgent need for reorientation of existing technical education to meet future needs. This can only be achieved through a new revolutionary approach to the planning of technical education. This will need complete overhauling of the curricula and evaluation system and methodology. The syllabi of all technical courses should contain study of basic electronics, knowledge of alternative energy sources, computer programming, material sciences, pollution, ecology, etc. Consequently teaching of physics, chemistry, mathematics will have to be strengthened. Since curriculum time is not elastic, it would be necessary to drop unnecessary frills in the present syllabi to make room for essential


Operators Training
Scientists/Engineers Education/Research
PRACTICE
THEORY
Technicians Education & Training
Training components
Education components

inputs. Use of library should be an essential part of the learning process. In short, there is need for intensive investigation and research in the field of technical and vocational education.

As far as possible the first degree course should be broad based, with a small peak of specialisation at the terminal stage. Actual specialisation should be attempted at the master's level. There should be large-scale expansion at the research level. At research and post-graduate levels, there is need for mixing science students and engineers. At the technician level, narrow specialisation should be avoided. Such specialisation should be introduced at the post-diploma level as part of continuing education after an individual has spent about three years in employment.

Changes suggested in the curricula of the technical courses will demand consequential changes in the secondary education system, particularly teaching of languages, sciences and mathematics. It is felt that till the deficiencies and weakness of the secondary education system are removed, the duration of degree courses in engineering and technology should remain 5 years and should not be changed to four years. Recent investigation shows that higher secondary school performance is a bad indicator of likely performance at the higher technical education stage. Modern physics taught at the first year of the five-year integrated engineering degree course is a better indicator.

There is need for continuous evaluation and updating of the technical education system. With all the facilities so far created in the field of technical education, India has not been able to produce the proper type and quality of scientific manpower to become self-reliant. However, when students after finishing their education in the country go abroad, they are able to compete with anyone from outside, after proper reorientation training either at post-graduate or research degree stage. Hardly any serious research has been undertaken to find out the shortcomings of our technical education system although many opinions have been expressed by various expert committees. In recent years, some individual efforts have been made to initiate researches in technical education by a few progressive institutes. Such researches, are however, normally restricted to services research, that too mainly 'action-research' to improve class-room teaching or evaluation system. No research has so far been undertaken on the gap in the existing system of technical education and the changing needs of the country. This is one of the reasons for our weakness in R & D activities.

It is felt that at least 1 to 2 per cent of the total provision for development of technical education should be spent on relevant research. The major role has to be played by the higher technical institutions, specially IITs and Technical Teachers' Training Institutes.

Since hardly any attention is given to research in technical education, the institutions specially higher technical institutions are drifting away from their objectives. Some of the IITs and other institutions, instead of concentrating their energy on developing high technology and manpower for research and development, are diverting their energy and funds to so-called development of rural technology forgetting that science and technology do not differentiate between rural and urban development. It is more a question of adoptation of technology in various environmental situations. In fact, the need for technology in rural areas could be better met by a polytechnic than by an IIT which should devote its time to developing higher technology.

The higher institutions of learning in the field of science and technology, instead of frittering away their energy and funds on fancy activities like rural development or routine research which could be taken care of by other institutions, should concentrate on the objectives for which they have been established. These institutions should provide leadership in the field of technical education and research of a fundamental nature and assist the country in improving the standard and quality of technical education in particular and education in general. Institutions of higher education should play an effective role in the following major areas:

(1) To provide an effective and efficient model of under-graduate programme for technical education through continuous evaluation and assessment to meet the challenges of the 21st Century keeping in view global technological and scientific changes, and to make the technical education system a dynamic one with built-in mechanism for quick change.

(2) To provide adequate facilities for R & D activities keeping in view the country's technological needs in the 21st Century.

(1) and (2) will need the formulation of a new concept of technical education, curricula, approach and methodology of teaching and evaluation, etc., and research programmes with long-term objectives like alternative energy source, economisation of energy, space technology, material technology, genetic and human engineering, etc.

(3) To provide adequate facilities to develop teaching personnel for other institutions with a view to improving the standard and quality of degree education.

(4) To develop appropriate educational materials and aids for technical and science education not only for engineering colleges and technical institutions but also for secondary schools.

(5) To develop literature and aids for popularisation of science and technology so as to develop scientific temper in the country for effective utilisation of science and technology by the people.

Future leadership in all spheres of life will rest with the technical and scientific manpower, if the world is to survive. Thus technical institutions have a great responsibility in shaping the world of tomorrow. ▣

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Central Board of Direct Taxes,
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Central Secretariat,
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Directorate of Inspection
(Research, Statistics & Public Relations)
Income Tax Department, New Delhi-110001

davp 81/380

E.E.C. Search for Unity

RAMNATH NARAYANSWAMY

IN a ceremony at Brussels recently, the partnership of the ten West European countries that make up the Common Market commemorated the twentyfifth anniversary of the European Economic Community. The EEC has reason enough to outline some of the accomplishments that justify its existence. But the present recession that looms over the Continent has not only brought about greater emphasis on collective unity but has begun to cause regrets about some events in the organisation's past and increasing worries about its future.

This is evident from a cursory glance at the reality that has replaced the lofty dream of social and political cooperation envisaged during the signing of the Treaty of Rome 25 years ago. The Community is now involved in bafflingly obscure and endless disputes over butter, chicken, sheep or wine. As Gaston Thorn, president of the EEC's Permanent Commission observed: “The Community is lurching from wine wars to turkey fights to budget disputes. It is involved in esoteric squabbles about money. Its identity is slipping away. There is lack of direction, a sense of powerlessness.”

has to be an immediate start on laying the founda-

A closer look at the problems facing the Community confirms this impression. Britain is questioning its returns for its contribution to the communal budget and has been threatening to block the agricultural programme if its demands are not met. Greece, the latest to join the EEC, is demanding a renegotiation of its entry agreement. Greenland, a Danish territory with autonomy status, wants to pull out. France, ignoring the Community's byelaws, continues to block the importation of Italian wine. Likewise, French brewers have been complaining of West German import regulations on the quality of beer, making it impossible for the former to export to the latter. Even within the Community, local opinion seems to be increasingly in favour of pulling out. In a referendum conducted in Norway in 1972, 53 per cent were in favour of rejecting membership and there are reasons to believe that the figure will be much higher today. The situation is not very different in Britain where contribution to the Community's budget has become an issue of central importance. In other words, it is no longer the grander notion of a Community that today matters but who pays what and who gets what.

If the present tendency continues, the economic and social situation within EEC countries will continue to deteriorate, and if the proceedings of the recent EEC summit that coincided with its twenty-fifth anniversary are any pointer, the prospects seem none too encouraging. The resulting priority accorded to new investments at the summit as a means to deflate the rise in unemployment was therefore hardly surprising. According to official estimates, unemployment among the ten will rise for the ninth consecutive year in 1982. (from the present 10.7 million to 11 million by mid-1982.)

Also, the conflict between France and Britain over future British payments to the EEC budget continues. The conflict centres not only on future British payments but also on the terms of the compromise proposal drafted by Gaston Thorn and Leo Tindemans, the Belgian Foreign Minister, which aims to reduce British payments up to five yars. The main opposition to the proposal came from the French who have made it clear that the compromise plan cannot be accepted as a basis for discussion and stressed the need to adopt a firmer and more stringent policy in applying industrial and trade policies in respect to Japan and the USA.

The Falklands Islands crisis which has come as a surprise to most EEC members is also bound to contribute to the uncertainty among members on matters of policy. According to its own figures, the ten EEC countries had a trade surplus of about 250 million pounds with Argentina last year, and although there has as yet been no report of an impending trade boycott, British initiative in the matter will doubtless prevail. The West Germans have begun to review the delivery of six German submarines for the Argentinian navy, following the escalation of the Falklands crisis. Internally, although Greece has clarified that it is not withdrawing from the EEC, it has by no means withdrawn its objections. It has submitted a memorandum to the EEC which demands that Greek industry be exempted from EEC rules governing anti-trust and competition behaviour within and outside the Common Market and the memorandum contemplates steps such as the “granting of development incentives, provisional and regulated protection of newly-created industries and granting of export aid for small and medium-sized undertakings”. If negotiations on these fail, the Greek Government has not excluded the possibility of reviving the threat to call for a referendum aimed at withdrawing from the Community.

Externally, the EEC has been compelled to strain its relations with Turkey as a result of revelations of human rights abuses in Turkey, and the resulting friction has come to threaten the EEC-Turkey association agreement. The dispute followed European complaints of the dumping of Turkish cotton yarn in the Common Market to which the latter responded by imposing a 12 per cent duty on cotton imports while the Turkish Government is contemplating import penalties on several EEC steel products worth about 150 million pounds a year.

Closely related to the budget dispute, is the continuing controversy on 1982 farm prices of which Britain and France seem to be the major protagonists. The initial proposal to raise the payments to the Community's eight million farmers by 10.5 per cent under the system of guaranteed farm prices this year has met with considerable opposition from the British who have been demanding rebates on their large payments to the Community's budget and ascribe the high spending on agricultural subsidies to the disproportionate size of its payments to the Community. A similar sentiment was echoed by West Germany. The French, on the other hand, have been calling for a more hefty increase to compensate the losses incurred by farmers last year, and have been joined by Italy, Ireland and Greece.

The EEC today is not what it was meant to be. Gone is the federal notion of a United States of Europe embodied in the Treaty of Rome. The idea is not even mentioned any more. Despite some of its economic successes, the experiment has proved to be a political failure, and the latter threatens the peace of the former.

'Two Better Than One'

ANJALI DESHPANDE

'Two is better than one' says an Amul advertisement and for naive people like us who might take it to mean two packs of butter, the meaning of the words is made clear by a painted hoarding in which our celluloid Mughal-e-Azam is shown smacking his lips in a truly gluttonous manner while the coy second bride offers him an insignificant lump of butter with all the satiated expression of offering herself on a platter and the first wife beams in delight at the two without letting go of the masculine arm she leans upon.

Two wives are better than one. And why not? Since many a matinee idol is taking another wife, sometimes clandestinely, sometimes not so discreetly, it is so. If they weren't so sure they wouldn't be squandering all that cash earned by sweating under glaring lights on maintaining two households, although income-tax sleuths know they have much to spare. After all they shoulder the responsibility of leading the unthinking millions into aping them blindly.

For having had the luck of professing the only true faith, the Muslims of the land are allowed to take two of those twos for a double treat. All this hullabaloo about the hush-hush second wedding of a tragedy king of the screen is definitely in bad taste. It violates the hallowed privacy of an individual of which anyway there is always a dearth. If the tragedy is to his bedroom it is his private business. The breed of progressives, who never can be kept at bay, are flying at his poor throat for having betrayed the cause of monogamy. These progressives don't seem to understand that a cause is a cause and private life is private life, and the twain need not necessarily go hand in hand.

Cooperatives have now come to the rescue by cooperating in publicising the brighter side of the picture. Their advent in the field of social ethos is a welcome sign. Industries with cultural pretensions are the 'in' thing today. They may liberally finance artistic establishments or promote culture through strategically placed ads. All in the cause of the nation. In fact another leading light is the chairman of the Mahila Arthik Vikas Mandal, whose heart has gone out to the bigamous man in question. What better way to go about economic development of women than to get them disillusioned and deserted by men and then get them jobs to do?

Ours is a secular state. What is wholesome for Akbar must be nutritious for Amar. That is just scientific temper, which we are developing, and developing fast. So have Hindus earned the right to get into the nuptial knot a second time, with the blessings of law-abiding *pujaris*. If you can pray to 33 crore gods surely you can have as many women to keep you company. Lord Krishna had them. Swetaketu's golden words apply to all mortals.

The nasty press, always ready to have a dig at everybody who is anybody, wastes precious newsprint in publicising private affairs of this sort. A whimper was heard in Parliament the other day when a Hindu *nakshatra* married a dream girl for the second time. On second thoughts our elders gave clandestine blessings to the clandestine wedding dug out by the press. After all if the former wife is prepared to take it with the salt of her tears, and the second spouse wouldn't care less, why raise hell? Everybody seems so perfectly happy. Second wives have become beaming mothers, husbands are gloated over more and more, a sure sign of the Indian brand of good health. In the villages, where India lives, it must be having a field day. You need not bring in those suicides by spoilsport actresses who couldn't bear being the second woman.

First wives are being deluged with unsought advice by well-meaning friends to hurt their wrong-doing husbands by marrying again and making a hell of their lives in another man's house, for the sake of sweet revenge. The only snag, is they have to get a chit from the court marked 'divorcee'. That isn't very secular, is it? □

Defence in the Eighties (*from p. 6*)

with its neighbours. Moreover, in the South-South context, now that India is emerging as a major actor, 'militarism' would make this country suspect in the eyes of the rest of the Southern fraternity. It is further argued that the resources now being spent on defence could profitably be used elsewhere, in other vital developmental sectors of the country's economy.

There are indeed no conceivable incentives for either Pakistan or China to engage India in a military confrontation. There are severe constraints on their part. It is also a fact that the political dialogues with our adversaries are continuing. Yet, all these do not mean that the basic causes of conflicts between India and China, on the one hand, and India and Pakistan, on the other, are in the process of being removed totally. As everyone knows, these conflicts are deep-rooted; it may take several decades and several generations before a permanent state of amity is achieved, if that is at all possible. In the intervening period, however, there are always chances of mistaken perceptions and misread signals leading to conflicts and wars. Since one way of avoiding actual hostilities is to influence the adversaries' perceptions in regard to this country's strength and determination, defence preparedness must continue to be uninfluenced by ups and downs in political relations.

Therefore, it is not correct for us to follow the examples of Nepal or Sri Lanka or any other country because they are spending much less than India on their defence. If statistics are followed to the logical end, we find that this is because of the simple reason that India is fifty times or more bigger in size than these, as much larger in population, and probably many times bigger in terms of the country's security requirements and also its resources.

As for the Southern fraternity, its share in the global defence spending is 16 per cent (excluding China). This works out to 80 billion dollars, while that of the Northern countries is 375 billion dollars. India, which constitutes one-seventh of humanity, shares a burden of less than one per cent of the total world spending. In other words, India which represents 30 per cent of the Southern population expends 5 billion dollars on defence, which constitutes 6 per cent of the Third World total. The remaining 94 per cent of the Third World defence spending, or over 75 billion dollars, are spent by the rest of the 70 per cent of the Southern world. Therefore, there is no reason why India should feel apologetic about its modest defence outlay.

As for the money spent on defence, one has to take an overall view to know the real nature of defence burden. True, in terms of absolute figures the defence outlay may look awesome. In fact, as the table below shows, the increase in India's defence expenditure represents largely the growth of the Indian state and its economy. In the past decade India's national income increased by 304 per cent and per capita income by 242 per cent. Corresponding increases in defence expenditure was 263 per cent and per capita burden 111 per cent. The table indicates three-fold growth in all major sectors of the economy. Even after providing for inflation, growth in all the sectors remains substantial.

India: Defence Expenditure in Perspective

Item	*1970*	*1980*	*Percentage Increase*
Population (in crores)	54	67	—
National Income (in Rs. crores)*	34,235	104,201	304
Per Capita Income (in Rs.)*	633	1,537	242
Agriculture and Allied (in Rs. crores)*	17,307	41,479	239
Industry, etc, (in Rs. crores)*	6,790	24,421	359
Transport, Communication and Trade (in Rs. crores)*	5,454	21,580	395
Financial and Real Estate (in Rs. crores)*	1,683	5,618	333
Community and Personal Services (in Rs. crores)*	3,285	11,034	338
Central Expenditure on Social and Development Services (Rs. crores)	320	891	278
Central Expenditure on Education (Rs. crores)	87	267	307
Central Expenditure on Medical (Rs. crores)	18	68	382
Central Expenditure on Public Health (Rs. crores)	12	31	254
Defence Expenditure (in Rs. crores)*	1,443	3,800	263
Defence Expenditure as Percentage of GNP	3.4	3.8	—
Per Capita Defence Expenditure (in Rs.)*	27	57	111

*Current prices

Defence spending as percentage of the country's GNP varied from 3.2 to 3.8 during the last decade. Except for 1963-64, when the military expenditure reached a peak, the Indian defence budget had remained below 4 per cent of the GNP. The budgeted expenditure for the current year is Rs 5,100 crores as against the revised estimates of Rs 4,600 crores for 1981-82. The present and future level of defence spending may thus represent a new magnitude of defence spending, which may be in the region of 4 per cent of the GNP. Probably this may remain the trend for the 1980s in view of the rising international tension and the country's need for modernisation and equipment programmes for the forces.

There are 34 countries, as listed by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), which spend 4 per cent or more of their GNP on defence. Twenty-seven of them belong to the developing world.

Another indicator of the defence burden is the per capita expenditure on defence. Out of the 65 countries studied by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in 1981, India ranks the lowest (next only to Indonesia) in terms of per capita defence burden. It is 7 dollars as compared to 98 dollars of Japan, 154 dollars of Switzerland, 455 dollars of Sweden, and 759 dollars of the USA. For Pakistan it is 17 dollars and for China 56 dollars (1980). Even in terms of defence expenditure as percentage of Central Government spending, India at 16.9 per cent in 1981 ranks lowest (next only to North Korea — 14.7 per cent) among the developing countries.

It is not the purpose here to suggest that defence spending is the ideal form of productive use of scarce resources. Nor is it implied that there is no scope for adopting efficient managerial and economy measures. But that is a different story. To argue, as one eminent journalist has done, that though we are spending more than Rs 70 per head on defence, we do not find enough money to nourish malnutritioned children, is to lose perspectives of both defence and development. Maybe more resources could be devoted to population control and care of pregnant women and thus reduce births of congenitally malnutritioned babies. Or maybe some of the hundreds of crores spent in this country on tobacco and alcohol could be diverted to this noble cause.

What is needed therefore is a concept of total planning for defence and development to optimise both. A high-level coordinating council could probably identify the priorities jointly in both defence planning and development planning, which exercises are presently being done independently of each other. (*April 20*)

Offshore Exploration *(Contd. from page 5)*

fleet, surface or sub-surface, which happens to pass by. These recordings of the noise characteristics of each can easily be passed on by an exploration company to an interested power. These will be of immense help to the passive detection systems of an adversary's submarines against our own vessels.

Even if the ONGC be entrusted with the technical monitoring, as distinct from mere management monitoring, many subterfuges are available to an operating company to mix its legitimate seismic information recording function with the covert function of collecting strategic information. Micro-instruments of like appearance and the tenuous difference, superficially, between operations for legitimate data collection and those for finding our vulnerabilities will always help an operator to put a gloss.

Even at this stage the Government should cancel the prospecting right given to Chevron. It would not mean any invidious distinction against this particular company, nor would it be an aspersion on it, if a principled decision is taken that no offshore area would be leased out to any foreign company.

Our security interest demands that we do this, immediately.☐

Ershad's Problems *(Contd. from page 10)*

the present regime. These are small matters and often the result of over-enthusiasm of those who are more loyal than the king. The officer in charge of the police station where the Indian journalists were detained was himself reported to have expressed surprise at the incident when he came to know about it the following day.

India's and Bangladesh have had official-level negotiations in Dacca regarding inland water transit and trade. The Standing Committee of the Bangladesh-India Joint Rivers Commission has met to fix priorities and assign specific issues to five local-level joint committees pertaining to the five border rivers, namely Gumti, Monu, Khowai, Dharia and Dudhkumar. The Committee has also discussed implementation of the Ganga Water Sharing Agreement. There are indications that Bangladesh is giving serious thought to a long-term solutions of these problems. It is significant that Ershad himself holds the portfolios of Foreign Affairs and Water Resources.

India's External Affairs Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, who was scheduled to visit Dacca on April 30 and who was reported to have been reconsidering his plan following the coup, has now been personally invited by Ershad to pay the visit by the end of this month and prepare the ground for a review of the Farakka agreement scheduled for May. The General has announced that he would be Rao's host and would personally lead the Bangladesh delegation at the talks. The outcome of these negotiations would indicate which way the wind will blow. Till then let us keep our fingers crossed.☐ *(April 19)*

Land Reforms *(Contd. from page 18)*

joint farms with landless labourers; Ramaswamy Reddiar and M.G. Ranga, in their minute of dissent, objected to "making the actual cultivation of land a cooperative process through compulsion" and also to "narrowing down the maximum extent of land" in the case of "really brilliant, capable and experienced agriculturists". These champions of "brilliant farmers" did not fail to organise a campaign against the recommendations of the Congress Agrarian Reforms Committee. In the 1960s the ruling class chose to beat a retreat. In fact, it became wedded to the modernisation of agriculture via technology, which led to the ruin of the small peasants throughout the country.

The question is whether an alternative strategy corresponding to the long-term interests of the small peasants and agricultural labourers can be formulated. As the policy statements of the Kisan Sabha show, the emphasis is on land reform, occupation of land, rural credit and remunerative prices for crops. Curiously, cooperative agriculture seems to be a remote ideal. In the memorandum submitted to the Land Revenue Commission in 1939, the Bengal Kisan Sabha, while advocating "the transfer of full rights of property to the individual cultivators", noted that "it is no solution of his poverty. The average cultivator has not the money to buy seed ...Reclaimed land should be state-owned and worked by agricultural labourers". Apparently the need to develop the large unit of cultivation in the form of cooperative farm was not even the long-term goal of the Kisan Sabha. In 1970 the All-India Kisan Sabha envisaged the formation of voluntary cooperatives as part of the struggle for land reforms: "In a vast country like India, modernisation of agriculture can effectively be undertaken through voluntary cooperatives, which would increasingly play a dominant role in our agrarian economy". But this formulation went imperceptibly into the background, as the Kisan Sabha carried on agitation for radical land reform, which was nowhere undertaken except in Kerala and West Bengal.

There is a new-found sense about the importance of cooperative farms in West Bengal today. As the report of the CADC which grew out of the giant CADP launched in 1974 shows, cooperative farms have been formed in a few districts. Such experiments, if multiplied, can lay the basis of large-scale cooperative farms which will exist alongside small farms. Only dogmatists would argue that cooperative farms can be viable when state power is in the hands of the working class. In Italy, a capitalist state, there are more than 30,000 cooperative farms, of which three-fifths are communist-led; the cooperatives farm is an integral part of the agrarian programme of the Communist Party for accelerating agricultural growth. (C. Marzani, *The Promise of Eurocommunism*, 1980). What needs to be emphasised is that the allottees of surplus land will feel helpless in the face of the increasing strength of free market forces, while the jotedars and rich peasants will add field to field by leasing in the land of small peasants. The danger is indeed grave.☐

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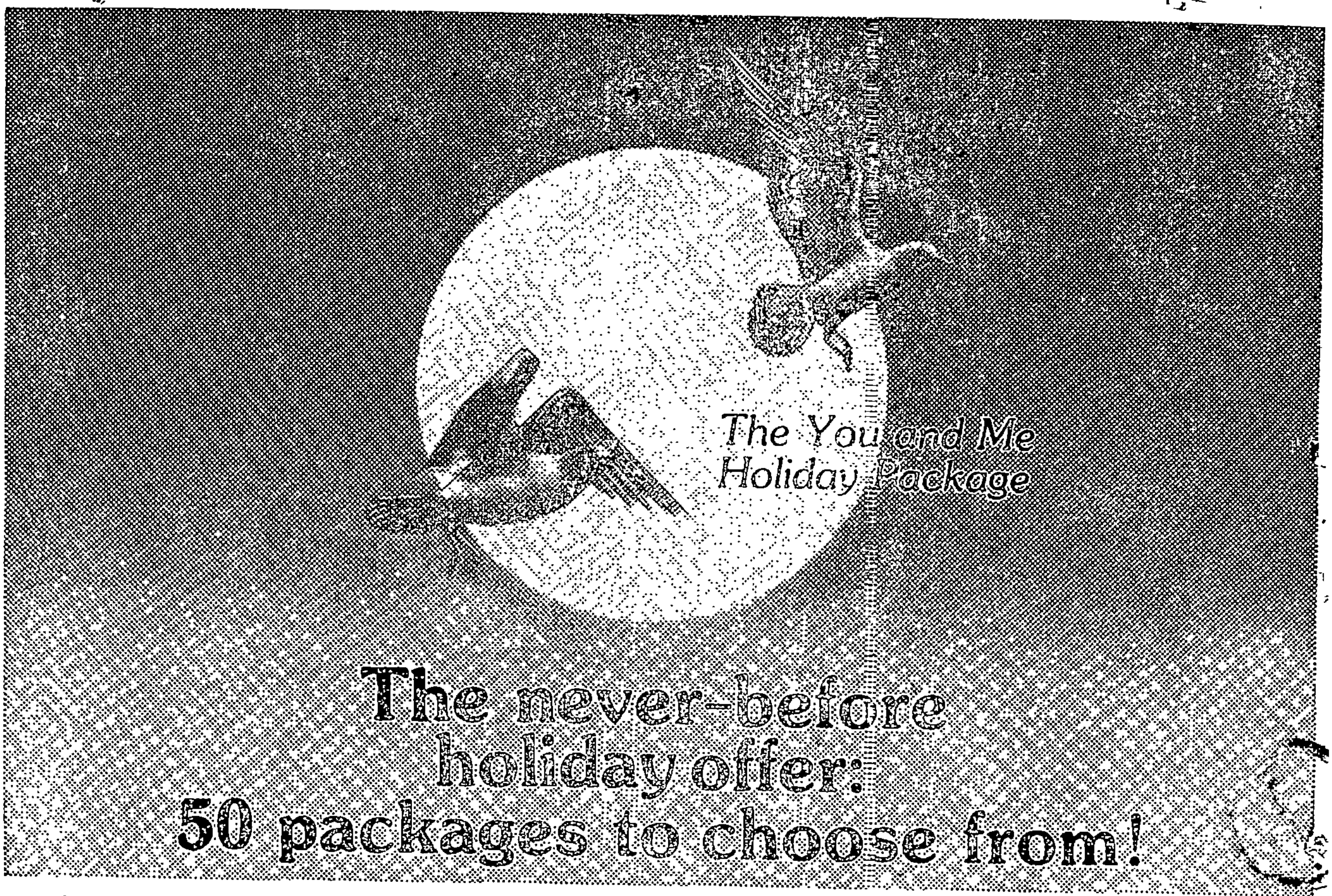

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May Day : Focus on Industrial Relations

Mainstream

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Eyeless in Punjab

WITH the latest round of communal violence in Punjab, a new dimension is added to the danger of national disintegration that has been slowly creeping into our body politic.

The provocation this time has been provided by Dal Khalsa miscreants planting the severed heads of two cows in front of two Hindu temples at Amritsar on April 26. If the misdeeds of the Sikh extremists were so long confined to such antics as the hijacking of an Indian Airlines aircraft to Pakistan and the blatant secessionist demand for an independent Khalistan, this time they have invaded the precincts of Hindu-Sikh communal relations, vitiating it by a calculated move to hurt the religious susceptibilities of the Hindus in a State in which Hindu orthodoxy is firmly entrenched in the form of RSS. The Dal Khalsa's open acknowledgement of this piece of misdemeanour as a means to hasten the ban on smoking and sale of tobacco in the immediate neighbourhood of the Sikh community's holiest of the holy, the Golden Temple at Amritsar, brings out the direct threat it poses to the fabric of Indian nationhood, negating its secularist commitments.

It is by no means a comforting thought that such a direct act of provocation aimed at destroying Hindu-Sikh amity should be enacted in a strategically-situated frontier State, where a section of Sikh extremists have already been engaged in working for secession with help and encouragement, overt and covert, received from abroad.

THE conventional view so far held has been that communal tension in this country is by and large confined to Hindu-Muslim relationship, and any attack or disadvantage suffered by the Muslims in India has so long been delectable meat for Pakistani propaganda. In recent times the Hindu communalist outcry against some cases of Harijans embracing Islam has been coupled with a mendacious campaign of Saudi gold propping up Muslim communalism in this country.

The position on this score has been decisively changed with the success of Indira Gandhi's recent visit to Saudi Arabia while her warm reception at the

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hands of the ruling establishment and at the popular level has been greeted by a chorus of slander in the Government-controlled press in Pakistan: in contrast, the impact of the Prime Minister's Saudi visit has been positively wholesome on the psyche of the Indian Muslim. In this respect, Indira Gandhi can very well claim to have undertaken a successful political Haj earning the accolade of India's largest minority community.

RECENT developments have however demonstrated that the mischief of fissiparous forces is not confined to the arena of Hindu-Muslim relations. The riots at Kanyakumari some time ago brought out how these elements sought to vitiate long-standing communal amity between Hindus and Christians. Now at Amritsar, vicious communalism is being deliberately spread to poison the relationship between Hindus and Sikhs, who with all their differences, have long lived in mutual amity.

It would however be a mistake to blame the external forces for engineering such new dimensions of communal tension in the growingly uncertain political climate in India today. Our own record at home needs to be scrutinised with stern objectivity. Sikh communalism has not mushroomed overnight. Its roots have a long history, but there have been periods in our contemporary times when this was curbed, if not brought to the point of virtual extinction, as in the days of Pratap Singh Kairon's Chief Ministership.

But the secular crusade against Akali communalism could not be sustained because of the exigencies of parliamentary politics. Both the Congress and the Opposition have been guilty on this score: neither can claim to have denied any quarter to Akali communalism. The factional in-fighting within the Congress in Punjab has often been reflected in one group ganging up with the Akali bosses to outwit the rival group.

For the last two years and more, Union Home Minister Giani Zail Singh has been known to have been moving heaven and earth to oust Punjab Chief Minister Darbara Singh. Apart from intrigues within the Congress and manipulating the media for this purpose, the Giani has indulged in rather shameless hobnobbing with the Akalis — and this includes his touching the feet of the leader with acknowledgedly extremist leanings, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, whose sympathies for the Khalistanis are not unknown. Such dangerous extension of Congress-I faction-fighting to the point of abetting Akali extremism for the purpose of discrediting the Punjab Chief Minister, has so far invited no reprimand for Giani Zail Singh. That the Giani is not overburdened with political wisdom is no news in New Delhi, and those who are familiar with his cerebral attainments were not surprised by his gratuitous tribute to Hitler's genius in a typical outburst in Parliament, which earned for him the unique distinction of being the only Home Minister whose observations on a political issue had to be expunged from parliamentary proceedings. For such a politician to be involved in playing soft to Akali intransigence — to say the least — to fight the Chief Minister belonging to his own party, is not in the least unusual. What is extraordinary is that such a character should continue to be retained as the Home Minister of India.

If indulgence towards Akalis on the part of Giani Zail Singh weakens the Congress-I stand against communalism in Punjab, the record of a notable section of the Left is no less unworthy. The CPI-M in Punjab has long been known to have kept up entente with a section of the Akali leadership for the purpose of sharing the loaves and fishes of parliamentary electioneering: in the latest round, the CPI-M has unembarrassedly come into the arena of mass political action in the company of the Akalis to block the construction of the Sutlej-Yamuna link canal, necessary for the equitable sharing of the Ravi-Beas waters arranged by mutual agreement between the three State Governments of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan. By all objective assessment, this has no doubt been a fair deal, but the Akali leadership has been trying to whip up Sikh jingoism for short-term political gains. What is amazing is that the CPI-M with its pretensions of being a national party, has not hesitated in joining this agitation which is meant to generate inter-State acrimony. The CPI-M's growing political links with Akali politics disables it to a considerable measure, in the crusade against communalism in Punjab.

WHILE there will now be a chorus of pious platitudes exhorting the people in Punjab to maintain communal harmony, the record of most of the political parties on this score is far from clean. Perceptibly the political leadership in Punjab has shown up its bankruptcy in combating communalism—Hindu or Sikh. The punitive measures that Darbara Singh's Ministry may have to resort to will be nullified so long as on the political plane, different parties are unprepared to excommunicate Akali communalism and its Hindu counterpart. The expectations of narrow political gains have made them myopic, if not totally blind, to the grim threats to the nation's integrity.

Punjab today thus poses the greatest challenge as well as gravest danger to Indian secularism.

April 28 *N.C.*

COMMENTARY

Why Licensing Policy Changes?

THE recent revision of the list of core sector industries under Appendix I of the Industrial Licensing Policy in order to facilitate the entry into this sector of big business houses and foreign companies has not come as a surprise. Talk of such a change had been going on for quite some time, and the Minister himself had hinted at this a few months ago at a seminar abroad. Almost a month back, an economic daily had come out with a lead item captioned "MRTP Act changes under way: Big houses' entry into 90 'zero industry' areas to be allowed". It was revealed that the Government was going to allow them to undertake the manufacture of commercial vehicles without any restriction. It was added: "The argument in favour of permitting large houses is that the type of investment required for such a gigantic task could be found only with the large houses."

It is needless to add that this argument is not very incorrect if one assumes that public sector enterprises are not to be made so profitable as to generate investible resources, the rural rich are not to be directly taxed, and the private corporate sector is to be given fiscal concessions and incentives to increase investment and production. These assumptions or constraints have been implicit in almost all decisions and policy-pronouncements concerning the industrial sector since the 1970s.

Though lip-service is still being paid to the importance of the public sector and to the basic framework provided by Jawaharlal Nehru's Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956 which was to keep the commanding heights of the economy in the hands of the public sector, in fact the balance has tilted in favour of the private sector. This was apparent when Charanjit Chanana told the Lok Sabha on July 23, 1980, while presenting the new Industrial Policy Statement: "Now that the Congress Party has been entrusted with the responsibility of the Government, what is needed above all is a set of *pragmatic policies* which will remove the lingering constraints to industrial production and, at the same time, act as catalysts for faster growth in the coming decades." The main emphasis was on raising the growth rate.

Soon afterwards 'the provision for automatic growth' was extended to more industries. Production for export came handy to circumvent the provisions of licensing policy and the MRTP Act. It was stated that exports would not count against licensed capacity, and diversification was freely allowed in respect of a number of industries.

During the last financial year, even more concessions and relaxations were announced. To quote a Government report: "Investment limits...were raised. Installed capacities in excess of licensed/registered (limits) in thirtyfour selected industries have been regularised. These include basic industries and those producing mass consumption goods ... Automatic growth has been allowed to the extent of 5 per cent per annum or 25 per cent in a five-year period in the registered or licensed capacity of nineteen additional industries, bringing the total of such industries to thirtyfour. There has also been some relaxation in industrial location policy with a view to providing for natural growth for export production ... Production for exports will not be counted in the licensed capacity of an undertaking and it will also not be taken into account for the purpose of determining 'dominance' under the MRTP Act."

In February this year the Government categorically stated that it was going to carry liberalisation still further: "As 1982 is the 'Productivity Year', further measures to enable industrial undertakings to optimise production out of existing capacity need to be taken as a matter of urgency. The new 20-point Programme reiterates the need to maximise power generation and improve the functioning of electricity authorities. It seeks to further liberalise investment procedures and streamline industrial policies."

Close on the heels of this announcement came partial decontrol of cement and the new integrated export-import policy. In a major policy decision which might prove detrimental to the country's security, the Government allowed the involvement of private sector firms in the field of defence electronics. Thus, monopoly houses were allowed to reap increasing profits from involvement in defence production for which the budget allocation has been going up every year.

What we have till now tried to show is that the latest declaration is neither an isolated event nor a bolt from the blue. The surprising thing is that all these months there has been no mobilisation against this trend in the Government's industrial policy. On all sorts of issues and questions, national and international, conferences and seminars, rallies and demonstrations have been organised, but the economic policies and the state of the Indian economy have not merited more than brief mentions in resolutions of Left parties and editorials of their official organs. Are these Left parties not guilty of being passive spectators? Why can they not visualise the shape of things to come and prepare to resist changes detrimental to national interest? This may be because they are unable to foresee developments or they are just not interested.

Now it is an open secret that the MRTP Act is to be overhauled in such a way that whatever teeth it has are made completely useless. The Ministry concerned seems to have thrown the report of the Sachar Committee into the dustbin. Is this not a subject deserving more attention than one or two lines in obscure places in the journals of Left parties? Why can't economists be mobilised along with trade unionists to hold debates and discussions all over the country and organise rallies and demonstrations, submit memoranda and run a campaign through democratic papers?

The five new areas opened to large houses and FERA companies include (1) high technology reproduction and multiplication equipment, (2) carbon and carbon products, (3) pretensioned high pressure RCC pipes, (4) rubber machinery, and (5) printing machinery.

Big business houses and MNCs will be permitted to set up units even in industries not included in Appendix 1 provided the units are predominantly export-oriented, and this export-orientation has been defined as the capacity to export 60 per cent to 75 per cent of the production. Only last year the Government had allowed 25 per cent expansion of the production capacity of certain industrial units over the 1980-1985 period. Now the Government has decided to allow industry 33.3 per cent capacity over the best production during the last five years over and above the 25 per cent excess production already permitted. This will apply also to the drug industry which is dominated by MNCs and their subsidiaries.

All these changes have been brought about in the name of "the present need for increased production, higher export generation, adoption of modern technology" etc. Revision of the list had become necessary because "several developments have taken place (since 1973 when it was prepared) in terms of technological advancement, changing potentiality for export, development of middle level entrepreneurship... need for establishment of adequate capacities in certain industries consistent with the level of technology and quality standards, etc."

One is at a loss to understand the silence on the need to curb the growth of monopolies and MNCs and make the public sector expand continuously. Even the technical considerations stated above are not convincing enough. The question is: Why cannot the public sector be relied upon to do the job? If it is inefficient or not equal to the task, why cannot this deficiency be removed?

It is not without reason that the FICCI has hailed this change. Its president has said that it will create conditions for augmenting production and raising productivity. One industrialist has said: "The Government's decision to allow the industry 33.3 per cent capacity over the best production during the last five years is an excellent step to remove production constraints"

Economist,

April 25

Order, Order!

President Sanjiva Reddy's concern over deteriorating standards of conduct in the legislatures and the tendency of elected representatives to contribute with all their might to disorderly scenes, paying proportionately less and less attention to the responsibility entrusted to them, will be widely shared by enlightened public opinion all over the country. The President, speaking at a Bangalore function on April 24 to commemorate the centenary of the Mysore Representative Assembly, referred with regret to the fact that even during debates on important issues concerning public welfare, attendance in legislatures was poor. He made a pointed reference to the quality of debates also.

But frankly, poor attendance during important debates, whether in Parliament or in State legislatures, is perhaps the least disturbing aspect of the situation. If one recalls newspaper headlines and reports of recent months and years, perhaps even the current quality of debates on matters of vital public importance and interest, most decidedly in a tattered state, will not depress one unduly. Consider the facts. For the present, only very recent facts.

During the month or so that preceded Sanjiva Reddy's pained observations, there were several ugly scenes in legislatures. There was "pandemonium" — to use a handy word popular with the media — in both houses of Parliament over the imposition of President's rule in Kerala; perhaps not surprisingly, those who had been demanding dismissal of the Ministry and holding of elections were the noisiest contributors to the pandemonium. Even the "elders" in the Rajya Sabha, intended to make up, in true Westminster style, any deficiency in wisdom or sobriety of the Lower House, got into the spirit of the times. Walkouts and full employment of lung power are only part of the scenario.

But then the houses of Parliament, despite occasional din and much inane speech-making from both sides, and the poor quality of even the Budget debate, are a haven of peace and tranquillity compared to some of our State legislatures. Not even that odd member's recent effort to burst into song really made much difference in this regard.

Towards the end of March, in the Rajasthan Assembly, to quote a newspaper report, "members from both the Treasury benches and the Opposition ... exchanged blows, kicks, and jostled one another when their lung power had been practically exhausted," and on top of all this, "chappals were used in the clash. Not only members were dragged out and beaten up but the watch and ward staff was also prevented from entering the house." Much more than this happened, and no wonder the house was adjourned sine die ten days in advance of the scheduled date.

The Budget session of the Bihar legislature "had a stormy start ... with the entire Opposition raising slogans denouncing the Government" (no doubt well merited), and several members "tore up the order papers and flung them towards the podium" as the Governor rose to address the joint session.

The Haryana Assembly, now dissolved, was no less grotesque in terms of its proceedings. Nor even the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly. Indeed, hardly any State legislature has been free from scenes that would make boisterous college and school boys envious.

Here is one area of public life where North and South seem to be equally at ease and even quite competitive. There were, for example, unruly scenes (or exciting scenes, depending on your taste) in the Tamilnadu Assembly late last month (March) and early this month (April). On one occasion, says a report, noisy scenes culminated "in the Deputy Speaker running out of the house to fight it out with a defiant DMK member." A few days later, "paper-weights flew and AIADMK and DMK members came close to blows"; "a near-riotous situation prevailed in the house for nearly fifteen minutes" with members from both sides "throwing paper-weights at one another and exchanging invectives". The two gentlemen who we are told started it all were no less than the Law Minister on the one side and the Leader of the Opposition on the other. The noise over the cement deal in the Karnataka Assembly was in comparison perhaps quite mild, though, one does remember equally exciting scenes in that august house too in the past, as in Maharashtra and elsewhere.

These are mere samples which provide no more than a vague idea of what is going on in our legislatures constituted at great cost and maintained at rather heavy expense. And this is the situation which Sanjiva Reddy wants to be changed, restoring a measure of dignity to proceedings and standard of debate. Considering that the deterioration that he deplores has not taken place overnight but has taken place steadily over some years, one does not know how far his advice will be heeded, even if the public are undoubtedly behind him in this highly valid enterprise.

The President, whose experience as legislator and Minister has been substantial, wants a procedure to be devised under which as many members as possible are encouraged to make their contribution in the shaping of Government policies, in the appraisal of Government performance, and in the whole legislative process. That is a proposition with which no one can quarrel. And Sanjiva Reddy notes that the best speakers are those who are not only the best informed but the most courteous members who never fail to observe parliamentary decorum. Again, an unexceptionable statement.

The question is, how do we go about restoring dignity to these many houses at the Centre and in the States? How do we ensure that members are well informed on the subjects they are taking about? How do we prevent the proliferation of the strong, silent members who are seen and heard only when there is a crucial vote to be taken or a bizarre scene created or furthered? Who, in short, will undertake the education of our parliamentarians and legislators (all honour to the honourable exceptions)? The political parties? Full fledged institutions filled with experts of all sorts? The task does seem forbidding, but at least our political parties and their leaders must give serious thought to what the President has said, in the interest of safeguarding and strengthening our parliamentary democratic system and thereby the Republic itself. Parliamentarians and legislators must keep themselves informed and contribute to debates in the houses of which they are members if democracy is to serve any purpose. The public will certainly endorse Sanjiva Reddy's call to legislators to present their points of view cogently and persuasively, keeping the public interest in view. Yes, even if that means depriving some of our hot-sales newspapers of their daily grist.

We may draw up a code or prepare a framework. That is easy. The hard part is to implement it, what with so many houses and so many members, so many parties and so many factions, so many interests and pressures. An American story goes that when Woodrow Wilson accosted Moses in heaven, the latter commiserated with him about the fate of his Fourteen Points for world peace. Wilson advised Moses to go down to the earth and see what they had done to his Ten Commandments.

One would not like such a fate to overtake Sanjiva Reddy's advice on legislatures and their members.

April 27 *C.N. Chitta Ranjan*

Arms Race and Human Rights

D.A. DESAI

THE Second World War inserted the last nail in the coffin of the League of Nations. The devastation and the destruction caused by the Second World War compelled the leaders of the world to devise an effective machinery for securing international peace and harmony. The holocaust of war heaped immeasurable loss of men and materials on the countries which were the battlefields of war. The USSR, France, England, Germany principally in Europe and Japan in Asia suffered such terrible destruction that it became a compelling necessity to reorient and readjust international relations based on lasting peace. The Atlantic Charter and the subsequent setting up of the United Nations promised an era of peace and prosperity. High idealism informed the drawing up of the UN Charter. A reference to the promise of plenty made in Article 55 of the Charter may be advantageous.

> With a view to the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, the United Nations shall promote: (a) higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development; (b) solutions of international economic, social, health and related problems and international culture and educational cooperation; and (c) universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without discrimination as to race, sex, language or religion.

Victory in Europe Day was celebrated in 1945. A stock-taking of the last four decades is disturbing and agonising. The wholesale genocide taught one lesson, that if mankind is not to repeat the fatal error in the foreseeable future with thermo-nuclear weapons, it is but meet that the natural resources of the globe must be so equitably distributed and the international economic order must be so devised that the ugly, distressing picture of unpardonable waste in one hemisphere and starvation and destitution in another is avoided.

Respect for boundaries of the nation-states, right of self-determination, equitable distribution of the world's resources, would pave the way for lasting peace. In this scheme of things there is no place for merchants of death. Employment by large-scale manufacturers of lethal weapons is a mirage. Manufacture of weapons can only be avoided if the international order is based on mutual understanding, co-existence, respect for national boundaries and right of self-determination. The old outmoded and expended theories of spheres of influence and balance of power should have no place in the scheme of things envisaged by the Charter.

Human nature has never been ideal. Every society nurtures a belief that it is the only ideal society and any other form of society is anathema. Since the revolution in the USSR an entirely different kind of society with different values emerged. Its economic doctrine, social integration and anti-capitalist stance shook the world capitalist order. Instead of appreciating the emergence of a new society ushering in socio-economic justice, equality and non exploitation, the capitalist society felt threatened, and the fear psychosis provided a facade for multiplication of arms. The world again started getting divided into capitalist versus communist societies in place of empire holders and colonies. Once a feeling of insecurity is generated, security by arms is accorded high priority. The vicious circle starts.

Manufacture of arms raises two problems. With the vast advancing nuclear technology and space research, arms of today become obsolete in a short while. Research proceeds at break-neck speed, the target being maximum destruction of mankind, not of property, because in a capitalist society property is placed on a higher pedestal than the human being who is supposed to enjoy it. The latest research in this behalf establishes the truth of the statement. The manufacturer of arms must find a market for the obsolete arms. They have to be dumped somewhere. There are countries in which military regimes have perpetuated their hold and they are ready to buy arms. The greater the proliferation of arms, the larger the threat to international peace. To the extent industry is diverted to the manufacture of arms, its capacity to produce consumer goods is proportionately decreased. To that extent humanity suffers.

Having generalised the propositions let me turn to some stark facts. One UN survey shows that since the Second World War the world has spent more than six thousand billion dollars on research, manufacture and proliferation of arms. The developed countries in their search for full employment keep their arsenals of arms full. If these developed countries had stockpiled arms within the country, the developing countries would not have suffered much. But the export of arms to sensitive areas creates problem for countries which are wedded to international peace and which want to concentrate their energies on the development of society. Nearer home, arming of Pakistan by the USA and introducing most sophisticated F-16 war planes, has pushed up much to our dislike our military budget.

How much this mad exercise costs may be illustrated by our own experience. Till 1960 India had a comparatively low military budget. Then came the unprovoked Chinese aggression (1962) and the whole approach had to undergo a change. Since then the military budget started shooting up starving our welfare services. 1965, the Rann of Kutch

(Continued on page 32)

This contribution is the text of the speech delivered by Justice Desai, Judge of the Supreme Court, at the International Seminar on Human Rights, Arms Race and Peace, at New Delhi on April 25, 1982.

DISCUSSION

Indian Development: Options and Choices

The perspective of Indian development is fast becoming a matter of crucial concern for the polity of the nation. Taking into account the need for serious discussion of the state of our political economy and the options before the country, *Mainstream* (March 20, 1982) published a contribution from a distinguished observer of the economic scene. This was followed by contributions from Dr C.H. Hanumantha Rao (*Mainstream*, April 10) and Mohit Sen (*Mainstream*, April 24). Here we publish an article written by an authority who, being a senior functionary in an international agency, prefers to withhold his name. — *Editor*

AN ECONOMIC OBSERVER

A Student of Political Economy, in his discussion note in *Mainstream* (March 20, 1982) has focussed attention on an issue which is acquiring a growing relevance for India's political evolution in the immediate years to come. This issue has been at the centre of debate in the Left movement over several decades now and continues to occupy attention to this day. Positions on this issue have governed, among other factors, the relationship of the two Communist Parties for a long time now, including their relationships with the international Communist movement. The issue provided a backdrop to the recent discussions on the CPI-CPM unity at their two congresses at Varanasi and Vijaywada, earlier this year.

As the programme for action of the Left is to a large extent affected by ideological positions on this basic issue, it is only natural that the working people of India should be able to consider the question in all its apects and ramifications and be able to take appropriate action according to their lights in their respective spheres of action. It is, therefore, necessary to examine the note carefully and analyse its contents critically and constructively.

The basic propositions advanced in this note are as follows:

(1) *A la* Gramsci, at a particular point of history, a ruling group need not invariably and consistently represent a specific class, or a permanent interest alliance, but only a coalition of pressure groups which can give it the necessary support to capture and wield state power in an institutional framework of elections and democratic government.

(2) Indira Gandhi today is a leader of a coalition of pressure groups which could be identified with the pressure groups constituting the Left; and her policy positions, with the ingredients of a policy framework which could be associated only with the alliance of the Left forces.

(3) Indira Gandhi is the leader of this coalition today because she had come to symbolise the 'spirit' of the Congress Party — in other words, the traditions of the national freedom movement under the erstwhile Congress Party — and it is that which has given her the 'charisma' of appeal to the Indian masses. For this reason, she has become a 'historical' force.

(4) Indira Gandhi, as a political being, is legitimately interested in retaining power. She, therefore, cannot afford to sacrifice the basis of her charisma or compromise the interests of India in any manner whatsoever.

(5) For these reasons, the political interests of Indira Gandhi and those of the Left have largely converged in the context of the Indian economy today, and the Left should strengthen the coalition pressure groups around her.

(6) If the Left could strengthen that coalition of pressure groups, it would strengthen its own cause.

(7) The fear of the Left that Indira Gandhi would promote a monopoly-capitalist pattern of development in alliance with foreign multinationals is without any basis because such a pattern of development, with Indira Gandhi at the helm of affairs, will come into conflict with the need of accommodation of Western capitalists in the Indian economy. Since such accommodation will tend to erode her political base and contradict her policy positions, it is unlikely that Indira Gandhi will opt for such a pattern of development, for her, the only way to prevent the growth of monopolist-capitalist elements (presumably including Western multinationals) is to develop countervailing power mainly in the form of public sector enterprises supported by the growth of medium and small enterprises. The development of such countervailing power will depend upon the strength of the pressure groups that the Left forces will represent and how that strength grows over time and space.

It will be noted that these propositions are only the offshoots or second-degree derivatives of some well-known premises of Marxist economic and political theory, and pragmatic generalisations about the Indian political economy since Independence. The scientific validity of these propositions would ultimately rest on the accurate understanding of these theoretical premises and their correct application to the political realities of Indira

Gandhi's positions and her policies. It is, therefore, necessary to look into the theoretical premises more deeply and examine their scientific validity and applicability to the conclusions of the author.

The idea that a ruling group invariably represents a class or permanent interest alliance derives from the Marxian theory of state which states that, in a society divided into classes, "the executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the affairs of the whole bourgeoisie",[1] and political power is "merely the organised power of one class for oppressing another".[2] Much before Gramsci, even Marx himself, in his writings, on the Bonapartist state in France, had propounded another view of the state according to which it may be independent of and superior to all social classes and have to some extent an autonomous role.

But this other Marxian view of the state in no way conflicts with the first view which regards the state as an instrument of class rule. In fact, these two views are complementary and can very well help to explain the role of the state in civil society in a structural sense as well as in changing class power situations. In this view, while Indira Gandhi, in a structural sense, may well be an instrument of class rule of the bourgeoisie as a whole in India, at the same time, she may also rule through a coalition of pressure groups which are composed of different factions of that class or its allies. Thus, there is no inherent contradiction in the two positions and it does not follow that a coalition of pressure groups cannot represent a specific class interest or a permanent interest alliance.

For this reason, the author's jibe at the Left, for 'its sterile and perennial debate about the class character of the Congress Party', would seem to have arisen more from ignorance of the central role of the class-state in explaining the dynamics of a capitalist society, than from any scientific irrelevance of the Left parties' political concerns.

Even Gramsci, on whom the author has relied for the proposition, has recognised the class-state and said: "The state is the instrument for conforming civil society to the economic structure, but it is necessary for the state to 'be willing' to do this; that is, for the representatives of the change that has taken in the economic structure to be in control of the state."[3]

Proposition 2 is an empirical generalisation based on the author's perceptions. But these may not necessarily be true or acceptable to Indira Gandhi or the Indian Left. The pressure groups around Indira Gandhi could hardly be shown to be the same or even similar to those of the Left except in a populist sense. Both pressure groups consist of groups of people who, in a democratic framework, exercise a right of vote and could equally affect the electoral chances of both Indira Gandhi and the Left. In this sense, and in this sense alone, the pressure groups around Indira Gandhi are the same as those around the Left. But in no other sense can they be said to be the same.

The similarity of policy positions of Indira Gandhi with those of the Left is only superficial, especially in internal matters. If examined in depth, significant differences of detail come to surface. Broadly speaking, Indira Gandhi's domestic policies are an anathema to the Left. At its last congress in Varanasi, the CPI has resolved to initiate and lead mass movements against the retrograde, pro-vested interest, anti-people and anti-democratic internal policies of Indira Gandhi Government.

Evidently, the perceptions of the author are different from those of the Left. With those differences in perceptions, it is hardly likely that proposition 2 can be universally acceptable.

Proposition 3 is again an empirical generalisation based on Indira Gandhi's return to power through elections in a democratic framework. But this must be appreciated, that Indira Gandhi's capacity to win elections and retain political power is as much attributable to the maintenance of a democratic framework as to her symbolisation of the 'spirit' of the erstwhile Congress Party. It was the same Indira Gandhi who was rejected at the 1977 polls although even then she continued to symbolise the spirit of the Congress Party. This means that Indira Gandhi has not become an *avatar* of the national freedom movement for all time to come. She has to win the confidence and affection of the masses on the basis of her concrete performance and policies from one Parliament to another. No symbols are eternal in human affairs. And perceptions of people, who watch over their political affairs intelligently, can change from one time to another. Thus, a time dimension has to be added to proposition 3 which is presently missing, and makes it appear as an absolute proposition.

From these considerations, it follows that proposition 4 cannot be held to be true for all time. It will be valid only for such period as Indira Gandhi's perceptions of India's interests coincide with those of her people. But, as has often happened in the recent history of several developing countries, if her perceptions deviate from those of India's working masses, it can be possible that her role as a historical force may not remain what it may appear to be today. There are too many instances in recent history of 'historical' personages losing their 'charisma' all of a sudden, with their magic over the masses suddenly disappearing. The Left has therefore to keep itself open to face such an eventuality if and when it arises, rather than put all its political eggs in one basket.

If and when a cleavage develops between the perceptions of Indira Gandhi and those of the working people, the convergence of political interests of Indira Gandhi and those of the Left could conceivably be disturbed and their cooperation adversely affected. This could be especially true because the class nature of Indira Gandhi's Government would remain operative all the while until she has created the countervailing power envisaged in proposition 7. And the class nature of her Government will tend to assert its policies all the time unless the Left is prepared to challenge them.

Thus, by strengthening the coalition of pressure groups around Indira Gandhi, the Left may risk strengthening of those pressure groups whose

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May Day 1982

Industrial relations problems in India continue to be difficult, and May Day is the appropriate occasion to take a look. We present here the views of the Government, employers and trade union leaders on the problems and possible solutions. —*Editor*

Industrial Relations: Issues and Problems

BHAGWAT JHA AZAD

DEVELOPING societies characterised by poverty, unemployment, exploitation and inequality are striving hard to establish a new socio-economic order based on dignity and equality of man to ensure social justice and improvement in the quality of working life. These challenges call for greater commitment and dedication from employers, workers and others. Such dedication cannot come unless there is a reorientation of the traditional methods of management. Yesterday's management policies and practices cannot cope with today's problems of the work place. What applies to managements applies equally to trade unions. There is, therefore, need for a new pattern of management — whether of an enterprise or of a trade union — which may ensure a developmental and constructive role for the managements and workers.

Labour and social policy is an area where priorities must be established, choices made and values weighed one against another. It is an area where the opposing interests of more or less influential groups must be reconciled. This is an area of power struggle and hence the only practical and possible procedure is negotiation between trade unions, employers and Government. This is the institutional approach to development. In this progress of social negotiation, labour laws have a decisive role to play by creating the framework, the rules and the procedures under which such negotiation must take place.

The most notable characteristic in every field of activity is the constant attempt to reconcile conflicting views or actions to discover a workable compromise. In an industrial system, as in any other walk of life, there is no such thing as a fight to the finish. It is always a reconciliation exercise over differences. Even if the results of reconciliation are not totally satisfactory, efforts must be continued in future to ensure that the inadequacies are made up. In other words, the relationship between the employers and the employees should not be considered as a fleeting episode but a continuous playing of the game.

Industrial peace and harmony may have the same meaning, but while the former is somewhat negative and restrictive, and emphasises the absence of strife and struggle, the latter is positive and comprehensive. It postulates the existence of understanding, cooperation and a sense of partnership between employers and workers. A quest for industrial harmony is indispensable where a country has chosen the path of planning to secure economic progress. Economic progress is itself bound up with industrial harmony, for the simple reason that such harmony inevitably leads to more cooperation between employers and workers. This would naturally result in more productivity and thereby contribute to all-round prosperity of the country.

Healthy industrial relations on which industrial harmony is founded cannot, therefore, be regarded as a matter of concern only to employers and workers. It is of vital significance to the community as a whole. That is why the concept of industrial harmony involves cooperation not only of employers and workers but also of the community at large. Such cooperation stipulates that employers and workers recognise that although they are justified in safeguarding their respective rights and interests, they must also bear in mind the interests of the community. If this is the true scope of the concept of industrial harmony, it follows that industrial harmony ought to emphasise the importance of raising productivity because the resulting accelerated rate of growth will benefit the community as a whole. This is the true significance of the doctrine of industrial harmony in its three-dimensional aspects.

Attainment of development objectives can be facilitated by creating a climate of industrial harmony. Development itself has to strike a fair balance between stability, protection and distribution. Following from this approach to industrial relations, participative style of management assumes vital significance, as it encompasses industrial relations, policies which aim at cooperation between employers, workers and Government. In the land of Mahatma Gandhi, who enunciated the principle of trusteeship in industry, industrial harmony through a cooperative and consultative model is not incompatible with the relationship between employers and workers. Government's role in maintaining industrial harmony arises from its desire to bring industrial relations practices in line with the requirements of economic development and achievement of the objectives set out in the Five-Year Plans.

The author is Labour Minister, Government of India.

It is on this account that in India emphasis has been laid on negotiation, conciliation and arbitration of disputes and differences between employers and workers. Government action in this area can, however, be of a promotional nature and providing the infrastructure for settlement of disputes. The main burden would lie on managements and workers.

There are various issues confronting the industrial relations scene. Justice available to workers under the existing laws has to be speedy and the implementation of awards has to be done with grace and grit. Government is, therefore, considering what changes are called for to improve their working. To cite a few matters, the processes of conciliation and adjudication have to be simplified and delays reduced to the minimum. Besides, identification of a bargaining agent in an enterprise or industry and the provision of rights and responsibilities is an important issue which has so far defied solution. The National Commission on Labour had recommended the formulation of a Central law for the recognition of trade unions at enterprise and industry levels. However, there is a divergence of views among the central trade union organisations on the procedure and the machinery to be adopted for the determination of the collective bargaining agent. It is for this reason that Gavernment has not been able to come to a definite conclusion, as it wants to secure a national consensus on such a controversial matter before taking any concrete steps in this direction. Government has to see that the industrial laws are brought in tune with the needs of the present. The central trade union organisations should, therefore, give serious thought to this problem and come to some working arrangement. I consider it a challenge to them and they must accept this challenge to arrive at a commonly acceptable solution of this problem instead of taking rigid positions which make a solution difficult.

Another problem which often affects industrial relations is the multiplicity of trade unions in the same enterprise, each vying with the other to increase their membership and not hesitating in making exorbitant demands or adopting unconstitutional methods to have them fulfilled. This phenomenon of multiplicity of trade unions has weakened the bargaining position and resulted in their fragmentation at various levels. This is not a very healthy development in the trade union movement. Quite often, such multiplicity of trade unions introduces extraneous matters in the area of employer-employee relationship, a solution of which lies elsewhere.

One of the major problems of the modern industrial society is the alienation of workers from the work process. By doing a rapid and monotonous job day or night the workers become an appendage to the machine. From this alienation flow various evil consequences which affect not only the process of production but also the workers' way of life. To combat these evils, it is necessary to promote the involvement of workers in the process of production. The field of industrial relations is basically one of human relations and is not, therefore, fully amenable to legislation. Further, the human relations approach does not envisage only the relationship of one person and another at the same level of hierarchy but to the entire work-place upward and downward. It is now well recognised that a work-place or an industrial enterprise is a social system. There is also an awareness that very often management policies and practices aimed at increasing efficiency and productivity may have negative effects on the people at the work-place, if their aspirations and attitudes are not understood and utilised.

Instances where managements haxe brought about innovations in the field of employer-employee relationship are few and in many cases they are still following the traditional methods of management, notwithstanding far-reaching technological advances in the production mechanism. It is essential that the managements fully recognise the utility and the inevitability of the human relations approach and make a conscientious attempt to understand human behaviour at the work-place and utilise or modify that behaviour to achieve the objective of the organisation, while fulfilling also the aspirations of the workers. Such an approach based on a consultative and cooperative model can help in speeding up the process of integration of workers with the organisation and creating an awareness of the mutuality of interest for harmonious working. And yet how many managers can sincerely say that they follow such approaches for tackling the problems of industrial relations and accept the workers as indispensable partners in the production process? One glaring instance of neglect is generally the absence of an effective machinery for the redress of individual grievances of workers which, if allowed to continue unresolved, can eventually lead to explosive situations. The value of a grievance redress machinery has not been fully appreciated by many managements. Nor have they taken effective steps with a sense of determination to create trust and goodwill among the workers by following a participative approach and establishing participatory forums as an integral and an important ingredient of their industrial relations system to bring about an integration of the work-force.

In the field of industrial relations one cannot expect that there would be no disputes or differences. But it is for the managements to provide an effective system by which the disputes and differences can be sorted out speedily and that they are not allowed to accumulate. Discontent and frustration if ignored would only endanger the relationship and harm the industry. Their causes have to be patiently analysed and remedial action taken with the utmost expedition to create a sense of satisfaction among the workers and build up their loyalty to the industry. Personnel practices and their implementation should inculcate among the workers a feeling that the management believes in fairplay and justice. They should also render support to the participative system wherever introduced. Once the management has created trust among its workers it would have laid the firm foundations of a sound industrial relations system.□

Conditions for Industrial Harmony

SUDHIR JALAN

THE current labour situation in the country has been the major concern of everyone who is anyone. The number of man-days lost has again shown an uptrend. The provisional figures put them at 22.56 million as compared to 21.93 million in 1980. The production loss has been variously assessed, but the rough estimates indicate that in 1980-81, the loss approximately was of the order of Rs. 1390 crores. What has really been worrying the employers in particular is the violence, intimidation and coercion that are being used to settle industrial differences. Collective bargaining is no more respected and validly concluded settlements are being given scant respect. Management personnel are subjected to threats and gross humiliation, all leading to a state of insecurity. Obviously, production and productivity have badly suffered and it is unfortunate that the call of the Prime Minister to work cooperatively for nation-building has been lost in the wilderness.

There is not much point in going through the factors and causes that have resulted in this drift. They are well known. Horizontal and vertical split, mushrooming, inter and intra-union rivalries and deep politicisation of the unions are often cited as major factors. But there is another equally potent factor that has contributed to the present instability. Democratic values have collapsed and the civilised norms of conducting human affairs are rarely followed. Be that as it may, the isssue is whether the problems through which the nation is passing should not be the primary concern of all sections of the people, whether they belong to the working class, the employing community or the bureaucratic systems.

A look at the economic terrain will be useful.

Our population is 700 million now.

The percentage of people below the poverty line is somewhere around 50.3 per cent, of whom 260 million are in rural areas.

Unemployment is estimated at 22 million, of whom 5 million are educated.

The performance of infrastructure has improved and power generation is likely to go up by 11 per cent in 1982-83. Yet it is not enough to meet the active needs of our industries.

The general industrial growth has been placed at about 7.8 per cent, but it is not of desired level.

The foreign exchange situation has comparatively eased after the 5.6 billion SDR loan from the IMF.

The Railways have achieved a record freight movement of about 230 metric tonnes.

The total picture emerging from the above indicators is cheerful as well as depressing. From whatever angle we look at it, there is no room for complacency and all the scope for caution. In any analysis of the factors that would bring about stability in industrial relations one must keep these economic compulsions in mind. For, the quality of labour relations is far more significant than the size of investment, the type of technology and the adequacy of raw materials.

It is most surprising that the concept of 'partnership in progress' has not visited some sections of our trade unions, workers and their leaders. The current spate of industrial conflict that has battered and buffeted our industries clearly discloses the unhealthy drift in the trade union movement. One wonders whether the unions have become so inward-looking that they totally ignore the claims of society on the industrial products and profits. The era of peaceful satyagraha has been blown to pieces; instead violence, intimidation and extreme coercion have become the stock-in-trade of unions.

They have not hesitated to give a call for strike on the flimsiest grounds. Surprisingly, while employers and Government have been persistently advocating the cause of the vast unemployed and under-employed, the workers in the organised sector numbering 22 million, have used their strategic location in industry to pursue their sectional demands. It should be appreciated that no employer is against fair and economically equitable payments to workers. But the situation becomes pernicious when the pressure on industry is contrary to reason. How can one justify the strike in the 60 textile mills in Maharashtra in the face of an existing negotiated settlement that covers wages, bonus and working conditions and so on? It is beyond imagination how the industry is going to pay wage hike demands ranging from Rs. 450 to Rs. 650. Yet the unprincipled and upstart leadership has disrupted the smooth functioning of the textile industry, resulting in a production loss of Rs. 4 crores per day. This does not include the loss suffered by the processing units, textile machinery manufacturing units, dyes and chemicals producers and the loss resulting on account of the setback in export earnings. The strike as on April 18, 1982, had deprived the country of cloth production valued at Rs. 562 crores. The loss of exports is estimated at Rs. 50 to 60 crores. The industry has been denied its precious resources of about Rs. 50 crores by way of overheads. Workers themselves had suffered wage loss amounting to Rs. 62 to 65 crores.

What is being experienced in Maharashtra now is not new to the industrial and business community elsewhere. West Bengal accounted for the maximum time loss of 8.28 million man-days in 1981, followed by Tamilnadu (3.84 million) and Karnataka (2.42 million). Thus the three States together accounted

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for about 64 per cent of the total time lost last year.

In this view of things some specific suggestions are quite in order:

- There should be a halt to the enactment of further labour legislation. No doubt labour is a subject on the Concurrent List of our Constitution. But there are enough Acts which can take care of the usual and contingent labour situations.
- There should be stricter enforcement and implementation of the legislative provisions.
- Government should not hesitate to levy penalties on erring unions when they go on illegal strikes, just as they do not hesitate in launching prosecution proceedings against defaulting employers.
- Government should seriously consider measures that can be taken to bring about unification of the trade union movement in this country. There has been enough proliferation and splintering. One-union-one-industry situation is the ideal to be aimed at. That alone will help in maintaining harmonious industrial relations.
- Once unification of unions has been achieved, planned efforts should be made to contain the outside leadership of unions. There were very salutory provisions for this in the Industrial Relations Bill that lapsed in 1979.
- It shall augur well for trade union movements in the country to develop worker leadership.
- There is general agreement that in coming years collective bargaining should play an important role in the settlement of industrial differences. Both management and workers should make conscious efforts to give fair trial to the system which has functioned so well in the advanced nations. Here too, one union and a recognised negotiating agent are pre-requisites.
- There should be strict legal provisions that will put restriction on the unions which attempt to upset agreements and settlements arrived at with recognised unions. Maharashtra type of situations should be strongly dealt with.
- Trade unions must totally change their attitude towards development. The economic compulsions before the nation are so imperative that it can ill-afford sectarian pulls and pressures on the gains of industrialisation. They should realise that there are millions who need help and creative employment.
- Governments should not entertain any demands that cannot be economically justified nor should they compel employers to concede payments outside the ones provided by the law. Here I have in mind the annual suggestions made to the managements to pay ex-gratia bonus even after the same has been paid in terms of the Payment of Bonus Act.
- Last but not the least important is uniformity of labour laws in the country. There should be prior consultations with the involved bodies, whenever fresh legislation is contemplated by Central or any State Governments. I commend to the Central Government that they revive the Indian Labour Conference and the Standing Labour Committee so that there could be periodic and regular consultations with the employers and the workers on the future labour policies and legislation.□

Industrial Unrest: Causes and Cure

N.K. BHATT

THE extension of support by various trade unions, barring the INTUC, to the call for a Maharashtra Bandh on April 19 and the dismally poor response the call evoked from the workers, brings to the fore alarming trends in the country's industrial relations. The bandh call, in support of over two lakh workers in Bombay's textile industry, who have been terrorised and intimidated to abstain from work for nearly three months now, was given by the over-ambitious and unprincipled leader of the illegal strike, who has shot into prominence in the city's trade union scene by sheer muscle-power.

The textile strike is against the agreement between the Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh, sole recognised spokesman of the textile workers under the Bombay Industrial Relations Act, and the Mill Owners' Association arrived at in 1979 and valid till 1984. The agreement was the outcome of direct intervention by George Fernandes, the then Industries Minister at the Centre, and was blessed by Sharad Pawar, the then Chief Minister of Maharashtra. Yet these two leaders opted to support an agitation against the very same agreement.

Another aspect is that the leaders of the very same trade unions who in the recent past were highly critical of the State Government for not taking action against this unscrupulous trade union leader rushed to support the call for bandh given with the sole aim of establishing the supremacy of the same trade unionist who has all along been a law unto himself. By making false promises and misguiding the workers, this individual has done immense harm not only to the textile workers, but also to the future of a responsible trade union movement. The demand for high wages, particularly in the context of the prevalent wide disparities, appeals to the workers, but it is they, not the leaders, who ultimately suffer when they are deprived of even their normal wages. It will take years to undo the damage done by this individual who

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is concerned more with his political future than with the fate of the workers.

The case of Bombay's textile strike and the indirect encouragement from the Opposition trade unions have been cited only as an instant case to highlight the dangerous trends in industrial relations, which have come to be characterised by increasing resort to indiscipline, hooliganism, violence and intimidation.

This does not however mean that the working class has not played its part in the planned socio-economic activities in the country since Independence. Despite heavy odds, the country's working class has played a crucial role in ensuring that the wheels of production are kept moving. With their organised strength the workers have been striving to achieve distributive justice with a fair share in the gains of production, social security, education and other benefits for the weaker sections.

It is, however, a paradox that while labour has continued to play its legitimate role, there is a deliberate effort to whip up labour by putting it in the dock for all the ills of industry. The organised propaganda machinery has been given maximum play for projecting supposed or genuine lapses on the part of labour in an effort to conceal failures on the part of the other sectors of the economy. Management failures are more catastrophic. The managements have always been complaining of labour indiscipline, but there is growing indiscipline and inefficiency in the managements which are glossed over. The Government is unable to correct managerial indiscipline.

Another disconcerting trend that has been gradually assuming dangerous proportions is the growing sickness in industrial units, which is man-made rather than otherwise. By and large these units are in the private sector. The private sector has been always claiming the ability to efficiently manage and run industry and has been highly critical of the public sector. It would be interesting to make a study of this trend of deliberate efforts turn industrial units sick and then blame the workers for it.

It cannot be denied that there is an absence of the requisite awareness among trade unions of the crucial role they have to play in the socio-economic transformation of the country as a major segment of the social control system. There is a need for them to free themselves from the narrow sectarian shell in which they have been operating. They have to be in the forefront in mobilising public opinion and have to widen their vision and activities to cover the entire canvas for achieving human and social welfare. While striving to secure for the workers their legitimate rights and status, the leaders will also have to make them conscious of their obligations, taking into account the numerous problems like poverty, unemployment, inflation and rising prices confronting the country as a whole with a view to channelising the organised strength of the working class for overcoming the problems. There is, therefore, imperative need for the trade union movement as a whole to reorient its objectives with an integrated and positive approach and appropriate methods.

Dispute settlement should not be carried on between the management and the union in an atmosphere of mistrust or in terms of 'victory' for one side over the other. It involves efficient bargaining without any compromise on the legitimate dues of the workers. Failure or 'defeat' should be taken as an opportunity to begin again and not as an excuse for confrontation.

Collective bargaining and union-management cooperation is reflected in negotiations and hence should not be considered as a reconciliation with the established system. The very basis of collective bargaining is to provide a device by which new levels of rights can be secured. Therefore, the term collective bargaining calls for a fresh look since it has to cease to be a process of each party trying to outwit the other. It is an effective instrument for promoting harmony in industrial relations and joint action in new areas of joint cooperation. Cooperation does not mean absence of militancy; it only signifies mutual respect and recognition of interdependence for higher goals.

All collective bargaining agreements should have a built-in provision for voluntary arbitration either by a board or a single arbitrator as the parties prefer. At present, once direct negotiations fail, the alternative is either strike or adjudication. Adjudication is a time-consuming process, what with writs in High Courts and appeals to the Supreme Court. The involvement of workers in protracted litigation results in their losing faith in the grievance redressal procedure. The judgement of the Supreme Court invalidating the dismissal of a workman in the Mathura electricity undertaking is a concrete instance in this regard. The worker was dismissed in 1956 and the Supreme Court gave its verdict in 1981, that is, after more than a quarter century!

Adjudication is tortuous and frustrating, turning parties to production into parties to litigation, with the result that there is frequent resort to strikes and lock-outs. If voluntary arbitration becomes the normal course, then the prohibition of strikes or imposing adjudication would become entirely unnecessary.

Towards the realisation of the social objectives guaranteed in the Constitution, India has opted for planned economic development, ensuring in the process distributive and social justice. In this, the public sector has been assigned a pivotal role so as to occupy the commanding heights of the economy and bear the bulk of the burden of the industrialisation programme which will ensure the growth of ancillary industries and small-scale units with a balanced regional development and generation of employment opportunities.

The investment of Rs 97,500 crores during the Sixth Plan period is huge, and it is imperative that this colossal investment should be made fully productive. The nation's stake in ensuring the all-round success of the public sector is, therefore, very high.

Unfortunately, there is an absence of intellectual commitment to the philosophy behind the public sector among most of the existing management personnel. There is also lack of awareness about the role of the public sector in a developing economy. This is so because the top executives are often drawn from the administrative services who evince no interest in the performance of the units they are in charge of and conduct themselves as birds of passage. They treat the public sector units as transit camps on their way to getting posted elsewhere on promotion. Steps must be taken to recruit only those with ideological commitment to the public sector philosophy and the present management personnel must be made to undergo special training in the management of the public sector units with a view to injecting in them a new culture that would inform their approach and conduct.

There is a marked deterioration in industrial relations in the public sector. The approach to industrial relations in the public sector at present only lead to mutual mistrust. Some of the managements in the public sector are also to be blamed for the rapid deterioration in this regard. In an attempt to cover up their own failures, these managements have been encouraging trade unions that indulge in avoidable direct action and agitation to the detriment of production.

It is also unfortunate that trade unions owing allegiance to political parties which swear by the public sector are trying to wage their political battles on the trade union front and are thus harming the public sector.

The Marxist concept of class conflict and confrontation has no relevance in industrial relations in the public sector. With the radical changes that have been taking place in the country over the years, relations between labour and management in the public sector can never be based on conflict and confrontation. Labour's right to participate in management is enshrined in the Constitution. Participative management and Marxism cannot go together, for one is based on cooperation and the other on conflict. Industrial relations in the public sector have to be based on commonality of interests, on cooperation. The need is for a radical change in the basic philosophy guiding industrial relations in the public sector.

Planned development is the cornerstone of a socialist society. Our development will become meaningful only with fuller involvement and active participation of the people at all levels. This has to mean deeper involvement of the workers in the planning process for increased production and productivity which alone can redeem the country from a situation of low production and high prices. The pre-requisite for our cherished ideal of economic and social democracy is industrial democracy. The present anarchy in industrial relations makes it all the more imperative to hasten the participative process which will ensure workers' involvement in all decision-making processes right from the shop-floor level to the highest level. Such a process alone will ensure motivation for raising the levels of productivity and improving the performance of the enterprise, at the same time safeguarding the legitimate share of the workers in the gains of higher productivity.

We are on the threshold of a decade which can usher in either hope or despair. Hope is the only harbinger for growth and prosperity. This hope can be kindled and preserved by the mighty efforts of the working class who can no longer forget their rights and privileges. □

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Towards Intensified United Actions

INDRAJIT GUPTA

THE present decade, the Nineteen Eighties, has opened up new prospects of intensified united action by the working class on economic, social and political issues, for trade union and democratic rights and against the war danger posed by Imperialism.

A little more than three months ago, on January 19, 1982, the first national general strike since our country won its independence was carried out at the call of the National Campaign Committee comprising eight trade union centres and 40 industrial federations. Between 10 and 12 million workers in the public and private sectors stopped work for 24 hours, representing about 50 per cent of the workforce in the organised sector. This is a historic event in the long annals of the Indian trade union movement.

The strike was widespread in the steel and mining industries, ports and docks, oil and petroleum establishment, road transport, electricity undertakings, newspapers, engineering, chemical, cement, sugar, and textile mills, as well as in hundreds of thousands of small-scale, "sweated" industries. It was 100 per cent complete in the banks and insurance companies.

Besides, the strike was actively supported in large areas of the country by agricultural labour, teachers, students, women, and small shop-keepers, as a result of which colleges, schools, university campuses, and markets were closed.

Hundreds of thousands of workers who struck work knew they were liable to severe legal penalties including dismissal from their jobs and imprisonment up to six months under the provisions of the Essential Services Maintenance Act, 1981, which has virtually imposed a blanket ban on strikes in the so-called "essential" services. But the Government's threats and intimidation did not cow them down. High tribute must be paid to the invincible fighting, class spirit of the working people.

At least 50,000 were arrested, hundreds beaten up by the police for peaceful picketing and demonstrations, 19 lives were lost on the strike day in firing and clashes provoked by strike-breaking rowdies. The National Security Act, which we were assured would never be used against trade union activities, was misused right and left to arrest trade union leaders and cadres and to detain them without trial. The leaders of the ICFTU-affiliated Indian National Trade Union Congress went all-out to oppose and break the strike. An unprecedented barrage of false and slanderous propaganda was unleashed by the official media, and the radio and TV stations all over the country were directed to play down the success of the strike.

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These facts themselves testify to the sweep and militancy of the strike action. In only some sectors, particularly of the Government employees and public service workers, the impact of the strike was comparatively weak due to weakness of organisation though not of spirit.

The National Campaign Committee of trade union centres and industrial federations took shape at a convention in Bombay attended by 4,000 delegates in June 1981. It formulated a 13-point charter of demands which included not only specific demands of the workers relating to Government's wage-fixation, cost of living allowances and bonus policies, not only to problems of unemployment, closures and retrenchment, guarantees for collective bargaining and trade union rights and repeal of all repressive measures, but also demands of a broad, democratic and popular character relating to reduction of high prices, strengthening of the public distribution system, remunerative prices for farmers, guarantee of minimum wages and job security for agricultural labour, and stringent measures against black money operators and corrupt officials.

On the basis of these demands, hundreds of meetings and State-level conventions were organised throughout our vast country, culminating in a million-strong demonstration before Parliament on November 23, 1981. The subsequent strike on January 19 revealed that the democratic masses in India are eager to accept the leadership of the working class for a broad united action which concentrates on vital policy issues affecting the lives of millions of working people. It was precisely because of this significant feature that the one-day strike action incurred the frenzy and wrath of the Government and the monopolists. This also explains the post-strike offensive of victimisation, of suspensions, dismissals, pay-cuts, break-in-service, and police cases, which has been launched in many enterprises, and which has now to be firmly and unitedly resisted by appropriate forms of action.

Of course no one imagined that our goals could be achieved by a single, one-day mass action. We have to prepare for a sustained movement capable of adopting multiple forms to meet the requirements of the situation. The platform of trade union unity represented by the National Campaign Committee must be strengthened and broadened. The developing unity between the working class and other democratic sections must be raised to a higher level. Another small, but encouraging, symptom of the growing urge for unity is the fact that the Indian delegation to the recent UFTU Congress at Havana comprised not only the AITUC, but also the non-affiliated centres — CITU and HMS — as well as the independent federations of bank employees and college teachers, all of whom were active participants in the united strike of January 19.

At the same time, one crucial test of class consciousness is the capacity of the movement to resist and fight back the variety of disruptive and divisive forces which are seeking to divert and weaken the workers' unity on the basis of communalism, casteism, separatism, regional chauvinism, etc. These undoubtedly constitute a serious menace to the essential oneness of the trade union movement, and they have repeatedly succeeded in provoking fratricidal riots and tension in some major industrial centres. Constant vigilance, strong mass bases, ideological propaganda, and refusal to compromise with avowedly communal forces (some of them within the trade union movement itself) are an essential part of the struggle for working class unity.

The catalyst which is stimulating the forces of unity and united action is, of course, the impact of the worsening capitalist crisis and the intensified offensive of the monopolies and the transnationals. India is no exception to this process of development. It suffers from all the consequences of underdevelopment which are today characteristic of the non-oil-producing Third World countries — low purchasing power of the broad masses, chronic and growing unemployment, a severely restricted home market, inability of native industries to compete in the international market, a heavy import bill and crushing burden of trade deficit, growing dependence on external loans, a high rate of inflation which brings gains only to the monopoly sector, uneconomic prices for the farmers and producers of commercial raw materials, and domination of the wholesale trade by powerful groups of speculators and hoarders of essential commodities.

In the name of fighting inflation and securing access to export markets for the products of Indian industry, the Government and the monopolists are advocating so-called "austerity" and "economy" measures based on the notorious wage-price spiral theory which is dear to the heart of bourgeois economists all over the world. Thus, the Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-1985) of the Government of India, which, incidentally, was not even allowed to be debated in Parliament at its draft stage, speaks openly of the "need for bringing about a greater rationalisation of the wage structure and linking of wages at least in some measure to labour productivity". This is another name, if not for wage freeze, at least for a restraint on higher wages; although the consumer price index (1960 = 100) has risen above 460 points and continues to rise, the Government has recently revived the idea of paying only a portion of cost-of-living allowances in cash, while forcing its employees to deposit the balance with the Government for future payment in instalments. Social security legislations are planned to be amended so as to reduce the present benefits.

A number of collective agreements in key sectors like steel, coal, banks, BHEL, etc., will be expiring by August/September 1982. Their managements have already indicated that no new wage increases will be approved unless they are linked with productivity. Unless this official attitude changes, there is every likelihood of major confrontations taking place in these vital industries.

Emboldened by the Government's attitude, the monopolists are trying, in the face of the workers' stubborn resistance, to maintain a high rate of profit by reducing the work-force, increasing workload in the name of rationalisation, and cutting down of existing benefits and privileges. It has become a profitable practice to mismanage and fleece a company until it is declared a "sick" undertaking, after which the entire responsibility devolves on the Government to revive it to health with massive injections of public funds. The number of such "sick" units as on December 31, 1980, was 24,656.

As recently as on January 30, 1982, 58 textile mills (47 cotton and 11 jute) employing a total of 113,000 workers were lying idle, either completely closed down or locked-out by the employers on grounds of alleged losses or of labour "indiscipline". The entire work-force involved has been thrown on the streets without any compensation. According to the Government itself, about 46.26 million people would need employment at the end of the Sixth Five-Year Plan in 1985.

At a time when 50.82 per cent of the population of India is somehow existing below the poverty line (which approximates to a monthly per capita income of roughly Rs 70), the assets of the large industrial houses increased by 45 per cent during the three-year period ending 1980. The two largest monopoly houses in India, the Birlas and Tatas, have increased their assets by more than 200 per cent between 1966 and 1980.

It is mostly these large industrial houses which act as the vehicles for transporting the foreign multinationals into the Indian economy via collaboration agreements. There are at present more than 6,000 such agreements in operation, representing partnerships for production, export promotion, or technical expertise between Indian partners and about 1,000 US, British, French, West German, Japanese, Dutch, Swiss, Canadian and other firms in diverse fields such as drugs, fertilisers, aluminium, tyres, cosmetics, food, hotel-chains, detergents, electronics and so on. Moreover, the penetration of multinationals is not confined to the private sector, but has extended to vital public sector undertakings also.

In the last four years, multinational companies operating in India have remitted to their head offices about 577.33 million dollars by way of profits, dividends, royalties, fees for technical know-how and interest payments. US investment in India now totals 350 million dollars, second only to the UK. According to the American Chamber of Commerce, between 1975 and 1980, sales of 30 US equity investments in India increased at an average annual rate of 16 per cent, gross profits averaged 15.2 per cent, and dividends 19 per cent.

The threat to India's economic self-reliance and independent development has sharply aggravated with the recent sanctioning of an unprecedentedly massive loan of 5.8 billion dollars to India by the International Monetary Fund. Though all the terms and conditions of the agreement have not been made public, it is well known that among the so-called "conditionalities" of the IMF are the obligation of the recipient Government to create a more favourable atmosphere for private foreign investments, export-oriented production, further liberalisation of imports, lower subsidies for public services like railways, posts and telegraphs, urban transport, etc., and a cut-back on uneconomic public sector undertakings, and a rationalisation of labour laws leading to improved production discipline.

Already, foreign investors and their journals are waxing eloquent over their future prospects in India, while the working people live in dread of further burdens and tightening of their belts.

At the same time we must admit that the situation would have been even worse and the depth and manifestations of the capitalist crisis much more acute, had it not been for the extensive, all-sided and expanding cooperation between India, the USSR and other socialist countries in the fields of industrial development, science, trade and commerce. The Soviet Union, in particular, by selflessly aiding India to establish and expand key public sector projects of heavy and basic industries, by providing valuable technical know-how and training of Indian cadres, and by extending most favourable terms of trade to India, has created positive conditions which can and should be utilised by the Indian people to resist and defeat the aggressive inroads of the transnationals and of international imperialist agencies like the World Bank and the IMF.

It is high time for the trade union movement to move from general propaganda against the dangers of the transnationals' offensive — the essence of modern neo-colonialism — to concrete initiatives and actions. We must admit that we are still lagging behind in this respect. Coordinated action in different countries as also on regional levels against particular multinationals should be given high priority by the Indian trade union movement.

The working class in India is seeing the evil expressions of the Reagan doctrine in our region in the arms build-up of the military dictatorship in Pakistan, the proliferation of US bases and naval activity in the Indian Ocean, the undeclared war, launched from Pakistani soil by armed mercenaries against the revolutionary regime in Afghanistan, and the continuing Sino-US intervention against the people's Republic of Kampuchea on behalf of the genocidal Pol Pot clique. All these are integral parts of the global strategy of the US imperialists who are today also threatening to attack Cuba and El Salvador, and are shamelessly supporting the South

(Continued on page 22)

Problems of Organisation and Consciousness

B.T. RANADIVE

MAY Day this year will reveal the innate weakness in the consciousness of the working class and the trade unions.

The international working class and the people of several countries will celebrate the day as an anti-war day and a day for preserving peace.

The aggressive plan of US imperialists to place missiles in Europe in preparation for a war against the Soviet Union and the Socialist countries, and the prospect of a nuclear war in which the entire humanity might be involved, has raised united protests from thousands of people in Europe and the USA and led to big popular movements for peace. The working class and the people of the Soviet Union and the Socialist countries together with their governments stand by the people of the world in the fight for peace.

But it cannot be said that the trade union movement in India and all its major organisations are alive to these vital problems. Only the CITU and the AITUC and a couple of other central organisations will rouse their workers to the danger of war and their international duty. The rest will confine themselves to some immediate demands and ignore the international challenge of war.

The 'nationalisation' of some trade union leaders has corroded the consciousness and led to the isolation of large sections of India's working class from the main international current; notwithstanding repeated pleasure trips of these leaders abroad.

The war clouds have also reached our borders and the arming of Pakistan by the US imperialists presents a threat to the Indian people. But perhaps even this fact is not properly known to the mass of workers and the trade union leadership of many trade unions can be justifiably charged with neglecting the international task as well as duty towards defence of the freedom of our country.

The year that has gone has seen a tremendous tussle between the organised trade union movement and the anti-labour policies of the Indira Congress Government. Last year saw the wearing out of the illusion arising out of Indira's return to power and the working class again resumed its strike struggle. The number of man-days lost in 1981 went beyond 25 million, 4 million above the 1980 figure, though it was lower than the 1979 figure. The number of man-days lost in the public sector almost doubled since the preceding year. The increase in strikes and man-days lost was inevitable because of the economic conditions as well as the policies pursued by the Central Government. The Congress-I Government regards every trade union dispute as a law-and-order question. Outright repression and illegalisation of militant struggle is

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the basis of the labour policies of the Indira Government. The use of NSA against the Loco strikers and the enactment of the ESMA remind one of the Emergency regime so far as labour is concerned.

But the bourgeois-landlord Government follows other methods also to repress the organised movement and drive a wedge between it and the people. It carries on ideological propaganda against trade union demands by proclaiming a fake income and wages policy. It exercises pressure on all agencies—private employers, private sector banks, Government departments, nationalised sector — to oppose the economic and organisational demands of the workers. It launches attacks on the gains already secured by the working class, buying over some pliant leaders. It bars increase in wages and due compensation against inflation and price rise and makes administrative provisions for imposing the burdens of high prices on the working people. It attacks the concept of collective bargaining and assumes arbitrary powers, leaving hardly any scope for the employees concerned to negotiate.

Similarly, it uses state power and its patronage to recognise only its agencies as leaders of the working class and directs private employers also not to deal with unions with mass following. The Bombay textile strike involving more than two lakh workers which is now three months old completely exposes the partisan and arbitrary policy pursued by the Government in relation to recognition. The strike took place in spite of the opposition of the recognised union, the favourite of the Government affiliated to the INTUC. The entire mass of workers joined the strike and repudiated the leadership of this recognised union. The strike continued for nearly three months under the leadership of rival unions but the Government insists that only the disowned union will continue to represent the workers and refuses to open talks with the union which is conducting the strike. And these are the people who talk of Productivity Year; they express their concern for increased productivity but they are prepared to sacrifice crores of rupees worth production if the workers repudiate their present leadership. It seems under the Congress-I regime the people have the right to vote for a Government of their choice but the workers have no right to vote for the union of their choice.

The Government further does everything to give monopoly of representation to its own agents to represent the Indian labour movement abroad so that the real voice of the Indian working class does not reach international gatherings. This is necessary to prevent the exposure of Indian labour legislation with its farcical provisions and implementation machinery. The growing collapse of this legislation shows that formal acceptance by the Government of India of international conventions does not change by an iota the worker's life in India.

Last year the trade union movement had to contend against this policy and wage innumerable struggles. It may be said that the outstanding feature of the year that has gone is the achievement of united action and trade union unity. There was a break with the morose conditions of the earlier year when some central trade union leaders, reeling under the defeat their political leaders had suffered in the 1980 elections, were chary of mass actions.

The CITU steadfastly worked for united action and, helped by others, was successful in giving a push forward to trade union unity. The Bombay convention was a very important step in the direction of unity. Never before had so many organisations covering different industries, central trade unions and federations together with the organisations of employees, come together to voice their common protest against the anti-labour policies of the Government and champion the demands of the people, the peasants and the agricutural workers.

The massive unity demonstrated on November 23 last when lakhs of workers gathered in the Capital to voice their protest and the demands raised on behalf of the people and the call for strike marked yet another step in the unity and consciousness of the trade union movement. The demonstration included hundreds of working women coming over long distances to the Capital and reflected the new awakening among women workers which was made possible by CITU unions devoting special attention to their problems.

The unity demonstrated on January 19 to implement the call for strike was unprecedented in trade union history. With the support of major Opposition parties the strike became a complete bandh in many places, drawing tens of thousands of shopkeepers, hoteliers, lawyers and professionals.

The demands raised by this strike were significant and conformed to the international trend of merging of working class demands with the demands of democracy and living standards of all sections of the downtrodden.

By combining the demands of the workers with the pressing demands of the peasants and the agricultural workers, with the demands of the suffering people against fleecing prices, the trade union movement is taking steps to unite all sections who are leading a miserable existence under the bourgeois-landlord ruling and authoritarian party and seeks to discharge the responsibility of the working class towards the people.

The strike against the NSA and ESMA gave expression to the working class protest against the authoritarian regime and its determination to defend the democratic rights of the people.

No wonder the government came down with a heavy hand against the workers. More than 60,000 workers — 20,000 in Kerala alone — including trade union office-bearers, were arrested and put behind bars. INTUC leaders were active in breaking the strike and attacks by anti-social elements against the workers were common. Ten workers fell victim to brutal police firings.

Organisationally, the weakest part of the strike was the Railway and Central Government organisations including Defence organisations. The leaders of these organisations could not make up their minds to join the strike though many of them had earlier supported the call and also decided to join it. In West Bengal, Tripura and Kerala, however, these employees joined the common action in a big way.

Among the State Government employees the strike evoked magnificent response in West Bengal, Kerala, Maharashtra and Tripura. In other States there was hardly any response.

These weaknesses have to be removed. Unless this is done they are likely to prove extremely dangerous to future growth and encourage the Government to launch a general attack on the present gains of the workers.

The Government is already busy at the game. Exploiting the weakness and meekness of these leaders, the Government has enforced compulsory deposit scheme of arrears of Dearness Allowance on the Central employees. This will be soon used as a precedent first in relation to the Central Government employees and then in relation to all sections of employees and workers. It was the same leaders who let down the workers by agreeing to link bonus with productivity, and now the Government is intent on introducing this principle in all industries.

It is necessary that the central trade unions and federations hold a dialogue with these leaders to make them aware of the great harm done to the trade union movement by their policies. Above all, it is necessary to make an ardent appeal for unity and common action to the mass of Central Government, State Government, Railway and Defence employees to fight for their demands shoulder to shoulder with the rest of the working class, to fight unitedly for the common demands of the workers and the people.

It may now be safely assumed that through the united protests the trade unions and federations are realising that they are now face to face with definite economic and political policies of the Government which can be combated only on the basis of their class strength. Questions of rising prices, inflation, deficit financing, imports and exports policy, IMF loan or ESMA and NSA are not matters that can be remedied by a section of the working class. To combat them the working class should face the Government unitedly as a class. This is the realisation that is seeping to the movement through the experience of common action, especially the historic January 19 strike.

This consciousness has to be carried forward—the process of trade union demands merging with general democratic demands, the process of trade unions coming out as champions of the peasantry has to be carried forward. If carried forward consistently, it will result in important political developments, placing the initiative in the fight against authoritarianism with the working class.

The January 19 strike itself revealed the possibilities of united working class actions broadening into people's actions against the authoritarian regime. The decision of the organised trade union movement to go into united action, the certainty that the action will embrace lakhs of workers, evoked support from the Opposition political parties and led to the participation of wide sections of the people including the peasantry. The championing by the trade unions of the demands of the peasants, agricultural workers and the people immensely widened the scope of the action.

There must be firm resolve to carry forward this heritage of the January 19 strike. The working class, if it is to be true to its class and its people, must courageously face the immediate problems that confront the country. At the centre is the grim fight against the authoritarian regime.

Certain sections of the working class, the working class of West Bengal, of Kerala and Tripura, have been in the forefront of this struggle defending the Left Ministries and frustrating the designs of the Congress-I Government against them and protecting these advanced outposts of democracy.

The coming elections in West Bengal and Kerala call upon the working class in these States and the entire working class of India to do everything to defeat the Congress I and ensure the victory of the Left forces and their allies.

The performance of the Left-led Ministries in these States is now well-known to the Indian people. They loyally stood by their electoral promises, protected the workers' right to strike, refused to employ the police in industrial disputes or any democratic and economic agitations of the masses and condemned both the NSA and the ESMA. These acts of theirs made them advanced outposts of democracy fighting against the attacks of the authoritarian party.

This May Day calls upon the working class to attend to other challenges also.

The imperialists are at their old game of disrupting the country's unity. In Assam they are promoting secessionist movements, exploiting the economic backwardness of the people; in the Adivasi areas they are doing the same with the help of some foreign Christian missions; inside the country they are financing Hindu communal organisations to cause the resurgence of Hindu orthodoxy. The RSS plays the same game and the Jamiat-e-Islami, proponent of Islamic fundamentalism also helps the imperialists' game to divide the country on communal lines. The oppression of Harijans also contributes to this disintegrating process in a big way.

This disintegration of the struggle of the common man and the disintegration of the nation's unity are intended to help the imperialist plot to re-enslave the country. The working class has to fight against this danger by fighting the communal and casteist forces as it has to fight the danger to the country's freedom from outside emanating from the feverish arming of Pakistan's dictatorial regime.

The working class is best suited to serve the nation because its class organisations can unite all communities and castes. Only, they should learn to pay more attention to the demands of the oppressed communities and castes.

It is obvious that the present state of organisation and consciousness of the trade union movement is totally inadequate to meet the grave problems confronting the country and the working class. The international consciousness of the trade union movement is at its lowest. Its awareness of the problems facing the people is also not very high. It seeks unity on day-to-day demands but there is no serious effort to bring all organisations under a common umbrella. The call given by the CITU for a Confederation of Trade Unions has not evoked any response. But the sincerity with which all the constituents of the National Campaign Committee, that common body of central trade unions for joint actions, and the Federations worked to implement the decisions of the Bombay Convention and the January 19 strike call, increase the prospects of rapid progress in this direction.

The next year is likely to see big advances in both consciousness and organisation.□

Government Employees' Constraints

O.P. GUPTA

TRADE Unions amongst Government employees and their struggles for economic improvement is going to play a significant role in the trade union movement in the country. They will be required to bear the main brunt in the struggle against the Government's economic policies as, unlike private employers, the Government will not be able to give economic relief to its employees. While private employers have been able to improve the wages and conditions of service of their employees by sharing the loot of national wealth through concessions and price rise, the Government is not able to meet even reasonable demands and keep up parity in wages.

Out of the total working force of 247.56 lakhs in the country, the Government directly or indirectly controls more than two-thirds, as is evident from the following:

	1961 lakhs	*1971 lakhs*	*1981 lakhs*
Central Government	20.90	27.71	31.96
State Government	30.14	41.52	56.11
Quasi-Government	7.73	19.29	45.49
Local Bodies	11.73	18.78	21.25
Total	70.50	107.31	154.81
Public Sector		15.75 (1976-77)	18.38
Private Sector	50.40	67.42	74.37

Source: Economic Survey 1981-82.

Unfortunately the central trade unions, partly because of split on a political basis and partly because of the limitations imposed on the trade unions of Government employees, are not able to provide an effective lead. The inability of Government employees to participate in the January 19 strike and the heavy repression let loose upon them after the strike, reflect this reality. A deeper study of these realities is needed.

The trade union movement among Central Government employees has not as yet acquired homogeneity despite the fact that since independence, all sections jointly organised strikes in 1960 and 1968. The Confederation of Central Government employees formed in 1955 has grown in size and is looked upon with respect by many workers, particularly white collar labour, but it has not yet become an effective instrument. A few months ago, its Secretary-General wanted to resign and leave the organisation, saying it had lost its utility.

The non-participation of Government employees in the January 19 strike and soon thereafter the acceptance of the Government's DA offer, has not only created controversy about the credibility of the movement but exposed the weakness of the whole movement. The leadership of the Government employees' unions have been subjected to severe criticism by the leader of the National Campaign Committee representing various national trade union centres without realising their limitations.

Trade union movement among Government employees is over 70 years old and has been greatly influenced by the British trade union movement. British workers who came to India as a part of the exploiting administration, set up an organisation to improve their lot particularly in the Railways, Telegraph and other departments. They were greatly influenced by the labour Party. In their turn, they influenced the Indian employees. Despite the fact that the economic condition of the Government employees vis-a-vis the poverty of the Indian people under British raj was not bad they could not tolerate for long the discriminating behaviour of the Government. In this they were encouraged by the Indian National Congress. Gandhi's non-cooperation movement and political struggles of 1921, 1932, 1942 etc helped the growth of militancy in the movement. While very few Government employees resigned from service on Gandhi's call, in their limited way they roused consciousness and patriotic urge among the employees which on economic issues went into action as early as 1908.

The Railways were managed by private British companies and were taken over as a nationalised service after 1945. Therefore the development of trade unionism among them has been more on the industrial pattern and not as in the case of civil servants. Only after the second Central Pay Commission did Railwaymen start behaving as Government employees (though not as civil servants). Even today they are not emotionally integrated with other civil servants despite the two strikes in 1960 and 1968 which were fought under a common banner. Both because of the size (they are more than 50 per cent of public servants) and being an operative service, their role will always be somewhat different.

Among the remaining Central Government employees the bulk and best organised are the Post & Telegraph employees. The P & T service, unlike the Railways, has been state-owned ever since its

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inception. Its affairs were conducted on commercial-cum-utility service where in the postal wing the charges of services are fixed below cost and the department is expected to make good the loss. Consequently, in respect of wage and service conditions, the P & T workers are discriminated against as compared to other civil servants. Therefore, their trade union, while facing the limitations of the British rules for the civil services, had to organise struggles to improve their service conditions.

Among the remaining civil servants, unions on association pattern grew as in Audit, Income Tax, etc.

Till the Second World War there was not much stir among these employees. In 1946, the massive postmen's strike all over the country and the complete P & T strike in West Bengal, Assam and some other parts of India gave an impetus to the freedom movement.

In the background of the political upsurge, the first Central Pay Commission was appointed in 1946. There have been two more CPCs, one in 1960 and the other in 1973. The Pay Commission, while removing many disparities, failed to give a fair deal to the operational staff and therefore there were strikes in 1960 and 1974.

The 1960 strike exposed the inadequacy of the negotiating machinery in the Government services. Despite Prime Minister Nehru's assurance, this machinery was not created till 1966. However, the Government's refusal to refer the dispute to arbitration provoked the workers to organise a one-day token strike in 1968.

Lack of cohesion in the Government employees' trade union movement is not merely a national phenomenon — it exists all over the world though except for the fact that there is a common employer and wages are broadly similar there is nothing in common. But these two aspects — common employer and consequently joint negotiating machinery — compel the movement to adopt a united stand and if possible a common programme.

The Government employees are governed even today by British-made Conduct Rules which prohibit participation in political activity. Except for the Railways which brought a tradition of trade union functioning from British days and the Defence workers who are treated as industrial workers, Government employees are not permitted to affiliate their organisations with national TU centres. They are also not allowed to form unions on communal or caste basis. These limitations have proved a blessing in disguise as they have helped the workers in civil services to avoid split on a political basis. Only after the 1968 strike and later under the Janata Party was some political bias injected.

These restraints and limitations have also influenced the approach of the trade unions. Outside the Railways and Defence, the National Federation of P & T Employees plays the most effective role. Its attitude also influences the decision of the Railways and Defence on common issues. The NFPTE has acquired this unique position by hard and devoted work. The correct tactics adopted by the NFPTE in evolving its approach not only towards the Government but also in respect of the struggles of the workers to win their demands have been vindicated over the years.

Its approach to the Government is from issue to issue, that is, neither total loyalty to the Government like the INTUC nor permanent hostility like the Left trade unions. Its support to Emergency was neither for seeking favours nor out of fear. This approach has kept a vast section of employees with varied political leaning firmly loyal to the NFPTE.

Because of the balanced approach — middle of the road line — it has been subjected to repressive measures by the Government on the one hand and to criticism by political elements on both Left and Right on the other.

Even during Emergency, despite its support to the regime, the NFPTE refused to yield to unfair pressure from the Government and became a special target of attack. Its journals were destroyed by burning, the elected office-bearers were not recognised for years together, and funds of the union in the Post Office Savings Bank Account were allowed to be withdrawn by a rival group.

On the workers' struggle also the NFPTE adopts a realistic approach. The NFPTE was committed to the programme of the National Campaign Committee for the January 19 strike. The limitations on the conduct of civil servants and the fact that the Ordinance had a direct bearing on them

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considerably dampened their determination. Therefore the NFPTE did not hesitate to call for restraint and, despite pressure, it showed its participation by holding mass rallies and meetings of workers including those politically loyal to the Congress.

The NFPTE favours settlement through negotiations but does not hesitate to organise a strike when it becomes necessary. Through this policy it has secured for its employees great respect in the ranks of all Central Government employees. It does not boast or take a back seat but moves in a determined manner when required. It is because of this that in both the 1960 and 1968 strikes P&T workers' contribution was the maximum. Even in 1981, soon after the Ordinance was promulgated and before the NCC could take up cudgels, P&T workers prepared themselves to organise a non-cooperation movement. The workers' unity and determination to act was so great that Minister C.M. Stephen declared that the Ordinance was not sufficient to handle the situation.

Government employees are today the worst paid section of salaried workers. Not only wages in the public sector apart from banks, LIC, etc., have improved but even some State Governments have granted better scales. Most of the Central Government employees are in operative services like the Railways, P&T, Defence. Therefore the Government cannot continue to deny them parity in wages with the public sector undertakings. The Government has agreed to settle this demand by March 31, 1983.

The NFPTE has no illusion that the Government will accept the demand out of goodwill, and it is therefore determined to unify not only its own ranks but also other sections of Government employees including Railways and Defence to create sufficient pressure and to organise an effective struggle thereafter if the Government tries to back out.□

Towards United Actions

(from page 17)

African racist regime as well as the Israeli aggressors who have illegally annexed the Golan Heights.

But all these crimes and conspiracies against peace and national independence of the peoples are bound to fail. While the situation calls for heightened vigilance without relaxing for a single moment, what is more urgently required is still greater unity of will and purpose, stronger determination, better coordination of mass actions and popular struggles against the common enemy and refusal to be duped by his deceitful manoeuvres and lying propaganda. Our trade union movement must bring the organised working class into the front line of battle against the war-mongers. We express our full support for, and solidarity with all the peoples fighting against imperialism, colonialism and aggression, whether it be in Asia, Africa or Latin America. We stand for the defence of our own country and its security against any imperialist threat or attack, and for consistent carrying-out of India's policy of non-alignment and peace.

We support wholeheartedly the tremendous initiatives being taken by the Government of the USSR in favour of genuine disarmament, relaxation of international tensions and a negotiated solution of outstanding issues which threaten the peace of the world.

In the period ahead, the working class will thus have to combine its tasks of fighting the anti-labour policies of the Government and employers, and for better living and working conditions, with the task of safeguarding the security and integrity of the country and against the dangers of war and destabilisation created by the imperialists.□

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Agrarian Women : Unanswered Questions

ANJALI DESHPANDE

IF you believe the Government of India, only 31,339,000 women out of a total 263,352,000 are economically active. The rest, so to speak, are economically idle.[1] The enormous household industry, which consists of cooking, washing, cleaning, tending the sick, child-rearing, does not bring in any monetary returns to the exchequer and therefore it is found proper to declare that a minute percentage is active in economic terms while the rest live as burdens. The fact is ignored that it does save the exchequer a considerable amount of currency which would have to be spent on maintaining and staffing kitchens, dormitories, nursing units for the sick and nurseries to rear future workers, if women were not available as chattels.

Of these 11.9 per cent 'working women', a large number work on the fields. The Ministry of Labour records that of the total working population of 180 million only 31.3 million were women according to the 1971 census. The break-up of the recent census is yet to be made available. As compared to the 149.2 million male working population, women constitute just a little above one-fourth of the total working force. That is where the Labour Ministry stops — and that is where agricultural labour unions should take up studies.

But the main problem with writing anything about women agrarian labour is that despite thirty-four years of self rule, and over a score years of the existence of numerous kisan sabhas, no comprehensive study of the nature of work women do and are allowed to do in rural areas is available. One would expect the Left to show some interest and do some work by themselves on such delicate issues like data collection, without relying entirely on Government figures or the methodology by which statistics are arrived at. But 13 years of the Bharatiya Khet Mazdoor Union (BKMU) which was formed by splitting the Kisan Sabha, mainly on class lines, has yielded nothing on the subject of agrarian labour, leave alone women agrarian labour. It is the same sad story with the other major Left party, the CPI-M.

The vital importance of women labour in agriculture is indicated by a small occurrence recorded in the pocket book of labour statistics. The average number of workers employed in coffee plantations in 1976 is shown to be 60,0 0. The figure suddenly dips to 31,000 in 1977. The explanation for this decrease is given in a footnote that reads, 'The employment in coffee plantations is less during 1977 due to non-availability of women employment figures for Karnataka State'. If the number can fall by one half because figures of women employed in one State (although in this case Karnataka happens to be the major coffee-producing State out of four such States), it shows that nearly half the labour employed in coffee plantations is female. Another corollary which carries more significance is, why were figures of only women labour not available when the number of men employed in the same year is recorded as 20,000? In all probability the survey was never undertaken. Does it not smell of bias?

In agriculture too, about a quarter of the people who actually work in the fields are women. The 1971 Census records that of 47.5 million agricultural labourers 15.8 million were females. But it is a different story in the upper sections of agriculture, not engaged in actual work in the fields, but to a certain extent owning pieces of land and managing it are necessary. The number of men rises steeply from 31.7 million to 69 million and that of women falls to 9.3 million. Owning land is nearly the exclusive right of men. Recently (this year), when land grabbed from the Mahant at Bodhgaya was distributed, only after a fierce protest lodged by women activists of the Chhatra Yuva Sangharsh Vahini, the leaders of the struggle, and other women's groups, pieces of land were allotted to women also.

Even when it comes to toiling on land, women are specifically barred from certain tasks like hoeing. This has nothing to do with the much-publicised physical weakness of women. It is so that women may not contaminate what is "sacred". The other tasks that women perform in the villages are ample evidence that they are not treated as weaklings. After reaping stacks of grain with bent backs the whole day and walking long distances with heavy sheafs on their heads, they have to perform the additional task of house-keeping which includes such arduous jobs as carrying water over long distances, pounding and grinding grain, collecting firewood, making cowdung cakes, cleaning the house and coating the house and hearth with liquidised dung, dish washing, washing clothes at the pond. On top of all this, the children have to be looked after, elders have to be fussed over and the cattle have to be attended to. The normal day of a poor rural woman begins long before dawn and ends long past sunset. No weak person can perform such jobs.

The Equal Remuneration Act passed in 1976 and now in force is only to be seen where the wages are so low that no discrimination is possible. As the Labour Ministry itself admits, the small and scattered nature of land holdings makes the enforcement of the Act a formidable task. One would expect the agricultural worker's unions to atleast raise this economic issue in their movements. But apparently the issue has political undertones of fighting for equality of men and women which our frail unions can neither swallow nor digest. The BKMU carved out of the Kisan Sabha of the united CPI so as to overcome difficulties presented by uniting various classes under the aegis of the same union can be said to be the oldest union of agrarian workers owing allegiance to the Left. What have been its achievements?

To quote from its own report to the Fifth Nationl Conference 1981, under the heading 'Tasks of agricultural workers' movement, it says: 'The problems of women agricultural workers like maternity benefits, creches, proper resting places at work centres, payment of equal wages, etc., should be *highlighted* while agitating and struggling for wage increase' (emphasis added). The BKMU deems it sufficient to only highlight issues of such vital importance to women which also have the potential of shaking the very foundations of the social set-up.

Their achievements in other fields are beyond the scope and intent of this article, but their viewpoint regarding women labourers is amply reflected in their actions reported by themselves in their report. In Donepudi village, in Andhra Pradesh, and surrounding areas, BKMU succeeded in wresting an increase in the wages of men from Rs 5 to Rs 8 and women from Rs 3 to Rs 5, by striking work for three days. In Davegigudam village of the same State, agrarian workers under the BKMU umbrella together with the CPI-M-led union 'demanded wage at the rate of Rs 10 for men and Rs 8 for women and the landlords through negotiations agreed to pay at the rate of Rs 8 for men and Rs 6 for women'. Some achievement!

With their long history of struggle, plantation workers seem to be the only ones who raised the question of maternity benefits. Employment of women in plantations has seen a steady increase. In 1976 an average number of 416,000 women laboured on our tea, coffee and rubber plantations, which was 38 per cent of the total plantation workers. In just one year the percentage of female workers rose by 8 despite a general decline in plantation labour.

Only from this category comes the news that women claimed maternity benefits and got them. A total number of 42,991 women made claims and 41,791 got them. That only around ten per cent women had the pluck and support to stake claims is a reflection on the labour movement as such, still it does show willingness on the part of the unions to support such causes, although whether the women received all benefits accorded by law or not is not made clear.

Benefits is a word which allows wide-ranging interpretation. The Maternity Benefits Act provides six weeks leave before the date of actual delivery including it, and six weeks after the date of delivery excluding it. It would be pertinent to enquire whether enough medical advice is available to would-be mothers in remote rural areas to enable them to fix the date of confinement fairly approximately, to calculate the six preceding weeks long before the six-week period commences so as to allow enough time to stake the claim and fight it out and get it sanctioned so as to avoid running the risk of losing one's job. In all probability post-natal leave may be the only leave available to women.

In cases where no pre-natal and post-natal care services are provided by employers, the law prescribes Rs 25 as medical bonus. With the number of ill-equipped primary health centres in the rural areas it is anybody's guess how much the employer can provide to women with complicated childbirths calling for specialised attention. The *bonus* would not suffice to reach her to the nearest hospital, which may be miles away, in an emergency, and even after that there is no guarantee of care.

In order to effectively combat discrimination against women, it is essential for labour unions to go through a thorough soul searching exercise. It is true that being burdened with both housework and labour, women have neither the requisite time and energy, nor the inclination, to participate in collective struggles. The realisation that without collective efforts their conditions cannot be bettered and the lack of inclination to participate in the same forms an important contradiction among women. Despite this, a large number of women have come forward to raise the banner of struggle. In demonstrations one can see a generous sprinkling of women. Although their participation in the general labour movement is very low, it is not negligible.

If the labour movement sincerely desires women's participation it cannot be done only by wishing for it. To draw women into struggles the traditional relations between men and women have to be broken at the family level which the labour unions leave untouched in order to ensure that their membership and popular appeal are not disturbed. Without a radical change in their approach towards women no labour union can succeed in bringing about effective participation of women and hope to try solve their problems. Observing workers' days and bringing token representatives of women labourers to rallies and demonstrations by getting them a day's leave from drudgery may be a good populist stunt. It does not indicate an earnest approach towards women who form half the population.

Says the BKMU report that it had to delay its fifth conference for two years because 'all our attention had to be concentrated on the election battle in the next two months'. Since when has seizing a couple of more seats in parliament become the primary objective of the Left? That is what the legal Left is obsessed with, tossing coins to decide which section of the ruling classes to support. And the victory of the Janata Party in which kulaks and arch communal and reactionary forces had a dominant role resulted in the unleashing of a fierce offensive against the rural poor. 'Never before', says its General Secretary, Kodiyan, 'we had faced such a testing period as we did in 1977 and 1978'. 'Hundreds of Harijans were brutally murdered, *their* women raped, *their* houses and standing crops destroyed. All, houses, crops and women, are lumped together as *their*. After years of the founding of the CPI and its various fronts and its history one would think it is not in need of being reminded that class oppression (and caste too if you please) is not in quantified terms but in qualified ones; that whether a woman is raped once or twice is immaterial in historical terms, but the fact that a women *can* be raped is a significant symptom of a deeper malaise and that fighting to reduce the number of symptoms is not fighting the disease.☐

Inter-religious Couples: A Study

USHA BAMBAWALE and A. RAMANAMMA

INTER-RELIGIOUS marriage is a significant phenomenon in contemporary times. It has important implications in major institutional spheres of society, such as kinship and religion. Religion performs the positive function of maintaining social solidarity and social control. Parsons feels that religion is entwined with other elements in society in a complicated way, while at the same time people are influenced by the social groups of their origin. The social structure of a traditional society like that of India is decisively defined by religion, which is the ultimate ethos of its civilisation.

The central Hindu value-system — *purusharthas*, *dharma*, doctrine of *Karma*, and rebirth and the 'core' institutions of caste and extended kinship have crucially determined this ethos. Caste is the most important factor of social organisation in India. To ensure its continuity, society tightens marriage among people by endogamy and exogamy. Fundamentally the process of mate-selection functions like a market system and is governed by two norms — incest or avoidance rules and ethnocentric preferences. Consequently, the field of eligible partners is narrowed down considerably. In India the various religious groups follow strict religious endogamy and frown upon inter-religious marriages and try to prevent them. Though Christianity and Islam are proselytising religions, still their adherents prefer to marry within their religious fold.

Today winds of change are sweeping over the world. The values orienting social change in modern times are individualism, equality, liberty and secularism. The cumulative impact of these values, ideologies and beliefs finds its expression in two typical attitudes — romantic love and companionship. Science and technology, economic changes springing from industrialisation and urbanisation have contributed to the changed ideas and values of mate selection. This is significantly demonstrated in the slow but steady increase in mixed marriages. It is an expression of a major breakthrough in the value system of traditional India. Psychologically they pose some innermost problems of adjustment and reconciliation of the partners concerned. They have also an important socio-psychological dimension as they are related with a group phenomenon.

In this paper we attempt to study the pattern of adjustment amongst inter-married couples, who have been socialised in a home with different religious convictions. It is an accepted fact that all couples have to make some degree of adjustment, but Landis and Landis very emphatically declared that those who marry across religious lines have not only the secular but also the religious adjustment to make.

In this research the size of respondents' family, social status, social, cultural and educational background, and number of years of marriage are analysed. The study was restricted to the geographical area of Pune. The quota sampling method was adopted. Data were collected from 200 individuals by questionnaire.

The sample consisted of 50 Hindu, 26 Christian and 24 Muslim men and 37 Hindu, 45 Christian and 18 Muslim Women. The respondents belonged to 12 linguistic groups of India — Bengali, English, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Konkani, Malayalam, Marathi, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu.

There are a few essentially secular adjustments that practically all couples have to make after marriage. Religion is irrelevant in these spheres and compatibility is based on inter-personal factors. A successful marriage depends upon agreement on basic values, affectional intimacy, accommodation, euphoria and certain other factors. Disagreement is more likely to arise between dissimilar persons, and marital problems amongst the heterogamously married reflect conflicts in the cultural background of the people concerned.

Only 28 per cent couples shared a common mother-tongue at the time of the wedding. Those who did not have a common mother-tongue chose to communicate in either Hindi or English. The bond of a common language eased interaction with parents and neighbours and this further contributed to reconciliation.

Other specific areas where adjustment was necessary were food habits, daily routine, social activities and monetary dealings. Though these habits are imbedded in one's personality, they are also inextricably connected with the cultural and religious background of the family. Adjustment in food habits assumes greater significance because it involves much more understanding between the partners. Approximately 15 per cent males and 16 per cent females were vegetarians. Vegetarianism and non-vegetarianism have some religious implications, being related to the creeds of violence and non-violence. The majority of the respondents were non-vegetarians and included a greater number of Christians and Muslims. There were 31 per cent males and 35 per cent females who differed in food habits from their spouses. Even after marriage vegetarians continued to maintain their particular food habits. In India not only does the pattern of cooking vary from caste to caste and from religion to religion, but even the metal of the cooking vessels differs in Hindu, Muslim and Christian homes.

Even in the secular areas of adjustments we clearly find overtones of the religious background. This clearly indicates how tangled religion is with day-to-day life-style. Most of the respondents, who had set up independent houses had achieved consi-

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derable harmony in the matter of food habits. Only those respondents who stayed in joint families took a little longer to adjust.

A few couples had incompatible working patterns, due to the nature of their employment. Those couples who worked at the same place invariably went and returned from the place of work together. They invariably spent their leisure together. A sizeable number of women (44 per cent) worked to supplement their husband's income. A few (8 per cent) continued to work because of love of their profession.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by difference in opinions in certain areas of life-style

Differences in opinion	*Male*		*Female*	
	Yes	*No*	*Yes*	*No*
Spending money	60	40	56	44
Daily worship	13	87	10	90
Rituals	7	93	10	90
Ceremonies	7	93	5	95
Other religious matters	15	85	18	82

A greater number of respondents (78 per cent) had adjusted to the timings of work and shared the chores at home. Of the 52 women who worked, 26 said that they were pressed for time and had to get up very early in the morning in order to complete their home tasks. They stressed that they had to make numerous adjustments to lead a fairly uncomplicated life. Kapur (1970) feels that wives had to make more adjustments in marriage than the husbands and whenever there are disagreements between husband and wife, the wife gives in 2-1/2 times more frequently than the husband. It was interesting to note that our respondents corroborated this view and testified that in general wives make greater adjustments after marriage than their husbands. American data are no different. Rurgess and Cottell (1939), Locke and Williamson (1958), Landis and Landis (1958) in their studies find a similar pattern. Thus adjustment by wives in marriage seems to be more or less a universal pattern. Most of the respondents said that they pooled their incomes to meet all needs, and financial matters were jointly handled. Those who lived in joint families contributed part of their salary to the family.

Though religious differences constitute the area of major confrontation, financial adjustment has assumed greater importance, because of the changing priorities of men and women.

Intensity of religious feeling played an important part in adjustment amongst the inter-religious married couples. Seventyfive per cent of male and 90 per cent female respondents believed marriage to be a sacred event, while 14 per cent men and 5 per cent women considered it a social bond and 11 per cent males and 5 per cent females considered it a convenient contract. This indicates that the majority of the respondents view marriage as being sacred, and this leads to conflict in adjustment.

A few men (18 per cent) and women (5 per cent) strongly resented their spouses following their own form of worship. Mild resentment was expressed by 46 per cent males and 55 per cent females; only 36 per cent men and 40 per cent women had absolutely no objection to their spouse's pattern of worship. Those who resented their spouses following their own religion felt that the children should not be unduly influenced by one parent.

Table 2: Form of worship in the household

Form of worship	*Type of worship*					
	Hindu		*Muslim*		*Christian*	
	Males	*Females*	*Males*	*Females*	*Males*	*Females*
Own religion	17	9	11	2	9	18
Spouses religion	8	15	3	11	3	11
Both	16	12	7	5	10	15
No worship	6	1	3	—	1	1
Not applicable						
Atheist	3	—	—	—	3	—
Total:	50	37	24	18	26	45

There is a clear indication that even after an inter-religious marriage a number of respondents showed a preference for their own form of religious worship in their homes. Objects of worship such as idols, pictures of deities or a sacred corner for worship of only one religion were in evidence in these houses. A few allowed their spouses the liberty of worship and some had compromised by allowing both forms of worship. Schnepp and Masatio (1955) point out that cooperation and adaptation are common among inter-married couples.

The practice of daily prayer was followed by 48 per cent men and 27 per cent women. Once a week prayers were said by 29 per cent men and 32 per cent women. These respondents went to the place of worship and participated in community prayers. A few prayed on special occasions such as Christmas, Easter, Ramzan or Diwali. Praying together is more a characteristic of Christians and Muslims as their worship is congregational. Among Hindus hymn singing or bhajans are congregational but in the long tradition of cultish worship, invariably an individual prays separately. Christian women emerged as the largest group that continues to relate religion with its own forms of prayer and worship.

In this study, we noticed that (1) there was no evidence of any meaningful or consistent mutual dialogue between husband and wife on each other's religion; (2) by and large there was no resistence to learn the prayers of the spouse with the exception of a few women, who were ardent followers of their original religion. In spite of their conversion they refused to learn the prayers of their new faith; (3) some women gave up their original way of worship at the insistence of their spouse. A few of these respondents had a genuine problem because (a) the husbands could not instruct them regarding the specific prayers, (b) the women were reluctant to learn a new set of prayers.

Reading of religious texts also forms part of

(*Continued on page 33*)

Press Commission Report

Discussion on the Report of the Second Press Commission — which is yet to be officially published — began in these columns (*Mainstream*, April 17, 1982) with a contribution from G.N. Acharya. Last week we published two articles, by S. Viswam and A. Raghavan (*Mainstream*, April 24). This week we publish a contribution from R.C. Dutt, former Secretary, Government of India, and now Honorary Adviser, Standing Committee of Public Enterprises. Further contributions on other aspects will appear in subsequent issues. —*Editor*

Dominance of Business Interest

R.C. DUTT

THE Press Commission has submitted its report, and partial summaries have appeared in newspapers all over the country. The report itself is still a secret and will be treated as such until it is placed before the two Houses of Parliament. This is, of course, understandable, but there is an equally understandable impatience among those interested in the contents of the report which will not permit slow governmental processes to deny discussion of the report when it has already attracted public attention, and thus gradually kill it by lack of interest.

This impatience is born out of the fact that the stakes are high, and the policies at issue have been debated upon for years. It is true that the printed word carried by the press reaches fewer people in the country than the spoken word broadcast by Television and the Radio. But the press has an advantage not reflected by the number of its readers. The written word not only lingers and can be referred to over and over again when the spoken word has been forgotten, but perhaps, more importantly, the press which carries the written word has the potential of being used by a larger variety of persons belonging to different economic strata of society than the capital-intensive audio-visual media which can be owned either by the state or at best by some different groups of persons. Should this potential be exploited for the benefit of a democratic society, or should it be allowed to be lost by creating monopolist or oligopolist conditions in which only the points of view of the monopolists or oligopolists find expression? This is the crux of the debate which is going on for more than a decade now.

With this debate as to how to make the press media equally accessible to persons holding different points of view and belonging to different social classes is entwined another, which relates to the relations of the press with the state, To what extent should the press be controlled by the state in the matter of expression of opinions?

This is an important questions too, for unless the state allows the press to express diverse, and even conflicting, points of view, there can be no freedom for anyone except the group or party in authority. But this does not exhaust the content of the concept of freedom of the press, as is often made out by the "liberal" school of thought. What good is the absence of state control if the material conditions are such that only certain points of view can find expression?

Comparisons are often odious, as the saying goes, and it is futile to debate which aspect of press freedom is more important than the other, freedom from state control, or assurance of conditions in which various points of view can find adequate expression. Both are equally important, for one is meaningless without the other, though traditionally it is the former that has received much greater attention than the latter from the votaries of press freedom. This has been so because the battle for freedom of the press has been fought mainly between the press, as it has existed from time to time, and the state that has sought to control it. And it is a continuing battle, for the state, which has the undoubted right to curb certain subversive forms of expression, is often tempted to exceed the limit and forbid expression of views inconvenient to it. Thus, while no state can allow incitement to violence to overthrow it, or permit spread of disaffection among various sections of its population on social or religious grounds, and is therefore entitled to take action against those who do so, it often prefers to suppress all forms of dissent even by such pre-emptive action as pre-censorship of news and views.

This battle against over-stepping the limits of control must be fought, but in doing so it should not be overlooked that there is another battle, also worth fighting, between the established press and those who struggle for expression but are excluded from the establishment. This is a struggle which is equally important, but far less articulate as it has to be fought on behalf of those who have still to find their voice.

It is true that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, and it is right, therefore, though there is general agreement in our country on this subject, and freedom of expression is protected by the Constitution, that we should be vigilant against any encroachment on this freedom. That there was such an encroachment during Emergency is a fact of history which cannot be obscured by refusal to discuss it or even refer to it. It makes little difference if this encroachment was in accordance with law. If it was, it needs to be discussed if the law requires to be amended to prevent such encroachment in future.

A point for discussion, on the other hand, may well be whether conditions preceding imposition of pre-censorship as a part of Emergency administration justified this step. The veteran journalist, G.N. Acharya who in his article (*Mainstream*, April 17, 1981) has pleaded guilty to having welcomed Emergency, at least for the first six months, as a necessary evil, was not the only one to have done so. Many others at the time welcomed Emergency, including censorship of news, though, it is now generally recognised, erroneously.

These are, however, matters of debate, and the majority members of the Press Commission have not gained in stature by refusing to discuss the matter, as they are reported to have done. By their refusal they have merely succeeded in placing the mantle of champions of press freedom on the four dissenters.

But whose freedom do the dissenters champion? It is perhaps not entirely fair to criticise the dissenters without perusing their lines of reasoning, to condemn them unheard, so to say. No line of reasoning can, however, obscure the facts (i) that the press as it exists in India is dominated by big business interests, and (ii) that this domination creates conditions in which it is extremely difficult for independent journalists without business links to venture in the field in order to make their points of view heard. If these facts are accepted, and it is difficult to deny them, they naturally result in the big-business point of view finding disproportionate expression in the press. In these circumstances, absence of governmental control, however laudable an objective by itself, can only mean, unless other corrective measures are also taken, freedom of big business interests to continue unhampered to express their points of view in the national press disproportionately to their numbers.

To many champions of press freedom, absence of Government interference or control is its sole content. Not only that; they extend the case for Government non-interference with the press to non-interference with the present structure of the press also, on the ground that all parties, including big business, have the right to express themselves freely. This is unsound logic, to say the least. Government non-interference is the means, not the end, the end being that all should have equal opportunity to express themselves. A structure which hampers this equal opportunity is not conducive to freedom of the press, for continuance of that structure can mean freedom only for a few. Nor can re-structuring of the press amount to interfering with the freedom of expression of any individual or group. Big business men as individuals have as much right to express themselves as humbler folk. This right is not sought to be curtailed. What is sought to be curtailed is the deployment of resources which they possess, but others do not have, to derive undue advantage over the latter in expressing their point of view.

These resources are tremendous and can make a substantial difference to the viability of any newspaper or chain of newspapers in whose support they are employed. The capital derived from business sources, the ability to suffer losses during the initial period and the capacity to undercut competitors not similarly placed, are, by any standard significant advantages which such parties enjoy. To this has to be added the considerable advantages which business groups derive in the matter of advertisements which originate very largely in the business world. With these advantages, it is hardly surprising that big business has a stranglehold on the national press, not merely by direct participation in the newspaper business, but in almost equal measure from advertisement policies. The latter is of crucial importance, though it is often lost sight of, or at least is seldom emphasised. There have been representations to Press Councils and other authorities against Government discriminating in favour of or against newspapers to encourage or punish expression of certain views by extending or withholding advertisements from the newspapers. That this possibility exists, and that in fact advertisements have from time to time been used by Governments for this purpose, need not be denied. Little is, however, heard of the use of this same weapon by business interests in the growing consumer society that is developing in our country. And yet, this is certainly happening. Indeed, this is an instrument which enables big business houses to dominate the press.

What are the consequences of such domination? Its main consequence has been to stifle national debate, thwart the forces of change and encourage development on capitalist lines. The great national debate initiated before Independence, and pursued vigorously for a decade and a half after Independence, was for secularism, socialism and non-alignment. Each of these concepts has its own content, but they all postulate a change of production relations which would ensure social good rather than profit maximisation as the motive force of production, and self-reliance rather than dependent development as the objective. This basic postulate of a change of production relations, however, hurts the capitalist interests which are not reluctant even to enter into dependent relations if it maximises their profits. This conflict of interests, if it is to be debated objectively, needs equal facility and freedom of expression, but while the latter exists in a formal sense the former is stifled by a press dominated by one of the contestants.

The result is that while the case for change has been presented by a few periodicals with limited circulation among academics and others interested in change, the dominant voice of the Press is against any such change. Adherence to principles of change has been denounced as doctrinaire and ideological rigidity, while acceptance of *status quo* has been extolled as pragmatism. The public sector, the only concrete instrument of change, has been discredited as inefficient and bureaucratic, ignoring the fact that much of the inefficiency that may have crept into it has arisen out of the fact that its social role has been overlooked in pursuance of a role which at best is supplementary and at worst subservient to the private sector.

The fact is that with a Press dominated by vested interests of a particular class, it is the outlook of that class that is being drilled into the minds of the educated sections of our population. And yet, it is to this section of the population, the bureaucracy in Government, the executives in the public and even the private sector, the professionals, the journalists and others similarly placed, that one has to look for creating a general consciousness in the country for change, which cannot be brought about by a few academics and "intellectuals" alone who have interest in and time and patience for studying objectively the other side of the case. If, therefore, the process of peaceful change is to have a fair chance and is not overtaken by the growing contradictions between promise and performance, between affluence and poverty, and if the ideals not only of socialism but of secularism and non-alignment are to be cherished, for they are all in danger, the first pre-requisite is that there should be real freedom of the press, so that all points of view have equal opportunity and not merely equal formal right to express themselves.

The danger is real as our recent history shows. The socialist fervour of the fifties and early sixties, temporarily revived in the late sixties and early seventies, has disappeared. The word "socialist", having been enshrined in our Constitution to describe the nature of our republic, has all but retreated from general use. It is still to be found in so-called Leftist journals, but is taboo in "respectable" decision-making bodies. "Garibi Hatao" has left behind no echo, even as a slogan, and growth of GNP with or without social justice has been adopted as the objective. With the retreat of socialism, sectional and group points of view, including communal, chauvinistic ones, have emerged and even rationalism is at a discount to the danger of secularism. Non-alignment was eclipsed by "genuine non-alignment" during the Janata regime, and though it has been rescued since, it is difficult to say how long it will survive the increasing dependence on the World Bank, the IMF and the Western multinationals.

All credit to the majority of the Press Commission who, if the press reports are correct, have presumably recognised the danger inherent in an unbalanced press. Their lapse in refusing to debate Emergency censorship will no doubt be magnified by the dissenters and persons of their way of thinking, but should not blind us to the fact that they have emerged as better protagonists of press freedom than the dissenters. Emergency censorship, highly retrograde as it was, has now passed into history, and those who promulgated it were duly punished in the historical process by temporary loss of power, which could have been of longer duration, if not permanent, but for certain accidents of history. The Press Commission should have utilised its opportunity and its resources for an authoritative analysis of the phenomenon and its consequences, not to censure any individual or group of individuals, but to draw lessons for the future. This opportunity to benefit by past experience was lost by the Commission, but it has not been lost to history. History will draw its own inferences.

What is much more relevant for a Commission, set up to advise on policy matters, is how the policy should be framed which will affect the future. For the future, apart from continued vigilance to avoid aberrations like Emergency censorship, nothing is more important than (i) delinking business interests from the Press, and (ii) preventing advertising power of business from distorting newspapers' policies. Government made tentative beginnings in both these directions and the present writer was associated with the former. It failed because of the hostility of the business press which the Government was unwilling to face. The latter, which was formalised in a price-page schedule, was struck down by the courts and was never revived.

A fresh beginning will have to be made in both these cases, and if the Press Commission has provided the base for such a beginning, it has amply justified itself. It is now for all those who believe in freedom of the press, specially for organisations of working journalists, to create a strong enough public opinion to ensure that the Government does not hesitate or falter again. □

(*April 21*)

MAN WITH 'NO DRIVE'

Not long ago I mentioned the vagaries of language and the quaint meanings that different societies invest in the same words, citing as an example the all too frequent Indian use of "backside" to mean the rear of a building. Now a reader says that the best "loafer" in town is not a vagabond or layabout, but an industrious baker who prides himself on his hot loaves of bread. It is also rather embarrassing to find that if one says "gay" nowadays to mean lightly festive, one is apt to be misunderstood for the word is the widely accepted euphemism for something very different. Happily, this meaning has not spread very widely in India, but we have imbibed, alas, two Americanisms that would make any Presidency College purist of the old days shudder. One is "prestigious" as a complimentary adjective when in orthodox English the word means "practising juggling or legerdemain; cheating; deceptive; illusory" and is, therefore, far from flattering. The other is the common use of "transportation" for transport though there was a time within memory when "transportation" meant only penal banishment to the Andamans. This sense still persists in the Indian Penal Code but not in everyday usage.

But the story I like best is of the Writer's Buildings official who gave a glowing confidential report to his assistant, saying the man was honest, hard-working, enterprising and dependent "but no drive". Naturally, the assistant failed to cross the ability bar. The following year too his boss reported that he was sincere, trustworthy, innovative, diligent and capable "but no drive", and again he was refused promotion. After this happened a third time, the frustrated man went to his superior to ask respectfully in what matter he had not shown drive and if he had not how he could have all the other virtues he was credited with. The senior officer explained that all the fulsome tributes were fully merited. "But you still can't drive and I have been telling you to get a licence".

From A Ditcher's Diary, **Capital**, *April 19, 1982.*

Burma: Success Brings Problems

ECONOMIC problem No. 1 for Burma until the mid-seventies was how to manage any growth at all. In 1971, the socialist leadership actually chalked down a 1 per cent on its economic growth chart. In recent years, however, the economy has been expanding by an average 6 per cent annually, last year by an impressive 8.3 per cent (compared with Thailand's 6.3 per cent, Bangladesh's 4.8 per cent). Resource-rich Burma is now confronting a decidedly novel dilemma: how to keep pace with its own mush-rooming success. The main problem is finding and harnessing what the country is believed to have plenty of underground — energy.

Burma's economic turnaround has been fuelled mainly by massive injections of concessional loan aid as well as direct grant aid. But more important has been a striking improvement in agricultural performance spearheaded by a spectacularly successful high-yield-variety rice programme that has boosted both production and exports. Across the board, growth in the agricultural sector last year was an unprecedented 14.6 per cent. Other key oil-dependent sectors have also been on the move in a big way. Manufacturing last year grew at over 11 per cent; transport and communications at nearly 9 per cent.

The catch is how to keep the wheels of agriculture, industry and transport turning. Domestic oil production has been rising but not fast enough. In 1975 when Burma stopped importing crude, domestic output stood at 6.5m. barrels. By 1978 it was over 10m. barrels and economic planners began looking at export markets: in 1979 Rangoon agreed to provide Japan with 1m. barrels of crude.

But the crunch came during the 1980-1981 financial year. Not only did production not exceed the previous year's record figure of nearly 11m. barrels — it actually dropped. As the state-owned Myanma Oil Corporation (MOC) told it, the drop was around 5 per cent, but diplomatic analysts reckoned it could have been as much as 10 per cent lower than the official output figure of 10.35m. barrels.

Flagging output has meant not only a failure to meet export commitments, but shortages on the domestic market of all three leading refined fuels — kerosene, gasoline, and, most disruptively, industrial diesel oil. The government has responded by sharply cutting back on kerosene production with a view to concentrating on the other two. In a country where most urban households depend on kerosene for cooking the political impact has been predictable.

The diesel oil shortage has had the most damaging impact on the economy. "The agricultural sector has been especially hard hit", noted one analyst. Several major infrastructural projects have been slowed or halted altogether, say Rangoon sources. And in many areas irrigation potential has been limited by lack of diesel to drive pumps.

Just how crude output is likely to fare this year remains unclear. But pundits in the capital have not been slow to draw their own conclusions from the fact the government has stopped publishing monthly production figures — "a fair indicator", as one put it, "that things aren't as well as they might be". Unofficial sources indicated that MOC's production target for this financial year is around 14m. barrels — a figure that would require a daily output of about 38,000 barrels. But informed sources estimate real production at present may be little more than around 22,000 barrels daily.

The key to the dilemma hinges on new finds, and there at least optimism appears warranted. Last November, three new onshore oil fields were announced with much fanfare ...... So far, though, Rangoon observers note that the claims from the new fields have been conspicuously more impressive than actual production. Only one, at Htantabin in the Delta, is actually producing — at an estimated rate of between 1,000 and 1,500 bpd.

While onshore exploration continues apace, it's on offshore potential that immediate hopes are pinned. In February, agreement was reached between Rangoon and a Japanese consortium that will put up US $ 16.8m. for exploration in the Gulf of Martaban off Rangoon. Interestingly, the Gulf area was one place Western oil companies were not invited to prospect during their abortive drilling in Burmese waters between 1976 and 1978.

But even assuming offshore finds are struck in commercial quantities, bridging the energy gap is not going to happen overnight, say observers. For one thing, MOC lacks technical expertise for offshore drilling and according to one analyst "will need some... assistance for the project." In addition, finding drilling rigs could slow things up: no Japanese rigs are at present available and Rangoon appears reluctant to turn to the Americans.

Whichever outsiders join the venture, though, it seems unlikely there'll be oil on line for a few years yet. Meantime, short of some big onshore surprises or a major change in import policy, the energy gap will continue to put an unwelcome but unavoidable break on the country's headlong economic acceleration. But then, it is a measure of Burma's progress that it is facing such a problem.

From **Asiaweek,** *April 23, 1982*

Sikh Way of Life

LT. COL. MANOHAR SINGH (Retd)

A way of life emerges from the mission one has adopted. The Sikh mission governs the Sikh way of life. One has to go back to the Sikh of Guru Nanak's time and see how he has been shaped to understand society as it matured in the form of the Khalsa in the time of Guru Gobind Singh. The Khalsa is a universal brotherhood. It voices the concept of one world — *manas ki zat sabhe ek pehchan bo* (mankind is one). Also, the Creator (God) is one whose existence is not affected by time and who does not participate in the chain of birth and death. He is immortal.

The living Guru hierarchy ended and Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Adi Granth) was installed in perpetuity as the future Guru under the commandment of Guru Gobind Singh, the last and tenth Guru. The body is prone to death, but the Word lives on for ever. The commandment runs as under and is sung after *Ardas* (prayer) by the congregation on every occasion:

> *The will of God hath ordained the order of the Khalsa.*
> *This is the final Commandment to all the Sikhs;*
> *Accept Granth as the Guru.*
> *Deem the revered Guru Granth as the visible*
> *Body of all the Gurus.*
> *He who hath disciplined his soul, shall behold*
> *Confirmation there in the Revelation itself:*
> *The Khalsa shall rule and none shall successfully defy them.*

Sikhism does not believe in idol worship and has rejected the worship of gods and goddesses, since the gods are said to die when Brahman dissolves His creation. Therefore, Gurus' statutes or pictures are not displayed in gurdwaras.

Sikhism totally believes in *Grasth Ashram* (householders' life) and aims at obtaining *Mukti* (salvation) by people leading a normal or even an aristocratic life but remaining unattached to worldly things. This is evident from the lives of the ten Gurus. Abandoning society and retiring to caves and jungles to punish the body for one's spiritual development or neglecting the spirit for one's physical health is not the Sikh credo. The pleasure of normal life one must enjoy, but at the same time one must avoid the evils of gluttony or excess sleep in order to keep body and mind active and alert. This is necessary for the Sikh to live as a saint or as a soldier, as occasion demands.

Sikh life is based on the three basic principles of *Namjapna* (reciting Thy name), *Kirt Karna* (living by honest and hard work) and *Vand Chhakna* (sharing of wealth and power). The Sikh follows the motto of *Deg Teg Fathe* (*Deg* representing food or pot of food, *Teg* the sword and *Fathe* success or victory). To achieve success in any field of life, one must excel in wielding the sword to protect one's wealth. *Deg* and *Teg* are complementary for victory or success in leading a prosperous and dignified life. Napoleon's declaration that an army marches on its stomach, comes close to this concept. Vinoba Bhave said after the 1962 border war with China that a poor man cannot fight for his country.

In the Sikh way of life, the *Miri* (temporal) and the *Piri* (spiritual) — politics and religion — have been merged. Hence politics rests on religion and viceversa. The sword of *Miri* was to be wielded only against cruelty and oppression and to protect fundamental freedoms without oneself coveting political power or a realm on earth. Both *Bhakti* and *Shakti* (wisdom and power) are part of the Sikh way of life. *Bina raj nah dharam chale hai* (without the help of state, religion cannot be effective). As Guru Hargobind said, a religious philosophy or culture that cannot defend itself when cruel and savage forces attack it is bound to perish unless the evil is fought with its own weapons.

The daily assembly and congregation — *Ardas*, *Sangat* (devotees) and *Pangat* (lyric) — are the special features of the Khalsa Panth. The Sikhs were ordained to assemble daily before the Guru to have religious discourses and receive his orders regardless of the weather or other obstacles created by mountains and the sea. Since the institution of the Gurus has been perpetuated for eternity in Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the holy book is dressed in brocades or other silken material to denote royalty and is placed on a throne with an attendant with a *chawri* (yak tail).

The room in which the book is kept is called Darbar Sahib (court room). A devotee is to present a *Nazar* (donation) to the Guru Granth Sahib to denote its sovereignty. *Ardas* is not found in other religions. Since there is no institution of priests, *Ardas* can be read by a member of either sex in the congregation, irrespective of his or her special status. *Ardas* starts with expressing faith in the formless form of, and abiding victory of, God and then invokes the divine spirit of God. He prays for those who have shared their property, worked for society's welfare and lifted the sword for the protection of the weak and the discarded. Prayer is also invoked for those men and women and children who allowed themselves to be sawed, scalped, dismembered, turned on wheels, boiled or burnt alive by hanging from trees, and the mothers who embraced the garlands of their children's flesh, but did not waver in their faith nor compromised their principles and maintained the sanctity of their last hair till their last breath. They beg not for worldly gifts but for such things as *Nam*. The closing stanza, which is the base of Sikhism, says: *Nanak nam chad di Kala Tere bhane sarbat da bhala.* (In the name of Guru Nanak, O Lord! grant us remembrances of Thy name and the morale to

(*Continued on page 34*)

Arms Race *(Continued from page 6)*

military exercise and the 1971 liberation of Bangladesh, ignoring for the time being the intrusion in Kashmir, would clearly indicate that much to our dislike we are forced to divert our scarce resources to unproductive military budget. Moorthy in his book *Arms Race and Its Consequences*, has vividly brought out this aspect:

> "The wastefulness of the arms race is colossal. The amount allocated for the designing and development of the US Air Force fighter F-16 (which carried out the bombarding of Iraq's nuclear installations against all laws of international behaviour, and which were promised to Pakistan recently) would have been enough to finance eight major programmes similar to the World Health Organisation programme to stamp out smallpox in the world. The cost of one Trident submarine would finance the schooling of 16 million children in developing countries for a year. One modern tank costs 500,000 dollars, which is equal to the cost of equipping 520 class-rooms. The building of one modern destroyer costs 100 million dollars which is enough to bring electricity to towns and rural areas with a population of nine million people.
>
> The cost of the development and manufacture of the new Tornado plane of Britain is about 7,000 million pounds. This is more than what Britain spent on health and social security in the 1976-77 fiscal year!
>
> According to West German experts, the amount required for the manufacture of one Leopard-2 tank would be enough to build 36 three-room flats. One military exercise of a tank battalion costs as much as the building of 28 kindergartens. It would take 450 million dollars to eradicate malaria, which is less than half the annual cost of the arms race to mankind."

Human rights can be divided into political human rights and economic human rights. My concern is with economic human rights. Do we want more schools, jobs, places for enjoyment of leisure, libraries? Though there is no scientific survey available, if these industries devoted to manufacture of arms are switched on to the production of consumer goods, the destitution and starvation in Third World countries can be practically eliminated.

Today arms race is proceeding at top speed and the attempt, therefore, for reduction of strategic arms and detente are welcome steps. Certain events have put the clock of history back. But it is time that peace-loving people so raise their voice and start an international movement as to bring pressure upon the leaders of the world to return to the negotiating table, to detente peaceful progress and co-existence.

Even a super-power like the United States in search of illusory military superiority undertook a vast increase in the military budget. What are the consequences? A number of welfare services are being starved, a number of social services have been cut down, and the belief that increased spending on armaments would arrest the upward curve in unemployment is wholly belied. The net result of this unimaginative policy has been destabilisation in Asia, Africa, Caribbean and South America. Unemployment has not gone down in the USA.

The compelling necessity for the Third World countries to buy arms in the circumstances I have just explained has further impeded their onward march towards an egalitarian society. According to the figures recently published, Third World countries buy arms worth 13.5 billion dollars from the European Economic Community, 15 billion dollars from the USA and 16 billion dollars from the USSR. This led the *Indian Express* correspondent in America to state that arms and arms-related industry will be practically the only industry to thrive under the present American administration. But the arms purchased by the Third World also become counter-productive. The Shah of Iran got the most modern arms and that proved his undoing. Pakistan in the Asian sub-continent and Israel in the Middle East are two countries which have pushed up arms sales to Third World countries because of brinkmanship and made it a compelling necessity for the Third World countries to purchase arms.

There is another aspect which needs to be examined in the context of arms supply. After India achieved Independence a wind of change blew all over the world, especially the African continent. National liberation movements started in various dependencies. The empire-builders tried to halt the march by use of arms. The very economic prosperity of the holding countries was threatened if the colonies were liberated because the colonies provided a cheap supply of labour for raw materials and a dumping ground for finished products. Slowly and assuredly colonies after colonies were liberated. There of course remained some reactionary, retrograde imperial outposts such as South Africa. By itself it may have a nuisance value but the white racist regime in South Africa so formulated its foreign policy that today the question of Namibia is engaging the attention of the whole world. While colonies were liberated, the economic stranglehold was not easy to loosen. As a result the poorer section of the liberated colonies yearned for socialist change over. But the feudal overlords, as is now demonstrably established in El Salvador, wanted to keep their stranglehold on the masses for perpetuating their exploitation. As the economic liberation movement grew stronger and fiercer there was a new outlet for suppliers of arms to the anti-people regimes in these countries. El Salvador demonstrates the point.

The entire economy of the Western world is dependent upon oil prices. When the knowledge dawned on the oil-producing countries that the Western powers were exploiting the natural resources and since the early seventies the oil prices started rising, the Middle East became a sensitive area. Today the most sophisticated and costly arms are being supplied to Middle East countries. A large part of the earnings of petro-dollars are being spent on buying sophisticated weapons.

It is true that the USSR is supplying arms but this must be understood in the context of the geo-political situation. Friendship with all being the goal of Indian foreign policy in early fifties, we hardly spent anything worthwhile on arms. China and Pakistan instigated by the western powers imported arms much beyond their domestic requirements. India was forced to buy arms and obviously it had to turn to the USSR. That is equally true of Ethiopia, Angola and Mozambique. The fact is that while in one case arms are being supplied for destablisation, in the other case arms have to be purchased for survival. And that is the dilemma. □

Inter-religious Couples (*from page 26*)

worship; specially in monolithic religious orders, it is an important and essential part of veneration.

Table 3: Reading of religious texts

Religious texts	*Males*		*Females*	
	Yes	*No*	*Yes*	*No*
Gita	12	88	10	90
Bible	21	79	41	59
Koran	7	96	7	93
Any other	10	90	10	90

Unlike Hinduism, Christianity has only one universal sacred book and the habit of reading is cultivated from an early age. So we find more Christian women and men read the Bible.

A marginal number attend religious discourses (7 per cent males and 5 per cent females). The men attended these discourses with their spouses.

Festivals and ceremonies, *pujas* and *vratas* are all important occasions which have special significance in each religion. Women respondents celebrated many more festivals than the men, chiefly because some of them were accompanied by a *vrata* exclusively observed by women. The Hindu calendar abounds with religious occasions and a few Hindu women went to their natal home for Holi, Ganapati Puja, Raksha Bandhan, Vata Savitri Puja, Hartalika, Karva Chouth and Ugadi. Some of the important *vratas* connected with belief in securing a good husband and a long life for him were very popular even among the inter- married. Even after an inter-religious marriage the respondents adhered to a religious pattern of worship. *Pujas* still have a meaningful place in the life of the Hindus and those who have Hindu spouses. One of the reasons for the continuance of these *pujas* among the inter-married was their residence pattern within a joint family. Tolerance and respect for the partner's religious practices are also a part of adjustment. Even inter-religious married Hindus perform the popular Satyanarayana puja.

Ganesh occupies the prime place in any ceremony. At the beginning of every puja or ceremony, Ganesh's blessings are invoked for protection of hearth and home from evil. Four per cent Christian and an equal number of Muslim men have adopted Ganesh Puja after their marriage to Hindu spouses. Hindus celebrate Navratri throughout India by visiting temples of Durga, Kali, Jagdamba. Inter-religious marriage had made no difference to some women who continue to celebrate this festival.

The men and women adjust to a great extent in matters where religious practice is involved. It also brings to light a salient fact that religious socialisation or orientation is deep-rooted and persists even after a number of years of marriage with a person of another religion.

Another important area of adjustment is the concept of purity and pollution. In Hinduism this basic idea manifests in various ways from caste to caste, and is distinctly different from the notions of the sacred. The 'touchable' and the 'untouchable' are determined by the Brahiminic code and extend to the concept of pollution as is viewed by Muslims. A pig is considered unclean by Muslims and anything connected with pig flesh is considered polluted. The Hindu concept of purity and pollution is applicable to daily habits as well as to widow remarriage. In Hindu households the code of cooking is also enmeshed with the idea of purity and pollution. The majority of the respondents (82 per cent men and 80 per cent women) subscribed to the Hindu spouses concept of purity and pollution. The Christians and Muslims naturally did not understand its significance. Most of the Hindu respondents confirmed that after rubbing shoulders with all sorts in the city, the very concept of pollution had weakened considerably; it was further weakened by inter-religious marriage and was practically extinct in some homes.

Adjustments between partners is of greatest importance in any marriage. Among the inter-religiously married it is vital as the couple is conscious of their differences.

From the analysis of the two areas — religious and secular — that are involved in adjustment, we can conclude that the ways of adjustment fall into three different patterns:

(i) Some couples develop a relationship in which both compromise to a certain extent and find a middle ground of agreement that is satisfactory to both, achieving some degree of adjustment, security and confidence in inter-marriage after a few years (for example, language, food, festivals, etc.).

(ii) In the second type of adjustment, they accept their differences and accommodate in one or several ways. In the area of non-religious matters —

(*a*) The couples adopted a convenient common language and solved the problem of verbal communication. Hindi or English was chosen by most of them.

(*b*) Problem of divergent food habits was solved by mutual consent in different ways.

(*c*) The husband and wife had worked out a compatible work schedule in their daily routine.

(*d*) The maximum difference of opinion was regarding financial adjustment.

Very few couples were above the concept of religious identity which was further heightened by the dimension of culture. In spite of inter-religious marriage a large number of respondents were religious-minded. The religious manifestation is not always overt and direct, specially as the partners believed in worship and prayer, and each maintained a sacred corner for worship and celebrated festivals of his/her religion. A sizable number of these couples also performed *pujas*, visited temples, churches, mosques, according to their faith.

Those rooted in religious heritage objected to the loyalty of the spouse to his/her original religion. Christian women were found to be the rigidest. The idea of purity and pollution was beyond the comprehension of Christians and Muslims. To the Hindus it was still meaningful in some ways. Yet, there appears to be near-perfect understanding between a few couples who pursued their own respective religions. There is no substantive evidence of tension due to religious differences.☐

Indian Development *(from page 8)*

interests run counter to the Left's own, namely, the working class and the toiling peasantry.

Proposition 7 makes explicit the fear which the Left has often implied but never clearly analysed. This refers to their general fear of the foreign multinationals taking over the Indian economy in alliance with indigenous monopolist-capitalists, threatening India's freedom and sovereignty. This fear is based on the classical model of Western capitalist evolution towards imperialism experienced by developing countries over the last two centuries. But there is no historical inevitability about this pattern of capitalist evolution repeating itself in India also in the same way as in some other developing countries. India has already developed at least some countervailing forces which can help in checking this pattern of economic evolution at an early stage, particularly since such an evolution would call for an end to democracy and elections which the Indian masses would not put up with.

In view of these considerations, it would appear that the Left needs to very carefully consider its policy positions and compare and contrast them with those of Indira Gandhi and her Government. On points where there is convergence of interests and perceptions, the Left should be flexible enough to support Indira Gandhi and cooperate with her in the formulation and implementation of such convergent policies. But on points in which the basic class nature of Indira Gandhi's policies and her Government come into conflict with the interests and welfare of the working people of India, which are the Left's main pressure groups, the Left has no option but to mobilise the masses against these policies and lead the struggles of the working people against the vasted class interests of their exploiters and oppressors.

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Sikh Way of Life *(from page 31)*

accomplish what is Thy will, and the good of the entire humanity). Faith in and devotion to this *Hukam* (order) makes a Sikh acceptance in any progressive society anywhere.

This daily prayer is thus a model of the Sikh way of life. After *Ardas*, a hymn is read from Guru Granth Sahib called *Hukam* or *Hukam Nama*. And a resolution passed by the holy congregation for the welfare of the community is called *Gurmatta*. Originally *Gurmattas* were issued by Guru Hargobind from Akal Takhat Sahib. Before the congregation disperses, Karha Parsad is distributed on all occasions, whether of rejoicing or grief. The Sikh believes in the will of God and *chadi di kala* (high morale) does not permit depression to set in.

The *Sangat* and *Pangat* principle upholds the principle of equality in the daily life of a Sikh. In the *Langar*, free food is served without any consideration of caste, creed, religion or sex. A Sikh takes great pride in cleaning dirty utensils and the floor, grinding flour and serving water and fanning the *Sad Sangat* (congregation). Even Emperor Akbar had to partake of food before he could have an audience with Guru Amar Das.

The Sikh marriage, Anand Karaj, has much grace and simplicity. It is not bound to an hour, though early morning marriages are preferred, if otherwise convenient. Guru Hargobind married his daughter late in the evening at village Jabal after having fought an unexpected battle at Loligar Port. The four stanzas, initially written to describe a seeker's union with God, are now sung as the bride and groom go round the Granth Sahib four times to solemnise the wedding, and these hymns guide the couple. The groom is enjoined to treat all other women as mothers and sisters and the bride to treat all other men as brothers. The man takes the oath before Sri Guru Granth Sahib with a sword in his hand to protect the life and honour of his wife. The couple take vows of loyalty in direct communion with the Guru, so to speak, not before a priest.

The Sikh flag with a *Khanda* (double-edged weapon) is *Nishan Sahib*. The *Nishan* is sign of [illegible] aim at as a point of direction. The *Nishan Sahib* is the sign of sovereignty of the Khalsa Panth. It represents *Bhakti* and *Shakti*. It is hoisted on all religious and educational institutions and on the vehicle carrying Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

A sip from the *Amrit* (nectar) bowl magically chases away any feeling of caste, injecting the spirit of bravery and courage. The administration of *Amrit* in Sikhism has been in vogue since Guru Nanak's time. It was then called *Paul Amrit* (amrit made by the touch of the Guru's feet). Guru Gobind Singh changed it from *Paul Amrit* to *Khande Ka Amrit*. Therefore, baptism by the double-edged sword — the disintegrator — was in the nature of a modification of, and not innovation in, the accepted forms and usages practised by the Sikhs and ordained by the previous Gurus. The other injunctions regarding abstinence from tobacco, intoxicants, and shaving and trimming of hair, and adultery, were merely reiterated with an emphasis on their strict observance.

From the very beginning, Guru Nanak and all the other Gurus gave clear indications that the type of man and society they were aiming at must bear unshorn hair, the veritable symbol and testament of spiritual integrity. Guru Gobind Singh at the time of baptising the five beloved ones ordered the Sikhs to observe the Five Ks (*kachha, kara, kirpan, kanga* and *kesh*) and in future always present themselves to him accordingly. He gave the Sikhs that which entitled them to be called *Khalsa Akal Parkh Ki Fang* (army of God). He made the *Sad Sangat* supreme by declaring that Gurus' power measured 20 units and the *Sad Sangat's* 21 units. A Sikh should neither dominate anyone nor accept anyone's domination. It was through this Khande Ka Amrit that the spirit of the lion was infused in Sikhs and gave them the appellation Singh (lion). The oppressed became lions.

Baptism is an absolutely voluntary act and one has to qualify to be able to receive it. One has to be able to live up to the Commandment of the Guru. The status of the Five Pyres and the democratic form of life are institutionalised when he begged of them *Amrit*. This is a unique example of a relationship between Guru and followers, a true example of secular, democratic and religious life.

Any Sikh, without consideration of his social status, who violates any Sikh rule (*reht*) and confesses before the *Sad Sangat* is awarded punishment by the Five Pyres, usually being assigned tasks such as cleaning of dirty utensils of the *Sangat*, cleaning their shoes and reciting *Gurbani*, or a nominal fine is imposed. Punishment is accepted with grace and even considered a favour received. Records show that punishment was given to Maharaja Ranjit Singh as, more recently, to Master Tara Singh.

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This is certainly a time of trial for each one of us. Everybody will have to work hard and produce more in order to strengthen the nation. We have to make every effort to increase our production in the farms, in the factories and in whatever fields we are working. Only then will we succeed in the great task that is before us....

We are an independent nation, and we stand firm and erect in our independence. Each one of us will have to pay the price for preserving this independence...

The first thing which we have to learn from this challenge is to put an end to all those tendencies which divide us. Internal dissensions or disputes, whether they are between one region and another or between one language and another, have no place whatsoever in the circumstances of today. The national crisis demands that we should leave such things aside and think about the bigger and more important issues which face us. Therefore, I lay the greatest emphasis on the essential unity of India. We should work for the nation's progress and preserve its unity... Once the feeling of strength and unity is there, our task is easy to accomplish.

—Jawaharlal Nehru (October 26, 1962)

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Dal Khalsa : Giani's Baby?

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Mainstream

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Foreign Affairs : Too Many Cooks

THE mess-up over the Prime Minister's proposed visits to Moscow and Washington brings out the present style — or the lack of it — of conducting foreign affairs by the Government.

It was known for long that the Prime Minister's visit to USSR would be taking place some time this year. Apart from the fact that Soviet President Brezhnev's visit to India in December last called for a response from the Indian side, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was herself planning a state visit to the Soviet Union as part of her itinerary in renewing direct contacts at the summit level with the major powers of the world. The Indo-Soviet understanding and cooperation, regarded as multi-dimensional, extend from exchange of views on international affairs, to security requirements, to projects on the economic front. All these require constant overseeing at the highest level. It is absurd to think that the Indo-Soviet relationship cannot stand the strain of differences in approach towards many issues, all of which may not be exclusively bilateral in character: rather the location of divergence of views on issues and prospects underlines not only the enduring nature of this relationship between two countries which has proved mutually beneficial, but enjoins candid exchange of perceptions from time to time. The blind adherents as well as critics miss this aspect of the realities of Indo-Soviet connection.

India's relations with Washington are on a different footing altogether. If it is a matter of surprise that the Indo-Soviet relationship has hardly encountered rough weather in the last three decades and more, surprise should be still greater that the Indo-US relationship has at all been maintained at a level of normalcy despite the tensions and storms it has had to face in these very three decades. Basically, Washington's difficulty has been its inability to recognise the primacy of India in this part of the world — a reality which Moscow has never failed to respect. Yet there are a host of important issues — bilateral as well as international — which demand constant interaction between the two countries. Here too there could neither be total conformity nor inexorable confrontation; and this all the more demands consultations at summit level. If the Reagan Administration has demonstrated lack of sophistication — not to speak of understanding — in dealing with sensitive issues of vital interest for this country, it is all the more necessary for India's Prime Minister to meet and try to thrash these out with the US President. It is an infantile view of international relations that looks upon a summit meet as the end-product of friendly bilateralism alone and refuses to recognise it as an imperative in dealing with estranged relationship. The absurdity of such a logic is brought out by the very concept of detente which recognises antagonistic relationship and seeks to contain it.

It is therefore perfectly normal and necessary that the Indian Prime Minister should plan to meet the US President. The brief encounter at Cancun last year between Indira Gandhi and Ronald Reagan was in the nature of diplomatic courtesy; if anything, it underlined the need for a well-prepared summit. The need for such preparations was obvious when Secretary of State Haig had planned

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to visit New Delhi but abruptly put it off on the plea of the Polish crisis. No doubt there has come a series of urgent international developments to keep the US Secretary of State busy, but it is perfectly valid to infer that in Washington's present perception, India figures way down in the list of priorities, despite the stationing of the largest US armada in this country's neighbourhood and the US arming of Pakistan with sophisticated weapons as part of its so-called strategic consensus, ignoring the misgivings questioning the wisdom of such a step voiced not only in this country but by a considerable section of US opinion as well. If all these could not persuade Secretary of State Haig to reschedule his visit to New Delhi, it only warns that the preparations for an Indo-US Summit could not be and should not have been taken up in a haphazard fashion.

This is precisely what seems to have happened.

For one thing, it was strange that the Prime Minister's itinerary should have included Washington as virtually an extension of her long-planned decision to address the UN special session on disarmament in June. A visit to Washington should have been planned as an independent exercise unencumbered by any other major engagement en route. Besides, it is common sense to anticipate that India's Prime Minister, as the leading voice of the nonaligned community, would have been inhibited in her disapproval of the record-breaking spending on arms build-up by the Reagan Administration which threatens at the same time to cut down aid to developing countries apart from slashing down social service at home: an issue which in some form or other has to figure in India's contribution to Disarmament debate in UN. Obviously, this viewpoint, truly reflecting India's stand, would have been muffled when all the time there would have been anxiety about its impact on Washington, which the Prime Minister was billed to visit immediately afterwards.

Much in the same way it was thoughtless to have arranged for a quick stop-over at Moscow as an extension of the Prime Minister's long-prepared Scandinavian trip. The reasoning behind this awkward planning as could be gleaned in New Delhi is that since the Prime Minister is due to visit Washington in June along with her participation in the UN debate on Disarmament, she should visit Moscow first. Since President Brezhnev has already visited India while President Reagan has not, it was thought necessary by the Prime Minister's advisers that she should visit Moscow first. In the bargain, the Prime Minister's original plan for a state visit to USSR some time in September got disrupted, and in place of adequate preparations, there was perceptible hustle to somehow get the Moscow visit through.

There seems to be a super-power complex in New Delhi. Although it is theoretically denied in official circles that there is any attempt at maintaining a posture of equidistance between the two superpowers —an attitude which had been severely repudiated by Nehru himself — there are persons in key positions in the Indian establishment today who would seem to feel more at home with the Janata's so-called "genuine" nonalignment, which is but an euphemism for equating USSR with USA with regard to India's national interests. What is missed in this approach is that the live experience of three decades of our foreign relations has made it abundantly clear as to which one of these two has found it worthwhile to respect India's national interests and which has not. In effect, this failure to understand the differentiation that has been forced by the compelling realities in our approach to the two super-powers leads one into practical difficulties such as the present mess over Indira Gandhi's projected visits to Moscow and Washington. Such a mess brings credit for the Government neither at home nor certainly abroad.

A logical corollary of this equidistance complex is the anxiety to demonstrate before the West as if India is apologetic about its positive relations with Moscow. What is forgotten in this naive view of foreign policy is the hard fact that the West (including President Reagan) would treat India with greater deference and consideration when it realises that India is an independent power and that it is not ashamed of its time-tested relationship with Moscow. At a time when West Europe refuses to toe the Washington line of angry confrontation with Moscow, it is amazing that there should be chicken-hearted people in authority here who in their subconscious state cannot think independently of the West. While for instance, the pathetic performance of Britain over the Falklands has brought out its decrepitude even militarily when facing a Latin American weakling like Argentina, there are people here in responsible positions who are yet to wake up to the awareness that Britain has long lost its old imperial glory.

The position of India both in terms of its internal strength and its crucial location in the geopolitical map of the world is such that it can do business without any complex with both USA and USSR without having to lump these two in an unreal category so far as India's national interests go. While the relationship between any two countries in the interdependent world of today cannot be totally exclusive, it is prudent for us to learn from our rich experience in handling both Moscow and Washington that these two could be and should be handled separately and independently. A trip to Moscow in September need not have preceded nor followed another planned for Washington. Both need thorough preparations and the approach and problems to be taken up with one are certainly not those to be put on the agenda with the other.

And finally, no convincing explanation has so far been forthcoming why the two trips have been put off. If it is the question of the Prime Minister's preoccupation with the coming Presidential elections — as is now made out — then it is extraordinary that this was not thought of when she announced the two visits in June only a few weeks ago. The date of the Presidential poll was not a sudden development.

For all this mess it would be unfair to blame the Foreign Office alone, nor need one rush to lampoon the much-maligned IFS. The fault lies in the functioning of the establishment itself. If one were to piece together the drama of this mess-up, one would be amazed at the lackadaisical manner in which foreign affairs is handled in New Delhi today — much in the same way as the affairs at home are dealt with. The same lack of direction, the absence of a well-thought-out perspective, neglect of any tactical approach, indifference to details can be discerned. The mere urge to play a big role in the comity of nations can lead us nowhere. There is no policy planning at all in the entire Government, certainly not in the Foreign Office or the Prime Minister's Secretariat.

If one were to examine how this question of Moscow and Washington visits has so far been handled, it is clear that more than the Foreign Office, the Prime Minister's Secretariat figured prominently. But the Prime Minister's Secretariat today has no expertise whatsoever on foreign affairs. The Principal Secretary may be a clever person but he is conspicuously innocent of foreign-policy developments: his anxiety to arrange for a quick visit by the Prime Minister to Washington is understandable, but he has neither the acumen nor the experience of handling such a major international issue: dealings with Moscow or Washington can hardly be left in charge of any novice. The Prime Minister is known to be taking counsel of non-official advisers, but here too there is neither coordination nor any sustained policy-planning exercise: After all international issues can hardly be taken up as a ramble-thought pastime.

Above all, there is lack of coordination between the Foreign Office and the Prime Minister's Secretariat. There is no attempt at institutionalising the crucial links. The role of the Foreign Minister in decision-making has become marginal while he has to take the responsibility before Parliament for all issues of foreign policy. There is of course much to be desired in the functioning of the Foreign Office itself: it is unwholesome to let the Secretaries function almost autonomously. Of urgent concern is the need to strengthen the external publicity apparatus. In recent weeks, the so-called spokesman of the Foreign Office has displayed a level of juvenility which is indeed unprecedented. Instead of clarifying any foreign policy stand, this has only added to the confusion.

At the root of it all is the bane of ad-hocism. The wages of drift can indeed be heavy in the complex field of international relations.

May 5 *N.C.*

COMMENTARY

Giani's Baby?

THE Punjab scene contains an assortment with varied elements — good, bad and mischievous — all thrown together without anyone at the helm of affairs having the will to identify the forces at work: to isolate those representing, in the first place, a threat to the comity of the Punjabi people themselves, apart from their national import. The result is that communal forces of different hues, never so strong in the State's life as to be more than a secondary force, are now having a field day.

The question is: who is to blame for this slide down in Punjab? How come that such crude devices of whipping up communal tension as the throwing of slaughtered cow-heads before temples and cigarette butts before Sikh shrines are allowed to raise tension to the point of serious communal manifestations?

The answer is not difficult to divine, for it is in the very hub of power at the Centre — the Union Home Minister's own outfit — where a major share of the responsibility lies. Laxity in dealing with the foreign-propped elements — the Dal Khalsa and the National Council of Khalistan — is deemed to be the prime factor responsible for the present slide down in the State's affairs. To say that, however, would be an understatement.

It is not just laxity, but actual encouragement to these very foreign-backed forces through tacit actions of the Union Home Minister, climaxed in his opposition to the Punjab Government's demand for banning these organisations, that should be nailed down as the cause for the present situation in Punjab. Actually, it is the pathetic infighting for power in Punjab that has been allowed to get the better of Giani Zail Singh's judgement of happenings in his home State. The result is that Chief Minister Darbara Singh's endeavours to crack down on the extremist communal-cum-foreign-backed elements have actually been undercut from the Centre by Giani holding on to the crucial Home portfolio. These elements have little backing among the Sikh masses whose healthy instincts would never allow peace and goodwill in the land of their toil to be wrecked by the insidious actions of a handful.

Witness the manner in which Zail Singh allowed the Bhindranwale spectacle to be enacted right in the Capital, with the Home Minister seeking the blessings of the self-same Sant. Witness again the statement made by the Union Home Minister in Punjab, in response to Darbara Singh's demand for banning the Dal Khalsa! Was it for the Home Minister to reject the demand for banning the organisation on the spur of the moment? No doubt the saner sections in Punjab as well as outside have heaved a high sigh of relief when the Union Cabinet over-ruled the Giani and ordered the banning of Dal Khalsa — a step which the Union Home Minister had turned down when it had been raised in Parliament only the day before.

What has been creating the mischief in Punjab is, besides the Congress(I) factional war between the Chief Minister and the Union Home Minister, the pathetic approach to the problem of extremists and communal forces. The fact is that the inability of the Government — again largely because of the Union Home Minister — to isolate the extremists from the main body of public opinion, and to give them more credit in terms of popular support than is actually the case, has served to encourage the extremists. After the rebuff that they suffered recently, when the America-based Ganga Singh Dhillon was expelled from the Delhi airport, there should have been no quarter given to the Dal Khalsa and their cohorts. The warning signal came when the heads of slaughtered cows were found outside a temple in Amritsar. But the Union Home Minister failed to take note of it even when the Dal Khalsa activists owned up this misdeed. How long will this situation continue? It is high time for the Prime Minister to act decisively.

At the other end, the Centre has also been lax in considering what should be evident as the genuine demands of the Sikhs, and of all Punjabis. The clearance of the Thein Dam now may be in the category of belated action in the right direction; so too is the move to cordon off the Golden Temple in Amritsar from the shops that sell cigarettes, alcohol and meat. But even more important is to provide the final solution to the Chandigarh question and to find speedy ways of its merger into Punjab. Perhaps the elections due in Haryana shortly may not be conducive for such an action. But the elections will be over in a fortnight, and then would be time to bring to a conclusion a long-standing point of dispute between the two neighbouring States of Punjab and Haryana. It is to the benefit of both that the solution is found speedily.

May 4 *O.P. Sabherwal*

Road to Equality?

IT is some consolation that the Union Government, according to Minister of State for Home Affairs Venkatasubbiah, realises that the Mandal Commission report on backward classes has raised important and complex issues with wide implications for the country.

This is presumably what persuaded the Government to sit tight on the report for sixteen months. It could easily have been placed before Parliament during last year's Budget session, but it was only after much noise at the beginning of March this year that Home Minister Zail Singh promised that the report along with the action taken would be presented to Parliament, though Minister of State Laskar said the report had not yet been circulated to the States. Sixteen months is evidently not long enough for such circulation, consultation and action. From here to Eternity is the undying formula in such matters. And by presenting it on April 30, 1982, the Government deftly avoided the embarrassment of a debate.

The sensitive nature of the problem does not have to be stressed. The Bihar Janata regime's over-dramatised move in 1978 to provide additional reservation of jobs and seats to backward castes, immediately followed by a well-planned violent agitation against the very concept of reservation for the weaker sections, and the early 1981 agitation in Gujarat by medicos directed against Harijans and the weaker sections generally, had lessons, but who learns?

The Mandal Commission has recommended that 27 per cent jobs/seats be reserved for backward castes (3,743 of them) in the Central and State Governments, public undertakings and educational institutions. These castes are estimated to form 52 per cent of the population. Then there are the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, for whom continuance of the present 22.5 per cent is recommended. Together the Commission wants all reservations to be within the ceiling of 50 per cent laid down by the Supreme Court. That is a necessary concession to the plea for "merit", but neither endless reservation nor spurious ideas of "merit" being everlastingly bestowed upon the upper castes or the well-to-do can be accepted.

For 32 years we have had reservations for Harijans and Adivasis, and the condition even today of the vast majority in these two categories does not have to be underlined by citing statistics about placement in decent jobs or notorious facts about the kinds harassment, humiliation and worse to which they continue to be subjected. "Reservations" for over three decades and tall claims about emancipation, yet the bulk of them are illiterate and remain below the poverty line—itself a misleading yardstick, for it can mean anything from total to partial starvation. There is no denying the fact that in the case of Harijans and Adivasis, as more recently in the case of other backward castes, the concessions and facilities provided have gone to small groups that have in turn become a new privileged class. Harijans and Adivasis have been exploited by all the hierarchical caste layers above them.

No one can seriously quarrel with the Mandal Commission's view that there can be no equality for "the strong and the handicapped ... in the race for life" and that there can be "equality only among equals". That is the whole point of the Constitutional safeguards for the weakest sections and the minorities. But the argument would apply not only on a caste basis, though caste remains a factor, but also on the basis of actual poverty and misery.

The Commission is clearly right in warning against any facile assumption that the caste system is on the way out. Thanks to the centuries-old hierarchical system and to the mileage political parties have for years been trying to get out of its perpetuation, the effort of the influential and the powerful is to keep the unequal system going. Without the abolition of the pernicious exploitative and inhuman system based on birth, we can never hope to live up to the Constitution.

Those among the privileged who oppose reservation in order to look after their own progeny must ask themselves honestly about the injustice suffered for long centuries by the Harijans, Adivasis and other backward sections; but those who are vociferous about extending reservation more and more must also take careful stock of how many among the intended beneficiaries really gain, to what extent reservation is misused by the better-off among the backward castes themselves to get entrenched and ride on the backs of the weaker among their own caste-brethren. Caste is indeed becoming a more and more potent factor in political life — and consequently in social and economic life — and this trend, given our national lethargy and acquiescence as also sectional arrogance and power-lust, can hardly lead to a society based on social justice.

Reservations of the kind recommended cannot be avoided if the weaker sections are to hope for equal social and economic status at some future date; but if the benefits of reservation are cornered by the powerful few in each of these castes, leaving the majority out in the cold, the purpose will not be served. If it is true, as the Commission has pointed out, that the institution of caste will not wither away "in the foreseeable future", it is equally true that we can never build a strong, united nation on egalitarian principles if we — starting with the enlightened sections — do not organise a full-scale war against the pernicious caste system, which in such an event will be defended by a bizarre combination of powerful vested interests cutting across castes. The answer is to end the caste system — but that is a long haul, even if a beginning is made now.

There is no painless road to the 'socialist secular democratic republic" which we claim to stand for.

C.N.C.

May 4

FOCUS

Velayati's Visit

OBSERVER

UNITY has not been one of the strong points of the non-aligned world of late, and it is therefore not unnatural that there should be a sharp polarisation within it between those who want the summit to be held in Baghdad come September and those who don't. Given the divisions within the Arab world itself, it is not surprising that this polarisation should have become accentuated to a point where the choice of the summit venue has proved to be highly controversial. When Iraq's offer to host the summit was accepted at Havana, its war with neighbouring Iran was at least a year away and neither country had reason to believe at that time that they would be involved in a prolonged skirmish. When the Iraq-Iran war broke out, the majority of the non-aligned countries thought it would be over well ahead of the proposed summit.

Now they are torn between Iran's demand for shifting of the venue and Iraq's insistence, backed by several countries friendly to it, that Baghdad remain the venue even at the cost of Iran's boycott of it. India is a friend of both Iran and Irab, and faced an obvious dilemma. Indira Gandhi neatly extricated India out of it by resorting to the technical argument that since a summit had chosen the venue, only a summit can rescind its own decision. In other words, New Delhi signalled the world that Indira Gandhi would go to Baghdad whatever the state of Iran-Iraq hostilities at summit time. Last week, the Iranian Foreign Minister, Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, was in India arguing Iran's case and had to return home empty-handed. New Delhi apparently appreciated the strength of his arguments but advised him that the only possible solution to this crisis lay in a speedy end of the war through a negotiated settlement in hastening which India, as one of the four-member non-aligned panel of negotiators, was ready to play its part. Dr. Velayati told a press conference in New Delhi that he had failed in his mission, but that he continued to hope that the number of countries that intended to boycott the summit would increase because "Iraq has trampled upon the basic principles of non-alignment by invading Iran".

The joint press statement issued at the conclusion of Dr. Velayati's visit failed to record either Iran's objections to holding the summit at Baghdad or India's response to them. Instead, it emphasised the need to reassert the role of the non-aligned movement as an independent non-bloc factor and as a positive force for the preservation and strengthening of peace and security in the world. Considering that the "independent non-bloc factor" has had no purchase in the Iran-Iraq belligerence, this formulation must be seen as a routine tribute to the ideals of a movement which has not been of much avail in bringing two non-aligned countries together. "The Iranian side", says the statement, "briefed the Indian side of their views on the Iraq-Iran war. The Indian side expressed the hope for a just solution of the dispute in the near future". The operative phrase here is obviously "near future", but whether New Delhi's pious hopes will materialise is another matter.

Iran has lately shed some of its earlier inhibitions in regard to modalities for bringing about a political settlement of the Afghan crisis and has now persuaded itself to participate in the UN-sponsored efforts in that direction. It is yet early to hope for a fruitful outcome from the coming Geneva meeting at which the three countries involved in the Afghan situation, Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan, will face one another at a common negotiating table, but it is a matter for gratification that Iran will attend it. The reference in the joint statement to the Afghanistan situation is in conformity with the formulation adopted by the non-aligned Foreign Ministers in New Delhi last February. Dr Velayati's commitment to a "just and comprehensive settlement of the question on the basis of withdrawal of all foreign troops" is to be welcomed.

Both India and Iran have good reasons to be pleased at the bilateral aspects of Indo-Iranian relations in the consolidation of which the agreement to set up in the near future a joint commission is bound to prove a mutually beneficial arrangement. While the Indian side stated its readiness to share its technical and scientific expertise with Iran, the Iranian side reiterated its desire to co-operate with India in all fields including agricultural and industrial collaboration and commercial exchanges. There is here immense scope for building up a mutually reinforcing relationship of independence, self-reliance and friendship. Specifically, while Indian technical know-how and skilled manpower can aid Iranian reconstruction in a big way, the established Iranian expertise in oil industry can be of great benefit to India. Dr Velayati's visit thus marks a second stage in the furtherance of Indo-Iranian economic cooperation. A cultural agreement is also to be signed shortly to put the existing cultural contacts on an institutional and regular basis.

Dr Velayati promised that Iran would do everything possible to solve the Kudremukh problem to the mutual satisfaction of both countries. There may however be a wide gap between intention and fulfilment. As of now, Iran is not in a position to use the Kudremukh ore concentrates; the steel plants which would have consumed them are yet to be completed. It is doubtful if the war-time conditions will permit their being constructed at all. Teheran has also developed second thoughts about certain provisions in the 1975 Kudremukh agreement, and a dispute has developed over the capacity of the project and the price of ore concentrates. Dr Velayati sounded optimistic at his press conference over the likelihood of an agreement when an Indian team visits Teheran in the near future. It is difficult to share his optimism because Iran has virtually reneged on its credit commitments for the project and India has had to mobilise resources to finance it after Iranian payments stopped. Of the committed 630 million dollar credit, only 357 million dollars were remitted to India when further disbursements stopped last year. India will be wise not to bank too heavily on the prospects of an agreement on this and several other allied points in dispute but instead carry through the proposed pelletisation project with Romanian collaboration to make use of the concentrates. If and when the dispute with Iran is resolved, the Kudremukh project can be expanded to take care of Iran's needs also.

However, the fact that the

(*Contd. on page 31*)

SCRAPBOOK

The Last Hurrah

C.P. RAMACHANDRAN

ENGLAND has started many wars for many reasons. It started war against Burma when King Thibaw was found making faces at a British naval officer. It started war in Africa when a Black man refused to give up his seat to a White. But that was common. It started a war when a Spaniard cut off a piece of the ear of a certain Jenkins. Then Drake and other pirates singed the Spanish king's beard. It went to war against Afghanistan because the Afghans were being wooed by Czarist Russia. It fought the Zulus to help the Matabeles and went to war with the Matabeles when they became too powerful for the Zulus.

Britain now crowns her glorious career of war to safeguard the sacred rights of some 1800 sheep-farmers in the Falkland Islands.

What rights? Presumably, the right to tend their sheep. But the Argentines have not denied this right. Perhaps, the Islanders tend their sheep in a British manner while the Argentines have their own method. As most of the Islanders are of British stock this attempt to indegenise sheep-farming is perhaps being taken for an attack on their way of life. As a partner of NATO and the chief ally of the United States, Britain is committed to safeguard the inalienable rights of man, the pursuit of truth and happiness and the tending of sheep in the time-honoured manner. That is why the Mother of Parliaments has taken this decision to resist the invaders.

It is even possible that British intelligence, that vigilant watcher in the interests of parliamentary democracy, has discovered another Soviet plot in Argentina. After all, that country has a large trade with the Soviet Union in wheat and livestock. What does Gen. Leopoldo Galtieri get in return? The matter is well worth watching. It may be remembered that Jimmy Carter, a little before the Presidential election, discovered that Cuba had a new brigade of Soviet-trained troops. He nearly ordered the mobilisation of the US Fleet to face this dangerous threat to the security of the US.

Talking of security, one recalls that once upon a time somebody, perhaps it was John Foster Dulles or even Minoo Masani, said that the US's frontier was at the Mekong. The Mekong has unfortunately gone out of the hands of the US. Still, the idea is perfectly valid. Britain, for instance, said that it needed Gibraltar to guard the Mediterranean. It needed the Mediterranean because Cyprus and Malta were in that sea. Cyprus and Malta were needed because of Aden. Aden had to be built up because of India. India was meant as a base to protect Singapore. The Singapore naval base in the old days was meant to look after the security of such outposts as the Federated Malay States, Brunei, Sarawak and Hong Kong, all of them so vital for the British Empire on which the sun did not dare to set. Perhaps the British frontiers now extend to the Falkland Islands and spill over to Antarctica. Remember the fuss in the Western press when an Indian team of scientists landed in Antarctica? What was India doing in a place which was clearly marked out as a region over which Western interests must prevail?

To the list of great naval battles of the past, Trafalgar, Aboukir Bay, Scapa Flow, Leyte, Lingayen Gulf will now be added the action on Stanley. Winston Churchill's reaction when the *Hood* was sunk was to remark tersely: "The *Bismarck* must be sunk", or words to that effect. It is not known whether Margaret Thatcher bit her lips and stuttered, "*The General Belgrano* must be sunk". It may not have been sunk as yet but certainly British torpedoes have hit the cruiser. This is a considerable achievement for the British task force because the cruiser, although it was outside the war zone, constituted a threat to British aircraft carriers, destroyers and submarines. It is a powerful warship, having been on active combat duty at the time of Pearl Harbour, therefore, only forty years old. Nelson's spirit must be happy.

Britain is taking no chances. If the foolish Argentines do not surrender or withdraw from the Falkland Islands, as a result of conventional warfare, well, other means will be sought. It is not for nothing that the task force includes a nuclear submarine. The British Chiefs of Staff will recall the statement of an American Major that "in order to save Nam Dhan, Nam Dhan had to be destroyed". They may well say now that in order to save the Falkland Islands, they have to be destroyed first. That is why the nuclear submarine is there, shining and ready.

President Ronald Reagan will understand the feeling. So will Al Haig. Didn't the latter say at the Congressional inquiry to approve his posting as US Secretary of State that sometimes it was necessary to go to nuclear war to save a situation? Of course, he was right. Only he was hoping that these exercises will happen in Asia (preferably on the Sino-Soviet border) or in the Middle East (preferably in Iran) or in any part of Africa, except in that bastion of democracy, South Africa. At worst, it could happen in West Europe. Reagan has said that tactical nuclear battles in Europe need not lead up to a world war. He should know. Isn't he the leader of the Free World?

What is missing is eloquence. One would like to hear reading about Francis Pym, Britain's Defence Minister, saying with tears in his eyes, "Roll up that map of the Atlantic. We shall not need it again". Or, Lord Carrington murmuring, "The lights are going out over Port Stanley". Or, Enoch Powell thundering, "We shall fight on the beaches, on the mountains, on the streets". Instead of streets it would perhaps be more appropriate to substitute pastures. But that may lead to the Bible. For, Powell who knows his religious onions will say: "She (Margaret) leadeth me to the green pastures. My whiskey runneth over".

But there is of course no point in carrying on the comparisons between the days of the Battle of Britain to the present events of the Battle of Falkland Islands too elaborately. At the end of the War, the victorious Churchill was thrown out of office ingloriously. Will the Tories get thrown out after the war with Argentina? "Let us see", Powell said during the debate in the House of Commons, "what metal the Iron Lady is made of". An iron lady cannot be made of peat which is the soil of the Falkland Islands. She must be either iron or at best steel. Nobody said about Wellington, "Let us see what metal the Iron Duke is made of". It would have made the victor of Waterloo furious. Wellington had a fine opinion of himself. Once someone told him that one Jones was often mistaken for the Duke because he had the same features. "Funny", said the Duke, "nobody has mistaken me for Mr Jones".

Now that is the kind of repartee that Maggie Thatcher must indulge in if she wants to go down in history. Mere reiteration of unemployment figures is somehow not good enough. ☐

May 4

BJP Strategy in Kerala

GIRISH MATHUR

THE Bhartiya Janata Party is fielding 63 candidates for the 140-member Kerala Assembly, while the CPI(M) has put up 51 and Congress(I) 35 on their own party symbols. The CPI(M) is leading the Left-Democratic Front (LDF) which includes seven other parties, and the Congress(I) has forged the United Democratic Front (UDF) embracing ten other parties; the two Fronts are contesting all the seats. The BJP however has no allies.

Although this is not the first election in the State in which those who now constitute the BJP have entered the fray, this certainly is the first occasion when they are trying to make themselves felt in the electoral calculations of the two major parties. Reports indicate that both the major parties were anxious to reach an electoral understanding with the BJP, informally and under-cover if not formally and above board. Some of the top leaders of the CPI(M) are on record that an electoral arrangement to defeat the "authoritarian forces" (euphemism for Indira Gandhi) could not be ruled out; reports from Kerala suggest that the Congress(I) State leaders were trying for seat adjustments with the BJP even after the nominations had been filed.

Not that the BJP was against any understanding with the two major parties. It is conceded by all observers of the Kerala scene that the BJP would have bagged a couple of seats and entered the Kerala Assembly for the first time if it had come to some overt or covert understanding with the Congress(I)-led front. But the central leadership of the party barred any local electoral arrangement which would run counter to its all-India posture of being the only national alternative to the Congress(I). In the so-called Vrindaban Document, the party's central leadership had claimed that in some States it had already become the only alternative to the Congress(I) while in some others it was gradually emerging as one. Himachal was named in the document as one of the States where the party claimed it was recognised by the people as the only alternative to the Congress(I) which seems to be why it has not entered into any electoral arrangement with other non-Congress(I) parties in that State as it has done with the Lok Dal in Haryana. (The BJP however has left some seats for the Lok Dal in Himachal and Charan Singh has agreed to compaign for it in that State.) Since it has not entered into any electoral arrangement with other non-Congress(I) parties in Kerala and is fielding the largest number of candidates put up by any party single-handed, it can be assumed that the party regards Kerala as one of the States in which it hopes to emerge as the only alternative to the Congress(I).

However, CPI leader Balaram has said he suspected a secret or unwritten understanding between the BJP and the Congress(I) and that the BJP candidates might ultimately retire or remain in the field wherever this would help the Congress(I)-led front. Only the election results will show whether the presence of such a large number of BJP candidates actually helps the Congress(I)-led front or whether the BJP hopes about emerging as the only alternative to the Congress(I) are justified. At the moment, however, the following facts strike an observer of the election scene in Kerala:

The BJP has not set up its candidates against former CPI(M) Chief Minister E.K. Nayanar and former CPI Chief Minister Vasudevan Nair although both are contesting from their old constituencies in which the RSS has made some inroads. But the party has not spared the two former Chief Ministers contesting on behalf of the Congress(I)-led Front, the Congress(I)'s Karunakaran and the Muslim League's C.H. Mohammad Koya. It is recognised by unbiased observers that a division in the votes of the non-Muslims in Mohammad Koya's constituency would have helped him if he was not being challenged by the rival Muslim League's candidate contesting on behalf of the CPI(M)-led Front; as it is, the BJP nominee in the constituency would divide the anti-Marxist vote and would thus indirectly help the CPI(M)-led Front. As far as Karunakaran is concerned, he found his BJP rival in his home constituency, to be such a serious candidate that he has decided to contest from one more constituency; nobody says that the BJP nominee in Karunakaran's home constituency can win, but he will certainly divide the anti-Marxist vote and thus reduce chances of Karunakaran's victory.

Tellicherry is a constituency in which the CPI(M) and the BJP have been engaged in physically annihilating each other's cadre, and yet in that constituency the BJP is not fielding any candidate; the outcome of the contest in the constituency would be watched with interest and would show whether the absence of a BJP candidate helps the Congress(I)-led Front by not dividing the anti-Marxist vote or it helps the CPI(M)-led Front by not dividing the anti-Congress(I) vote. At the moment all that can be said is that it is really surprising that the BJP has left this constituency to the two rival Fronts to fight it out.

The Muslim League is the BJP's *bete noire* and one would have expected that it would concentrate its fire against all Muslim League candidate on whichever Front's' behalf they might enter the contest. But like other smaller parties, the Muslim League too is divided and one group has joined the Congress(I)-led Front while another group is a constituent of the CPI(M)-led Front, and the BJP is concentrating its fire not on both the groups but on the one that has joined the Congress(I)-led Front.

These facts do not support Balaram's suspicions that the BJP has entered into a secret deal with the Congress(I) or that, even if there is no secret understanding between the two, the BJP's role would help the Congress(I). On the contrary there are people who suspect that the BJP has entered into a secret deal with the CPI(M). But this commentator is not one of those who entertain such a suspicion. There are at least two quite sound reasons why neither side can come to a secret electoral understanding with the other in Kerala, namely, (i) the opposition of the CPI to the BJP is so strong that some people take the BJP, not the Congress(I), as the CPI's main enemy, and at least in Kerala the CPI(M) cannot afford strains in its relations with the CPI at this time for the sake of some dubious electoral gains, whatever might be the attitude of the central leadership of the CPI(M) towards the BJP; and (ii) the local cadre of the BJP can have no truck, direct or indirect with the CPI(M), their arch-enemy in the field, and it is known that during the days when the fate of the Nayanar Ministry was in doldrums the local unit of the BJP had to be threatened with disciplinary action to restrain it from doing anything that would have expedited its fall.

What then could be the aim of the BJP's electoral strategy? In seeking an answer to this question, this commentator proceeds from two assumptions: (i) the local as also the central leadership of the BJP is not so unrealistic as to imagine that it can provide an alternative to the Congress(I) and the CPI(M) in Kerala as of now; the best it can hope for is to get a couple of seats in the Assembly; (ii) even on the national plane, the BJP does not look upon itself as an alternative to the Congress(I) in the sense in which the Left aspires to become one — which should be evident from two facts: (a) the BJP has not put forward an alternative programme before the people and its policies have been formulated within the same framework as that of the Congress(I) policies; (b) in the so-called popular struggles, the BJP does not raise fundamental issues and strikes the posture of fighting against the Congress (I) on non-issues like corruption. However, on the national plane and in the State of Kerala, the BJP poses an alternative to the Congress(I) in another sense which, to this writer, is the *raison d'etre* for the party's electoral strategy.

Traditionally, the Congress electoral strategy used to be based on a coalition of the religious, linguistic and regional minorities and the weaker sections of society, particularly the Harijans and the Adivasis; it differed from State to State according to the variations in the alignments of these castes and communities. But since the 1980 elections the Congress(I) has been pursuing the strategy of seeking a coalition of Muslims, Harijans and the Rajputs (feudals) against the so-called backward (kulak) castes; in Kerala in this election the Congress(I)-led Front is seeking power by forging a coalition of Muslims, Christians, Nairs and Ezhavas which should be evident from the large number of seats allotted to the caste grouping of the Nairs, the National Democratic Party, a similar grouping of the Ezhavas, the Socialist Republic Party, and the groupings backed by the church and mosque, the Mani faction of the Kerala Congress and the Koya faction of the Muslim League.

The BJP also seeks caste-based coalitions, but its effort has always been to mobilise the Hindu electorate on a religious basis. The religious appeal has become the most prominent feature of the RSS strategy since the Meenakshipuram conversions, and it is the RSS which provides the brain and the brawn to the BJP, whatever be the latter's rhetoric. In Kerala, its main effort is directed at breaking up the emerging coalition of the Muslims, Christians and the two Hindu castes; the mosque and the church are the main enemies of the BJP. That this is the main thrust of the BJP's electoral strategy should be evident from the fact that by and large it has refrained from setting up its candidates against the (Nair) National Democratic Party and (Ezhava) Socialist Republican Party nominees seeking election on behalf of the Congress(I)-led Front — which is probably what has led Balaram to suspect a secret deal between the BJP and the Congress(I).

In the short term, the BJP's efforts to break up the emerging Muslim-Christian alliance with its potential allies, the Nairs and the Ezhavas, might prove advantageous to the CPI(M)-led front. But the BJP is trying to break up this coalition to be able to rally the Hindus on the basis of its religious appeal and the cry of "Hinduism in danger". This cannot be in the long-term interests of the CPI(M) or any party of the Left. By its short-range policy of forging a religion and caste based coalition to return to power, the Congress(I) is providing grist to the BJP mill. (*May 4*).

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Global Inter-dependence and National Development

View from India

K.R. NARAYANAN

The author is the Ambassador of India in USA. This contribution is the Keynote address delivered by him at the Eighth Annual Third World Conference organised by Governors State University, Chicago. (March 25, 1982)

WHILE the world has shrunk to "a global village" and become increasingly inter-dependent, forces have also been at work in the opposite direction pulling towards disunity and discord. For us in India this duality has been a perennial experience and the constant endeavour in our history has been to find unity in diversity, to reconcile the individual to the society, the locality to the nation, and the nation to the world.

It is well-known that the Indian mind has been inward-looking and preoccupied with the question of individual perfection, the realisation of the self and the salvation of the soul. What is not so well-known is that Indians from ancient days had thought of humanity as one family, a single nest, and "the whole world of mortals as an inter-dependent organism" as the Mahabharata put it. In modern times Mahatma Gandhi turned the inwardness into a dynamic force by pitting his individual mind and soul against the might of an empire through his method of non-violent non-cooperation. While he was prepared to stand alone, he saw life as an ever-widening circle of relationships in which the individual must work, and if necessary, sacrifice for the family, the family for the village, the village for the nation, and the nation for the world. He once said: "My service of India includes the service of humanity. Isolated independence is not the goal of the world states. It is voluntary inter-dependence. The better mind of the world desires today not absolutely independent states, but a federation of inter-dependent states. The consummation of that event may be far off".

This far-off vision was before India when she became independent and it was in the light of it that Jawaharlal Nehru declared that India proposed to pursue her national interests in the context of international cooperation.

Frist of all, we needed peace around us and in the world to enable us to concentrate upon the questions of social aad economic development of a country that was emerging from colonial domination and a long period of arrested growth.

Secondly, we did not want to be drawn into cold war conflicts and be forced to take sides in the military-cum-ideological struggle of the two blocs, which would have not only disturbed our peaceful environment but divided our own people.

Thirdly, we wanted friendship and lines of communications kept open with all countries so that we could get cooperation and assistance from all possible sources for our economic development.

Fourthly, for consolidating the unity of a country as vast, diverse and problem-ridden as India, it was necessary to lift the sights of the people to wider horizons beyond India and to cast their lot with the future of the world itself.

And finally, looking from the vantage point of our historically evolved world-view we perceived that modern developments, particularly the consequences of scientific and technological progress, were beginning to translate the old concept of an inter-dependent world into a palpable and practical reality.

Thus on the eve of our Independence Jawaharlal Nehru stated our credo as follows: "The world, in spite of its rivalries and hatreds and inner conflicts, moves inevitably towards closer cooperation and the building up of a world commonwealth. It is for this One World that free India will work, a world in which there is free cooperation of free peoples, and no class or group exploits another".

It was out of this totality of considerations that the policy of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence emerged which steered India clear of cold-war alignments towards the objective of friendship with all nations and peace in the world.

If we were obsessed with the question of war and peace, especially with the issue of nuclear war, it was not the result of moralistic posturing or idealistic frothing, as made out by writers in the West, but because of our understanding of its impact on India's interests and aspirations, and on the future of mankind. Today it is impossible to discuss the question of global inter-dependence and national development without facing up to this overriding nuclear issue. One touch of the threat of nuclear war, if I may appropriate a line from Shakespeare, is today "making the whole world kin." It was nearly twentyfive years ago that Jawaharlal Nehru declared that in this nuclear age the choice for mankind was between "co-existence or co-destruction."

I cannot but recall a friendly debate that Nehru had with Chairman Mao Tse-tung in 1954 when he visited the People's Republic of China. Those were the perfervid days of the doctrine of the inevitability of war. Mao expounded that the invention of nuclear weapons had not changed the nature of war in any substantial sense, except in its scale, and that even though 200 or 250 million people would be killed in a nuclear war, millions will survive particularly in the villages of countries like China and India. Nehru, on the other hand, argued that nuclear weapons have changed the nature of war and that, apart from the destruction it would cause of civilisation as we knew it, the effects of radiation would leave mankind virtually annihilated. It is fascinating that though Mao is no more and de-Maoisation is supposed to be taking place in China, the shades of this doctrine still haunt several unlikely places, and we now hear much talk about the possibility of a nuclear war, and winnability in such a war.

Neither global inter-dependence nor national development is of any avail unless this mad career of nuclear-missile armaments is arrested and reversed Behind this arms race is not merely arms but the concept of an irreconcilable conflict between two super-powers and two blocs. This concept is totally contrary to that of global inter-dependence. The Indian approach has been that there is no conflict in the world that cannot be resolved through peaceful means and through mutual accommodation, and even if conflict is imposed on us to wage it with the future of the peoples concerned and of mankind in mind and, in the words of Nehru, with "the hands of friendship never withdrawn." The idea of an everlasting enmity is alien to the human mind and heart. It was George Washington who in his farewell address advised the United States against the twin evils of excessive animosity and excessive attachment to particular nations. To me it sounds a little like the approach of non-alignment.

Speaking in 1958 Jawaharlal Nehru said: "All history points out that friends and allies sometimes become enemies, and enemies become friends, and the history of even the last twelve years has shown us this. Why then persist in a policy that perpetuates these enmities?" After pointing out that even the bloodiest of wars must come to an end and then the parties would have to seek peace, Nehru asked, "Why wait for a war before we seek peace?" The question is agonisingly pertinent today, because, for mankind a nuclear war will be a terrible, terminal war, and therefore we will have to seek peace before the war comes in order to avoid it.

Here we come to the question of disarmament, development and world peace. Man has today at his disposal the knowledge and the power to open up the cornucopia which would enable us to abolish hunger, and poverty, to raise the cultural levels of people everywhere, and to alleviate the thousand ills that afflict mankind, if only we eschew the massive misdirection of our resources and the misapplication of the fruits of science and technology. Even a limited agreement on disarmament by the great powers would release funds for development not only of the Third World countries but of people on the margins of poverty line in the advanced countries.

The confrontationist policies of the great powers have also played a part in the burden of armaments that is being imposed on the developing countries themselves. Eighty pert cent of the arms sales in the world today are estimated to be to countries in the Third World, most of whom can ill afford this diversion of their resources from developmental purposes. It may be asked, are not countries like India indulging in heavy expenditure on armaments? This is unfortunately true, but to a large extent it is the result of a vicious chain reaction set in by the cold war strategies of the super-powers in the region of the Third World, and by the policy of the advanced countries to sell arms for gaining political influence and for sheer profit.

Nevertheless I should like to point out that as far as India is concerned, while taking every precaution to possess adequate arms for our defence, we spent only 3.58 per cent of our GNP on defence which is well below the world average and below what is spent by our neighbours in Asia. The concentration of our resources and efforts is predominantly on social and economic development. I must add that our nuclear programme and our space programme are also dedicated to peaceful and constructive uses as shown not only by our solemn policy statements but our abstention from manufacturing atomic weapons having mastered in 1974 technical capability to explode a nuclear device. We believe that progress towards disarmament by the great powers would lessen the armament burden on the developing countries and release funds for accelerating the developmental process in the Third World. That would be a major contribution to national development as well as global inter-dependence and world peace.

This brings us directly to the other most important issue of our time, the problem of development of the Third World and the relationship between North and South. Abraham Lincoln at a critical period in the history of the United States told the American people that a house divided against itself cannot stand and a nation half-free and half-slave shall not endure. I should like to say that an inter-dependent world cannot endure, one-third rolling in affluence and two-thirds wallowing in poverty. It is really a misnomer to call the developing countries the Third World.

As Prime Minister Indira Gandhi once put it, there is only one world, and that is the one world in which we all live. The so-called Third World is an integral part of the same world. If one looks at it in this way, the North-South question can be seen as one of inter-dependence and cooperation rather than one of competition and confrontation. Indira Gandhi speaking for the developing countries said at the Cancun Summit: "We are not supplicants. Nor are we confrontationists. It is our experience that the interests of the developed and developing countries are so inter-twined that we can all survive in harmony only in conditions of true inter-dependence ... We earnestly seek a global compact which will ensure the development of the poorer countries along with the prosperity of the developed nations, in circumstances of international peace and security." Viewed in this light, there is no reason for the advanced nations to be afraid of global negotiations on the North-South question or of the efforts of the developing countries to work for collective self-reliance among themselves.

In February this year representatives of forty-four developing nations gathered together at New Delhi to consult with one another as to how they could cooperate among themselves and promote the North-South dialogue. Indira Gandhi set the tone

(Continued on page 32)

DISCUSSION

The perspective of Indian development is fast becoming a matter of crucial concern for the polity of the nation. Taking into account the need for serious discussion of the state of our political economy and the options before the country, *Mainstream* (March 20, 1982) published a contribution from a distinguished observer of the economic scene. This was followed by three thought-provoking contributions (*Mainstream*, April 10, April 24 and May 1). Here we publish two contributions — one from Dr. Boudhayan Chattopadhyay, Jawaharlal Nehru Fellow, and the other from Dr. Kripa Shankar, Research Associate, Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute, Allahabad.— Editor

Indian Development: Another Viewpoint

BOUDHAYAN CHATTOPADHYAY

APROPOS the contribution by 'A Student of Political Economy' published in *Mainstream* (March 20, 1982), let me state first the points of agreement:

1. Methodologically, one agrees with the Gramscian characterisation of the Indian state and the dominant ruling circles as a moving and temporary coalition of interest groups subject to the compulsions of Indian nationalism and adult suffrage, which ensure a certain weightage to anti-imperialism and to populist pressures in the polity. Under the circumstances, the political system moves essentially through what Gramsci would call "war of manoeuvres" rather than of "positions" For instance, if the Congress party rules at the Centre, and certain Left parties rule in some States, objectively, from the point of view of the total dialectic of the Indian state as a whole, it is a coalition, sharing of power in a "war of manoeuvres" rather than of "positions", the histrionics on Centre-State financial relations notwithstanding. The sooner the Left came to terms frankly with this objective situation of sharing of power and responded to the corresponding obligations as a necessary corollary, the better. That would enable the Left to emerge as a serious national alternative competing for hegemony.

2. The Indian economy has adequate productive capacities and skills to face and tide over the current onslaught of international capital in deep recession, provided certain basic regulatory disciplines could be ensured and implemented all along the economy and polity. On the other hand, left to the mercies of "market forces", the spontaneous processes would lead to the development of some form of a Brazilian-South Korean "export dependent" model.

3. If the forces representing the rural and urban working classes and the broad middle strata in industry and the professions fail to mobilise and intervene on a national plane, the danger of some sort of a Brazilian-South Korean model materialising would threaten the very existence of a unified state and would, perhaps, also throw Indira Gandhi out of power. This is because of the inherent contradictions between the compulsions of Indira Gandhi's mass base in the specific geo-political context of our country and the compulsions of the Brazilian model.

One can also agree that the Left in India today does not respond adequately to the dangers ahead. The basic problem, however, lies elsewhere. I am afraid, the "economist" in the contributor has got the better of the "political" economist. Consequently, he tends to short-circuit what must be a long haul indeed.

Even if one granted the veracity of the inherent contradictions between the compulsions of Indira Gandhi's mass base in the specific geo-political context of our country and the compulsions of the Brazilian model, where are the political instruments to implement on the ground that measure of regulatory discipline which will stop the current drift of government policies to what the contributor rightly characterises as "neutrality? And, is there a willingness on the part of the top national leadership to permit these instruments to be forged and use them to purpose? In a poor country where the vast untapped labour reserves constitute the main resource, organisations of the labouring people, capable of directing concentrated configurations to specified tasks, constitute the essential pre-requisite for forging the necessary instruments for implementing a measure of regulatory discipline. A cadre-based mass political party — not merely an electoral machine — is the only centralising force which can forge these instruments and also keep the country united. Gandhiji taught us this in a different phase of our national struggle.

That instrument, the great Indian National Congress — an organisation the like of which the entire colonial world has hardly ever known — now lies in ruins. What we see before us today is an ugly caricature, a ghost. Who is to blame for this state of affairs? Is Indira Gandhi prepared to reforge this instrument? Or, does she really intend to operate through a system of personal power, a kind of Indian variant of Gaullism? Gaullism might have been a feasible proposition to an extent in a linguistically homogeneous, much smaller developed country, in the specific context of the French bureaucracy which has successfully operated the most viable public sector in the post-war capitalist world. But, one has only to contemplate the pathetic sight of the Chief Ministers in the Congress(I)-ruled states of this vast multi-lingual sub-continent to realise the absurdity of it all in the Indian context. What has happened to the Indian National Congress? Is she ready to reforge it? If so, how? She owes it to herself and to our recent and contemporary history to answer this supreme question. The way this answer emerges will determine her and the country's destiny decisively in the days to come.

Similarly, is the Left prepared, or even willing, to address itself to the painstaking gigantic task of creating those vast organisations of the labouring masses endowed with the capacity to *run* the economy and society at all levels, to *manage* and *direct* material and human resources to specific productive goals, and not merely to ask for a pay-rise here, or a tube-well, a school there, or for pushing party members of indifferent quality into various positions of power aud patronage? If that were so, the Left Front Government in Kerala would not have gone the way it did, despite the very timely warning by Achutha Menon in the pages of *Mainstream*; nor would the performance of the Left Front Ministry in West Bengal have left so much undone, although, it must be said, the latter has succeeded in providing some sense of security to the rural poor of West Bengal, while wholesale murder of Harijans and Muslims—Indira Gandhi's mass base — takes place in a number of Congress(I)-ruled States.

A scale of lumpenisation of Indian society, of the entire political system, has overtaken us. This is the moral-political overture to the impending lumpenisation of the "development process" also. That is how some Latin American economists have characterised the Latin American scene — the so-called Brazilian model included. It is primarily a challenge in the realm of consciousness that the national leadership — Left, Centre, or Left-of-Centre — must face to be able to overcome and stem the tide of this all-pervasive process of lumpenisation which is eating into the very marrow of Indian society and polity. All institutions, including the political parties, are afflicted. This is what Lenin would, perhaps, characterise as a "petty bourgeois wave" — the way he characterised the post-February situation in Russia, 1917 — fuelled by a global inflationary recession and domestic black money in the most sick and dangerous decade of this century, the eighties.

Lessons in the realm of consciousness are not learnt easily by nations and peoples — least of all through proposals for synthetic political alliances. The untenability of such synthetic political alliances is exemplified by the tragic experience of the CPI between 1969 and 1977. After all, the CPI did support Indira Gandhi on more or less the same premises as those advanced by a 'A Student of Political Economy' almost to the point of committing political suicide along with Indira Gandhi. Lessons have to be learnt, not merely in word but in deed, on both sides. It is going to be a long haul indeed, through blood and death, unless the various segments of the national leadership wake up to the supreme challenge in the realm of consciousness.☐

Development and the Left

KRIPA SHANKAR

THE Student of Political Economy (*Mainstream*, March 20, 1982) bases his thesis on the hypothesis that Indira Gandhi represents a coalition of forces that is anti-monopoly and anti-big-landlord. The argument that he advances in favour of his thesis is that as Indira Gandhi gets her support from the masses who feel that "she alone can deliver the goods", and as siding with monopoly and big land-

as a countervailing power will be to extend the public sector along with strengthening the small and medium entrepreneurs in the industrial field and medium and small farmers in the agricultural sector respectively.

If the Student of Political Economy could prove that by her policies Indira Gandhi is trying to build a public sector which has the her policies strengthen these elements or do they go to undermine their position? An objective analysis of the policies followed by her should enable one to determine her role instead of prejudging the issue subjectively and then trying to build arguments in support of such judgement.

Let us begin with the public sector. The Student of Political Economy will concede that having public sector units in some key sectors, particularly where the private sector has neither the capacity nor the willingness to operate, will not by itself lead to the curbing of monopoly elements. The experience in our country and elsewhere is that unless the public sector assumes commanding heights and controls the direction of the economy, it may only play second fiddle. The public sector in India was confined to building infrastructure and certain heavy industries where the private sector was incapable of entering the field. Creation of power, steel, irrigation, communication, etc., is the necessary condition for industrial and agricultural growth of any country. It does not conflict with the interest of monopolist classes as it is only when critical inputs are available that they can hope to grow and expand. The private industrial sector has made rapid strides, and it is doubtful if it could have done so in the absence of huge investments made by the public sector in infrastructure and in heavy industries.

The entry of the public sector in heavy industries should not be construed as an encroachment as, by and large, the Indian private sector was so timid and circumscribed that if could not invest in heavy industries where investment requirements are staggering. No doubt public sector investments have gone up, but even faster has been the growth of the monopoly sector. This has been well documented in several studies and the Student of Political Economy will be fully aware of this. The Licensing Policy Enquiry Committee estimated the assets of the top 20 business houses in tne country at Rs 2089 crores in 1966-67. During the first decade when Indira Gandhi was at the helm of affairs the same had increased to Rs 5110 crores by 1977. The assets of the top 20 business houses which formed 61 per cent of the paid-up capital of all joint stock companies in the country in 1966-67 rose to 68 per cent in 1972-73. The growth of large houses has gone on unabated. The assets of two biggest houses — Tatas and Birlas — was Rs 968 crores in 1966-67; by 1978 their assets had increased to Rs 2741 crores.

The public sector in India was not extended to other manufacturing sectors where the private sector had undisturbed sway. The fixed capital of the factory sector increased from Rs 5,855 crores in 1966-67 to Rs 17,171 crores in 1976-77. The distribution field was scrupulously avoided, and even the marketing of public sector industries goods was monopolised by a few private companies. Four private companies control more than half of the distribution of the public sector steel industry. The gross profit of large public companies whose figures are published by the Reserve Bank of India increased by three times between 1965-66 and 1976-77. The total income of 1702 such private sector companies in 1976-77 was Rs 14,990 crores. The income of the Government of India on revenue account in that year was only five and a half times that of the income of the above companies.

Land reforms occupy an important place in the modernisation process. Late-comers in the industrial scene have to accomplish this in a swift manner as the time-span that was available to developed countries is not available to them. Japan completed the process of land reforms in the early fifties when nearly one-third of the land was transferred to the working peasantry. In India, although the western type of feudalism was transplanted by the British, yet the Government was relutcant to change the agrarian relations. The slogan of land to the tiller was, by and large, not implemented, and concentration of land ownership was not disturbed. The ceiling laws that were enacted fixed the ceiling quite high and there were so many exemptions and loopholes that the actual land redistributed does not form even 0.3 per cent of the cultivated land, although roughly one-fourth (23 per cent) of the total area is held in holdings of above 25 acres. The pattern of land ownership continues to be highly idequitous and the top 1 per cent own 10 per cent of the land whereas one fifth of the rural population consists of agricultural labourers having no or little land.

The pattern of asset ownership in the rural areas as revealed by the Reserve Bank Survey indicates that the poorest 10 per cent owned 0.1 per cent of the assets whereas the top 10 per cent owned half of the assets in 1971-72. The picture was similar to what it was in 1961-62 when the previous survey was conducted. In fact the concentration ratio of rural assets which was 0.65 in 1961-62 increased further, though slightly, to 0.66 in 1971-72. The position in the rural areas is that the assets owned by the top 1 per cent are equal to the assets held by bottom 50 per cent of households. If the pattern of ownership of land and other assets continues to be so inequitable the gains of development are bound to accrue to the better placed groups — the higher in the hierarchy of asset and land ownership the greater the gain. In such a situation those with little or no assets are bound to be left in the lurch. Can it be imagined that the landless, the marginal and small farmers who constitute about 90 per cent of the rural population can share the gains of development if the top 10 per cent continue to hold more than half of the land and other assets?

The Student of Political Economy wants us to believe that Indira Gandhi can perform the miracle of strengthening the position of the landless and the small farmers without breaking the concentration of land ownership. If the top groups in rural and urban areas continue to consolidate their position by virtue of ownership of assets, how can they acquiesce in the implementation of policies aimed at curbing their power and strengthening the position of the poorer sections?

During Emergency, when Indira Gandhi assumed draconian powers, she did not move in the direction of breaking the concentration of wealth. The Twenty-point Programme did not envisage either lowering the ceiling on land or breaking the monopolies. The richer classes in India having acquired huge wealth through questionable means are wasting the same in vulgar consumption. Even a bourgeois Government would very much like, in a different context, to curb such wasteful consumption and mop up the surplus for making productive investments in the economy. There is no other way to "Garibi Hatao". But Indira Gandhi has long given up this slogan which was once used to beat back her rivals. When she staged a come-back to power in 1980 she did not advance this slogan and instead promised a "Government that works".

And how is that Government working? Every year 5 million persons are being added to those who live below the poverty line. Not only resources are not being mopped up from the affluent classes but resources mobilised mainly by hitting the common man are being largely used in a non-productive manner. Non-developmental expenditure of the Central and State Gavernments is increasing in a phenomenal manner. During the five years ending 1981-82 the non-development expenditure of these Governments increased from Rs. 8,062 crores to Rs 14,016 crores. Now it is increasing annually by more than Rs 1,000 crores. Expenditure under-developmental heads is also establishment-oriented, with the result that very little of it goes to improving the productive base. At present the total annual spending of the Central and State Governments is of the order of Rs. 40,000 crores or nearly Rs. 600 on a per capita basis. Why is this huge spending not reflected in higher availability of daily necessities and an easier life for the people? It is precisely the unproductive nature of this spending which has resulted in near-stagnation in the living standards of the bulk of the population and has created an inflationary situation.

The Government is not only not making any change in the structure of property ownership but is not even inclined to check the wasteful consumption of the propertied classes despite Gandhian pretensions. This cannot but result in a very unsatisfactory growth rate creating only enclaves of prospertiy surrounded by a sea of misery.

Can the Left support such a Government and yet remain loyal to its cause? Let the Student of Political Economy ponder over this.☐

CASE STUDY

Dairy Development in a Backward Village

KUNWAR PRASUN and BHARAT DOGRA

RAMPUR village is located on Tehri Rishikesh road in the Tehri Garhwal district of Uttar Pradesh. It is a typical hill village. Both the important traditional occupations — agriculture and animal husbandry — are characterised by low productivity and absence of organised efforts to increase productivity. In addition, the villagers are facing increasing problems in meeting some of their basic necessities like fuel and drinking water. Due to the deteriorating living and occupational conditions several families have been forced to send out at least one adult male to cities in the plains to earn some money — mostly in low-paid jobs — to sustain the family in the village. Thus, while the cash income of some families may have increased significantly, it has to be seen in the context of the deteriorating state of traditional means of livelihood.

An important objective of planning for such villages is to turn them into relatively self-reliant units from the present-day 'money-order economy' so that the young men can hope to sustain their families without having to migrate to far-away places in search of jobs. The potential for agricultural development is certainly there, but it is limited by scarcity of cultivable land and the problems in cultivating the relatively steeper slopes. Animal husbandry, despite present-day low productivity, has a higher potential and can play an important role in reducing the village's dependence on money orders. Increase in milk production can raise the nutritional standards of the villagers as well as increase their earnings by supplying milk to cities like Tehri, Rishikesh and Dehradun. Here is a village where dairying, though under-developed, has the potential of playing an important role in improving the plight of poor rural families with small land holdings.

A total of 378 men, women and children from 57 families live in Rampur village which is about half an hour's climb from the motor road, almost halfway between the well-known towns of Rishikesh and Tehri. Due to low returns from agriculture and animal husbandry, as many as 68 per cent of the families have one or more migrant members. Families from which no member has been able to go out to work have an average monthly income of Rs. 131. On the other hand, the average monthly income of families which have one or more migrant members is as high as Rs. 775. Thus the entire village can be divided into two sections — those having a regular inflow of money orders who can lead a life of certainty as far as their problem of food is concerned though they also have to bring fuel and fodder from distant places, apart from leading an uprooted family life, and those who do not get cash remittances from outside and for whom getting two square meals a day is a never-ending struggle.

As in all hill villages, agricultural land is in short supply and generally no one owns more than 4 or 5 bighas. The total number of animals is 164, including cows, buffaloes, bullocks and goats. Of these 38 yield milk and the remaining do not. Eighty-eight per cent of the families participate in animal husbandry activities to a lesser or greater extent. On the one hand there are people like Abbal Singh, Raghu Vir Singh, Man Singh and Kalam Singh who are able to get 4 litres of milk a day and on the other there are villagers like Kuttu, Gadori Devi, Gyan Singh and Devi who have to be content with no more than 0.2 litre a day. The total production of milk on an average day is about 72 litres, the average per-family production being a little around 1.2 litre per family or 0.5 litre per capita. Families getting the highest milk production have an average income of Rs 1362 per month and those having the lowest production of milk have an average income of only Rs. 242 a month. Nearly 30 per cent of the families do not have any milk production of their own (they are not necessarily the poorest — lack of availability of family labour, among other things, may lead to inability to keep milch cattle).

The families having a low production of milk (less than half a litre) generally use milk only for tea and occasionally for the children. In other homes where milk production is higher, milk is used for direct consumption, for making tea, and in addition for making ghee. One or two families even sell their surplus milk to roadside tea stalls. Nearly 58 per cent of the families use milk to a lesser or greater extent for making ghee. Regarding the 30 per cent of the families with no milk production, 5 per cent use milk powder, about 9 per cent purchase milk from other families within the village and 16 per cent obtain milk from other families when their requirement is of an urgent nature.

In Rampur village there are 78 children below 10 years of age, of whom 5 per cent have gone out with their parents, nearly 78 per cent manage to get some milk to drink, while 17 per cent get almost no milk. Some parents said that as buffalo milk is difficult to digest in the case of children below the age of two, they prefer to give them tea instead.

An interesting aspect of milk production in this village is that according to a large number of villagers dairying has not been developing but deteriorating over the years and that milk production used to be higher earlier. In fact as many as 48 per cent of the families said they were able to obtain one and a half to two times the quantity of milk that they now obtain till a decade ago, while 44 per cent said their position regarding milk production had not shown much change.

As for the deteriorating state of dairying activities, the villagers mention several reasons, one of which is deforestation and deterioration of community grazing lands over the years due to which the availability of fodder has emerged as a critical constraint on dairy development. The lack of availability of family labour for looking after a large number of cattle is another constraint. Adult males have migrated from several families and the women have to do not only all the household work but in addition work in the fields and fetch fuel and fodder from distant places. Health problems and social problems regarding the break-up of the joint family or other problems within a joint family were also mentioned as reasons for inability to give more attention to dairying.

On the other hand, there are several families which can keep more cattle and in fact are anxious to do so but are unable to purchase a cow or buffalo because of their limited purchasing power and the high and increasing price of milch cattle. Last year Abban Singh (monthly income Rs 2100) purchased a buffalo for Rs 2100 while Kalam Singh (monthly income Rs. 1400) purchased a buffalo for Rs 2300. In contrast a person like Kuttu (monthly income Rs 50) cannot even think of buying a buffalo at this price. However he is now able to get a milk production of about one-fifth of a litre by painstakingly rearing a female calf. Of the people owning milch animals, nearly 21 per cent were able to buy a new cow or buffalo last year while nearly 28 per cent are obtaining milk from milch animals purchased earlier. The remaining families are getting their supply from female calves raised in their homes.

The maximum yield obtained in Rampur from a buffalo is 4 litres of milk a day. However, as many as 38 per cent of the buffaloes give a milk yield of between 1 and 2 litres while 18 per cent yield less than half a litre. Low availability of fodder and the absence of efforts to improve cattle breed are responsible for this low yield. Moreover, there is almost complete absence of veterinary care. Although a veterinary hospital does exist about 11 km from Rampur at Fakot, it is not functioning efficiently and hardly makes any effort to spread information regarding veterinary care in the neighbouring villages. Most villagers of Rampur are not even aware of the existence of this hospital. Similarly, there is no sign of any activity of the animal husbandry department. As a village youth Vir Bhadra quipped, "Hardly anyone here has ever heard about the animal husbandry department".

However, the biggest constraint is the limited availability of fodder. Bhimal and Guriyal trees standing on the bunds of agricultural fields provide a nutritious source of fodder for the cattle, but at present these trees are able to meet only 50 per cent of the fodder requirements, and that too only during winter months. Till some years back there was good forest cover at a distance of about 1 km from the village in Bokhart, Dugadda and Biasalyan, but most of the forests have now vanished. These forests had Khair trees which provided good quality fodder. Nowadays the women of Rampur have to traverse nearly 10 km to get fodder from the forests of Salet and Kalipair. These forests now have to meet the requirements of several villages and so they are fast dwindling. As village women have to climb very steep slopes to get this precious commodity they occasionally fall down getting seriously injured or even die. The forestry department had decided to axe the trees at Salet for commercial use of timber but activists of the Chipko ('Hug the Trees') movement organised by the village women prevented this. The women and even children of Rampur village participated in this movement, Some went to jail for a fortnight. Fortunately the forest was saved from the axe of the contractors.

Thus, despite the low productivity of the milch animals, the villagers have to work extremely hard to obtain fodder for their sustenance. The death of a buffalo generally means a family going without milk for five years and if a bullock dies, it means ploughing their land by borrowing bullocks from others. An additional reason why animals, even dry ones are valued is the organic manure obtained from them. In the absence of this manure hill agriculture will suffer greatly as it will become even more difficult to get something out of this infertile land, a good part of which is not really suitable for agriculture. Thus, despite the poor state of animal husbandary, animals nevertheless meet important needs of milk, manure and draft power which are critical for this village community.

Thus development of animal husbandry is important not only from the point of view of dairy development but also from the point of view of agriculture, and both these requirements should be considered while planning for animal husbandry for this region. While cattle improvement and veterinary care are certainly important, the most basic need that has to be met is that of adequate fodder. The deforestation and environmental degradation in this area has led to landslides and floods not only in this area but also in the plains below. The need for large-scale afforestation work in the Himalayas is widely recognised now and is being pursued. This should be inter-linked with the animal husbandry programmes and trees which provide nutritious fodder should be grown on whatever vacant land is available in and around the village. The villagers should be mobilised for this task. Experiments in handing over small stretches of afforested land to individual families for their care and allowing them to take fodder from it on a self-sustaining basis have been tried elsewhere in these hills and can be repeated here. Once adequate fodder becomes available in and around the village, cattle development programmes should be linked to the availability of fodder. In other words, the improved cattle should be able to convert this fodder efficiently, rather than require purchased feed for efficient milk production and good health.

Unfortunately the only animal husbandry development work which seems to have been tried out in this region in recent years (not in Rampur but in nearby villages) is the purchase of cows and buffaloes from the breeding tracts of Haryana and making them available to the hill villagers partly on loan basis and partly on grant basis. In this work too there have been irregularities. In some cases the beneficiary had to spend too much on appeasing the concerned officials in several ways. In some ways the cow or the buffalo purchased was of poor quality. In some cases corruption also involved local farmers whose cows were passed off as cows purchased from Haryana and the money was shared with the officials, while in some cases the 'beneficiary' suffered a loss because he was forced to accept a poor quality cow or buffalo which died soon, saddling him with the burden of repaying the loan.☐

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Farm Prices : A Rational Approach

M.V. NADKARNI

THE problem of agricultural prices is often presented as if it is a see-saw game between peasants and workers (both urban and rural). That is, it is supposed to be a situation where any loss to peasants is a gain to the working class and vice versa. Putting it this way may appear so simplistic that it would immediately provoke disclaimers. And yet, this is in essence the stand taken by quite a few. When disparity in land holdings and market dependence for food on the part of not only agricultural labour but even of the small farmers are taken into account, the contradiction between the interests of farmers who have surplus to sell and of those who have to buy it could naturally appear as quite sharp. My purpose is to point out that this contradiction is more apparent than real or basic, and that the real contradiction is located elsewhere.

Commercialisation of agricultural production is concomitant with economic development. In the interest of both further growth and ensuring basic needs to the people at large, agricultural and industrial production must grow and there should be an increasing flow of marketable surplus from agriculture consisting of both food and raw material. But how does one draw a farmer into the market and induce him to sell? By assuring him at least a return which is sufficient not only to meet the cost incurred on current inputs and maintenance of capital but also to provide him the surplus needed to keep him and his family in good health and reasonable comfort. Prices of agricultural commodities relative to the prices of inputs are an important element determining this return. (This does not mean that marketed surplus necessarily responds to any price variations. Above a certain minimum price which provides a reasonable return and draws them into market, farmers may respond to increase in relative prices, of one commodity as against another, but not necessarily to a general rise in the price of agricultural commodities). Another important element is productivity, which is determined by technology, skills and condition of land and capital. Forced commercialisation under conditions of bondage does not go a long way, since it does not ensure agricultural development and therefore economic development in general. Commercialisation is in the interest of both farmers and the working class when it provides adequate return to the former and marketable surplus to the latter.

But this is not simply a 'boy-meets-girl' story, for there is invariably a broker in commercialisation, and his nature determines the nature and magnitude of the contradiction. This broker is not simply the trader as a person, but the whole institutional set-up through which agricultural commodities are traded. The basic contradiction is not between the boy and the girl, but between the broker on the one hand and the 'couple' on the other

For quite some time, it was believed that Indian agricultural marketing is competitive and efficient and trading margins are no more than what is needed to meet the costs of transport, storage and interest on capital invested. With the help of mere co-efficients of correlation applied to inadequate data, it was sought to establish that markets are integrated with each other and, therefore, competitive. Recent researches by Barbara Harriss among others – painstaking and thorough — have called the bluff. She has proved on the basis of her studies in Tamilnadu that agricultural marketing is far from being competitive, that there is a good deal of concentration of trading turnover in a few hands (much more than what exists in land distribution), and that trading is so profitable that profits made are invested again in trading rather than in socially more productive economic activities. To anyone who kept his eyes open to the way traders have acquired urban and rural property, the certificate of 'competitive', 'fair', and 'efficient' marketing given by even 'serious' economists would have looked surprising. Now we have documented proof provided by Barbara Harriss.

One might say that only a few traders make huge profits and that the whole trading community is not engaged in profiteering. But that is precisely the nature of the system. Petty traders who form the bulk have no control over the system. It is the few monopoly traders who control it and shape its course and consequences for farmers and working class alike. Harriss has shown that neither regulation of markets nor state trading has solved the problem. (See *Transitional Trade and Rural Development*, 1981 and *State and Market*, Report to Overseas Development Administration, UK, Mimeo, 1981. Also see Suman Sarkar's paper in *EPW*, September 26, 1981; she found traders indulging in discriminatory practices particularly against poor farmers, apart from finding agricultural marketing to be far from competitive in general).

The problem is not merely one of increasing farmers' share in the rupee paid by the consumer and reducing trade margins to their proper size. In a so-called free market set-up, fluctuations in prices and uncertainty caused thereby pose even more of a problem than the level of average prices. Though minimum or floor prices can be assured, this does not stop significant fluctuations above the floor, assuming that the benefits of price guarantee reach all farmers seeking it. The behaviour of cotton prices is a case in point. They registered a sharp rise in 1976-77, inducing many farmers to divert land to cotton cultivation. There was a sharp fall the very next year, upsetting the calculations of

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such farmers. The susceptibility of commercialised agriculure to cobweb-type cycles is a well-known phenomenon has long become part of text-books.

What is missed here is that this is basically a problem of instability and uncertainty in prices rather than simply one of ensuring a minimum reasonable price. Even if a floor price is fixed and is regarded as reasonable to start with, once it rises sharply and returns almost to the floor level later, the floor price would look now unreasonably low. And this is so for understandable reasons. Whereas prices of manufactured goods adjust to upward rise in the prices of agricultural raw material, they do not similarly adjust to downward movements in the latter. Such a ratchet effect is particularly noticeable in manufactured goods. This is what happened in the case of cotton textiles, whose prices have been increasing continuously in the last six years in spite of a crash in cotton prices.

Meanwhile, prices of agricultural inputs too — which form a part of manufactured goods — have increased, leading to an understandable demand to raise the floor prices (in effect, procurement prices) of agricultural commodities. Though there is an inflationary trend in both agricultural and non-agricultural prices, fluctuations around this trend are more in evidence in the case of agricultural prices. This makes any rational decision-making in agriculture a much more difficult task, which could either retard commercialisation itself or lead to agitations to raise farm prices and incomes and even to waive repayment of crop loans and electricity charges. The demand to waive the latter is certainly unreasonable and goes against the farmers' own long-term interests; but this is nevertheless understandable in the context of endemic insecurity in commercialised agriculture even in pockets privileged to have assured water supply. Barbara Harriss has also interpreted the recent agitations by farmers as being on account of their concern to assure *security* for their gains in incomes in irrigated areas.

It is interesting to observe that the wholesale price index numbers increased during 1970-71 to 1980-81 at the rate of 5.9 per cent per annum in the case of fibres, but they increased the rate of 7.2 per cent p.a. in the case of textiles — a manufactured product. Using the co-efficient of variation around trend (CVT) as a meaure of fluctuations around this inflationary trend, we found that it was as high as 11.6 per cent during the same period in the case of fibres as against only 5.4 per cent in the case of textiles. Whereas the trend of rise in prices was higher in the case of manufactured product, fluctuations were higher in the case of prices of raw material used. The difference in the case of oilseeds (agricultural raw material) and edible oils (manufactured) was not so sharp. The trend rates of increase in wholesale prices in their case were respectively 7.5 and 7.7 per cent p.a., and the CVTs 15.1 and 13.8 respectively Fluctuations were wider in the case of oilseeds than in edible oils, but the difference was less than in the earlier case. Taking foodgrains, the CVT during the same period amounted to 12.8 per cent, whereas in the case of the general price level (all commodities) it was lower — 8.3 per cent. The average rate of increase in the wholesale price index of foodgrains was 6.3 per cent p.a. but higher at 8.4 per cent p.a. in the case of general price index.

An idea of ups and downs in prices nearer to the farm level during five recent years can be had from Table 1. We may note that traditional commercial crops like cotton and groundnut grown in drought-prone areas have suffered much more instability than the less commercialised food crops. This is not accidental and reveals how commercialisation affects agriculture.

Table 1: Farm Harvest Prices (Rs. per quintal, rounded off to nearest rupee).

	1975-76	*'76-77*	*'77-78*	*'78-79*	*'79-80*
Karnataka:					
Paddy	106	106	97	95	101
Jowar (kharif)	108	116	93	87	95
Cotton (kapas)	261	404	331	311	331
Groundnut	142	232	228	198	261
Andhra Pradesh					
Paddy	86	93	90	85	97
Jowar (kharif)	101	108	99	87	94
Cotton (kapas)	276	474	373	424	440
Groundnut	145	235	209	180	256
Tamilnadu:					
Rice	NA	NA	142	149	179
Jowar	97	110	100	81	94
Cotton (kapas)	266	389	395	380	325
Groundnut	239	283	291	124	NA

Source: Agricultural Situation in India (various issues), and Bureau of Economics & Statistics, Karnataka.

The question whether the trend in agricultural prices has turned unfavourable relative to the prices paid by farmers for inputs and consumer goods is controversial and falls outside the focus of this article. We may, however, discuss it briefly insofar as it is related to our focus. There is no evidence of a long-term trend having turned unfavourable, particularly if we take the whole period since the fifties or sixties. During the seventies, however, a few years witnessed a decline in prices received by farmers relative to prices paid, though not each time in absolute terms. Whether the trend over the decade as a whole turned unfavourable or not depends on statistical or measurement factors like the base year selected, commodities and inputs selected, weights assigned to them, level of prices taken (farm harvest prices or wholesale prices, etc.) and so on.

We have an interesting attempt in this respect by M.S. Bhatia presented at the Annual Conference of the Indian Society of Agricultural Economics in December 1981. The paper showed that all crops were not alike and there were diverse patterns. Taking all crops together, prices received by farmers were on an average lower during the latter half of the seventies, relative to input prices. This was on account of a sharp rise in input prices during 1974-75 and 1975-76, which depressed relative prices of agricultural commodities so much that even subsequent relative gains did not enable them to recover the pre-1974 position. However, gross income from agriculture maintained its parity with input prices, thanks to increasing trend in production over the decade. The crux of the situation, whatever be the conceptual and statistical framework used to grasp it, is that fluctuations in the series were always more marked or striking than the trend itself. At disaggregated levels, it is bound to be much more so and it is at these levels — rather than at the national level — that the shoe pinches most. The national measure is after all an average and conceals most of the fluctuations at the local level directly affecting farming. This is so particularly in respect of farm prices. The insecurity and uncertainty is so serious that it could well obscure the overall trends in incomes of farmers, both as a matter of fact and psychologically, though unfortunately the problem is not often perceived as such in clear terms.

One more point needs to be clarified. There is indeed instability in both prices and production. It would seem that in periods of crop failures, prices rise enough to compensate for the decline in output, and that decline in prices occurs only during years of bumper crops so that incomes may be stable though prices and production need not be so. Accepting this logic amounts to applying what holds good at aggregated or economy level to micro or local levels. Even if there is no general decline in output at the level of the economy, there may be drought in several regions and, therefore, decline in output in such regions may not be accompanied by corresponding increase in prices. Even if there is a general decline in output, it is vital to the country to arrest a rise in prices and imports may be made. Similarly, there may be a crash in prices following a general increase in output, and the latter may not be experienced by all regions though the former would be. Price movements also are more often than not disproportionate to movements in availability and may partly be a result of speculative deals and international influences. Price movements need not also be symmetrical through the hierarchy of price regimes. The full benefit of a price rise may not be passed down the line to the farmers, but the impact of price fall may be passed on more than proportionately to the movements at wholesale level.

In a recent study of instability in Karnataka agriculture, an attempt was made, *inter alia*, to Compare instability in money value per hectare (that is, yield per hectare valued at current farm harvest prices) of 11 crops with instability in physical yields. If there would have been a compensating or stabilising effect on money value of crops due to diverse directions of price and yield movements, the instability in money value would have been less than in physical yield. Our finding, however, was otherwise, as can be seen from Table 2. The fluctuations as measured by the coefficient of variation around trend, were always higher in the case of money value than in physical yield per hectare. Except in the case of maize, wheat, ragi and tur, the CVT in money value was *more than twice* as high as in physical yield. Even in the case of the former four crops, the difference was significant. It is evident, therefore, that farmers suffer from both unstable prices and unstable yields and that they do not counterbalance each other. At more disaggregated district levels, this would be even more so.

Table 2: Instability in physical yields vis-a-vis instability in money value of yields at current farm harvest prices (in Karnataka, State level).

Crops (in descending order of CVT in physical yield)	*Co-efficient of Variation around Trend (%)*	
	Physical yield	*Money value*
Maize	39.1	55.8
Wheat	29.4	56.2
Cotton	26.3	80.1
Ragi	25.4	31.1
Gram	22.4	46.0
Bajra	21.3	44.0
Tur	17.4	32.1
Jowar (total)	14.6	40.9
Groundnut	14.6	32.6
Rice	11.7	29.8
Sugarcane	9.1	28.8

Note: The calculations are based on the data from 1955-56 to 1975-76.

Farmers, therefore, would do well to perceive more precisely the nature of problems affecting them. If instability in agricultural markets is minimised through a revolutionary change in marketing and distribution systems and measures are taken towards combining growth with stability in yields, this would be entirely in the interest of both farmers and the urban working class. Such a situation would facilitate a more rational planning of crop production and capital formation on the part of farmers, and would also control the inflationary process. If, on the other hand, demands are made simply to continuously raise agricultural prices, farmers would only be playing into the hands of the common exploiters of the farmers and the urban working class. The benefits of such increase in agricultural prices would hardly reach the farmers and would get eroded even before they reach them. The existing system would ensure this, and the inflationary process would be fed continuously. This is beneficial neither to the farmers nor to the working class — urban and rural.

Farmers, the working class, political leaders and social scientists will have to deliberate on the alternatives to the present marketing system and ways of achieving them. In doing so, they may soon find that a change in agricultural market system cannot be isolated from the problem of changing the nature of market and production relations in manufactured goods too.☐

Lessons from Anti-HPT Drive

VIMAL BALASUBRAHMANYAN

ACCORDING to a report published in *The Hindu* on March 5 this year, the Union Health minister, B. Shankaranand, told the Lok Sabha that the Government had taken a conscious decision to permit the manufacture and use of five drugs banned in some countries. The criteria on which the decision was based were 'the relevant needs of medical care' and 'technical advice'. Of the five drugs one was the drug for hormonal pregnancy testing (HPT) which, the Minister said, had been permitted to be marketed subject to a 'cautionary' statement being added to the label.

As far as HPT is concerned, neither the two criteria nor the stipulated 'caution' in its current form can stand up to scrutiny (*Mainstream*, April 10, 1982). It is hard to see what kind of 'technical advice' regarding medical care' could justify a test that is neither accurate nor indispensable. And if it is being permitted for uses other than pregnancy testing, what is the Government doing to ensure that its misuse is prohibited and penalised? (More on this aspect later.) As for cautionary statements, does the Health Minister think that women taking HPT carry magnifying glasses in their handbags to read the small print on the packets?

It is ironical to recall here that in 1979, a reputed Calcutta gynaecologist had urged 'professional medical bodies' to 'agitate' so that the Government of India would actually promulgate an ordinance (i) banning the use of these hormonal drugs for pregnancy testing, 'particularly so in this the International Year of the Child.' (Of all the unrealistic suggestions to make!) The Government of India is perhaps so preoccupied with preventing babies from being born that it cannot really bother about those whose births it has not succeeded in preventing.

It is quite clear from the Government's callous attitude that a powerful drugs lobby is at work. The drug companies give information on drugs to doctors and doctors 'advise' the Government. As long as this mutually beneficial linkage remains strong, research findings that go against drug company interests will be confined to the academic journals instead of being adapted for public benefit. WHO has pointed out: "Drug advertising and contacts with representatives of pharmaceutical firms are often the main sources of information for a physician on drugs and sometimes the only ones. Such information is always influenced by commercial interest. The basic theme of promotional material is that a drug will provide the answer to distressing clinical problem. Little attention is given to aiding the physician to use his clinical judgement. Unfavourable aspects and complications of such treatment rarely receive sufficient attention." Everyone knows this now. The point is hammered home at every seminar on drugs, doctors themselves admit it, but life goes on unchanged. There's nothing like the good old status quo.

Coming back to the current anti-HPT drive, information emerging from medical sources is revealing, and encouraging too. First of all, it is good to know that a section of the medical profession, however minuscule it may be, is seriously concerned about HPT misuse. The doctors have focussed on the issue in English and Marathi newspapers published in Delhi, Bombay and Bangalore and also in district newspapers in Maharashtra. Leaf-lets listing the dangers of HPT have been distributed at women's rallies in Delhi, Bombay and Pune. In Delhi the Voluntary Health Association of India (VHAI) is collecting signatures from doctors to press anti-HPT demands. It is reported that: the test is prescribed in both rural and urban areas and often those who get it are poor women; a large number of doctors are not aware of the side effects; in Pune, many women are being sold this drug as an abortifacient.

In a letter to the Drug Controller, VHAI has demanded among other things: (1) a clear, bold warning on the packets in both English *and the regional languages*; (2) all practising medical professionals should be *individually* informed of the statutory warning through official letters and the mass media. (A prominent DAVP ad on HPT risk is clearly called for; (3) information should be given to the public on how all drugs are tested, on whom, and what side effects they have.

The relevance of this last point extends much beyond the anti-HPT drive, especially because of the invidious dumping in the Third World of all kinds of drugs that are no longer considered safe in the affluent countries. Public awareness on these and related aspects could also be a protective step against 'safety testing' of drugs on Third World populations aimed at bypassing the stringent norms for human experimentation that have been set up over the years in the West.

In Delhi, investigations carried out by VHAI along with a women's group, 'Saheli', revealed that *many doctors prescribe the drug without the warning.* It is bad enough prescribing an unreliable and unnecessary test. To do so without informing the patient of the risks seems not merely unethical but criminal. Would the Medical Council of India care to come out with a strong indictment of such practice and declare that ignorant and indifferent doctors should be struck off the register? (In the previous *Mainstream* article it was shown how some doctors continue to prescribe the drug but 'protect' themselves by warning the patient and advising termination of pregnancy).

Some pertinent points thrown up in the anti-HPT drive assume added importance in the context of the misuse of a large number of other drugs. Since the prescribers' guides (CIMS and MIMS) have included the contra-indications for HPT only in recent issues, the question is: "Do not drug companies supplying the preparations to chemists and doctors have the responsibility of categorically warning them of this change"? When new findings about a drug's adverse effects emerge, whose responsibility is it to ensure that *unbiased* information is given to doctor, chemist and consumer? Literally, whose baby is this? VHAI points out: "It is the role of women's groups, consumer associations and socially conscious individuals to disseminate and share relevant information. *If the health personnel could have done this, so many problems would not have existed in the first place*". (Emphasis added)

Referring to the ploy adopted by some companies which write 'see literature' in the prescribers' guides, two VHAI doctors say: "Even on specifically asking for the 'literature' we were told that the 'literature' is given only to the prescribing doctors". The drug companies know fully well that the products are available for the asking and can be, and are being, bought easily over the counter. A strange case where a dangerous drug is 'fit' for the lay person's consumption but the 'literature' listing its dangers is not!

And finally, a tailpiece which is basically a sidelight on the HPT issue but which nicely sums up its irony.

First some facts: Sweden was the first country to ban the drug in 1970, followed by Finland (1971), USA and Singapore (1975), Belgium (1977) and UK (1978). The drug was banned because of 'insufficient evidence of effectiveness'. However, as things stand, in India the drug can at the most be banned for pregnancy testing and not fully withdrawn because the Indian Council of Medical Research and the Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology have recommended its use in secondary amennorhoea after excluding pregnancy.

Now the irony: Condemning HPT misuse, Dr. A.R. Phadke writes: "There is one situation where the preparation is useful: that is to restart menstruation in women who have stopped menstruating (secondary amenorrhoea) but are not pregnant. Ironically, doctors almost invariably opt for curetting rather than use this preparation when really indicated".

Curetting, let's not forget, means a good day's earning for the doctor concerned. So why prescribe a pill that is cheap and harmless (since no foetus is involved)? The wheel has come full circle.☐

PHYSICIAN, TEACH THYSELF

A short report in a 1976 issue of the American magazine, *Science*, shows how the current Indian drama was enacted less than a decade ago in the USA. All the parallels are there — with one small, semantic difference. Apart from wrongful use in pregnancy testing, the combination-hormone drug was being wrongfully prescribed for preventing miscarriage, while in India it is being wrongfully advocated as an abortifacient. Some wonder drug!

The report, under the heading "Irrational Drug Prescribing and Birth Defects," begins by saying: "One of the weakest links in the chain connecting the drug company to the consumer is the physician. Few Physicians receive formal training in the current use of drugs, but the average practitioner writes 7,934 prescriptions each year. Many of these prescriptions are irrational in the sense that the drug had not been shown to be effective for the purpose for which it has been prescribed; many are completely inappropriate because they represent a substantial hazard to the patient without any compensating benefits."

As a "current" example of the second situation, the magazine cites a numbers of facts regarding the misuse of the hormone-combination drug for pregnancy testing and prevention of miscarriage. The gist is: Physicians have continued to prescribe the drug for use during pregnancy despite evidence that it may produce birth defects. Research studies at the University of Colorado Medical Centre and the New York State Department of Health are quoted, describing the nature of the deformities which include limb reduction, missing toes and fingers, and congenital heart defects.

In early 1975, FDA had warned against use of the drugs during pregnancy, in a bulletin mailed to physicians and other health professionals. The warning was apparently ignored. A survey showed that the number of prescriptions for hormone drugs in early pregnancy had declined very slightly compared to the number in 1972 when such uses had been approved. "Prodded" by the Public Citizen Health Research Group in Washington, FDA announced in October 1976 that it would issue fresh rules which would require manufacturers to print and distribute to users a brochure emphasising that the drug should never be used during pregnancy. The new rules would also require manufacturers to incorporate in the labels of the products a warning against use in early pregnancy, to say that no studies show the drug to be effective in preventing miscarriage, and to say that the drug should never be used to test for pregnancy. "The regulations would thus not only discourage the physician from prescribing the drug but would also warn the patient, so that even if the drug should be prescribed, she will be alerted to the potential hazard and will thus retain the option to avoid the drug."

— *V.B.*

Islam and Polity: Contradictions in Pakistan

ASGHAR ALI ENGINEER

At the outset it must be stated that the Koran—the primary source of all Islamic legislation—does not give any concept of Islamic state; it gives the concept of a society. It is somewhat a contrived proposition that politics and religion are inseparable in Islam. Strictly speaking, there is no political theology in Islam as maintained by some *'ulama* and the Islamicists. Even the hypothesis of theo-democracy as propounded by Maulana Abul 'Ala Maududi is difficult to maintain. (*Islami, Riyasat*, Lahore, 1974). An Egyptian judge and writer, Ali Abdar Razik, in his book on the "Fundaments of Government" (*Al Islam wa Usul al-Hukm*) propounds a different theory regarding the ecclesiastical state of Islam. According to him, Islam has never claimed a wordly government; this was left to the free consideration of the believers. The Koran does not mention the Caliphate, consequently it cannot form part of the Islamic dogma. The idea of Caliphate was created by the legal handbooks compiled centuries after the death of the Prophet.

There is no uniform concept of Islamic state. There are wide-ranging differences not only between different sects of Islam — chief among them being Shi'a and Sunni — but also within the sects themselves. Let alone the concept of Islamic state, the 'ulama disagree among themselves — as pointed out by Justice Munir in his report — about the definition of a Muslim. "The court of enquiry", points out W.C. Smith, "and subsequently the world, was presented with the sorry spectacle of Muslim divines no two of whom agreed on the definition of a Muslim, and yet were practically unanimous that all who disagreed should be put to death."[1]

The Koran, it must be noted, gives not the concept of state but a concept of a society instead[2]. The Koran wants to create a society free of exploitation, iniquity, oppression and all forms of injustice. There are innumerable verses to this effect in the Koran. The Koran also makes it obligatory to fight until persecution ends. "And fight them" the Koran says, until persecution is no more, and religion is for Allah. But if they cease, then lo! Allah is seer of what they do."[3] The Koran also makes it clear that the God's viceregency is not for unjust rulers and oppressors.[4] The Koran makes it obligatory that governance should be based strictly on justice. The Koran emphasises distributive justice and condemns concentration and hoarding of wealth. "Woe to one who gathers wealth and counts it. He thinks that his wealth will render him immortal".[5]

But the Koran, as stated above, did not indicate any definite way to institutionalise these values. The four rightly guided caliphs, according to the Sunnite orthodoxy (the Shi'as do not accept the legitimacy of the first three caliphs and even condemn them as usurpers) tried, on the basis of the Koran and Prophet's *sunnah* (practice), to build up a state structure. This state structure also had an element of Arabian tribal ethos.[6] It, therefore, tended to be democratic as the Caliph, even if nominated by his predecessor, needed to legitimise his caliphate through *bay'ah* (literally selling transaction but in this context means giving one's support or swearing loyalty) and for taking important decisions he had to consult either *Majlis-e-shura'* (a consultative body comprising important tribal chiefs and other prominent companions of the Prophet) or the public at large in a mosque.[7] This may not be democracy as we understand it today, but it came closest to it. This near-democratic polity of the first four caliphs assumes greater importance when contrasted with the powerful monarchies of Roman and Sassanid empires surrounding the fledgling state of Islam.[8]

However, the Islamic republic was short-lived and within a little more than thirty years it lost its democratic character and was transformed into dynastic rule. The pressures and limits of the situation worked in that direction. Thus we see that the institution of caliphate as it evolved in the early period of Islam could not strike roots and soon gave way to dynastic rule. However, the dynastic rule whether of the Umayyads or of the Abbasids, could not get theological sanction from the *'ulama*. Eminent 'ulama and theologians from Hasan al-Basari down to Imam al-Ghazali condemned dynastic rule and refused, even under coercive pressure, to accord legitimacy to it.[9] Needless to say, dynastic rule grossly violated all the central values enshrined in the concept of society given by the Koran and resorted to the worst kind of persecution and tyranny. The Islamic polity, during the period of 'Umar and 'Ali, had acquired revolutionary thrust and sought to end tyranny and persecution perpetrated by the Roman and Sassanid empires. The dynastic rule of the Umayyads and Abbasids, on the other hand, re-created monarchical polity based on tyranny and persecution.

IN the light of what has been said above as regards the polity in Islam, we have to examine the contradictions in the state building of Pakistan. We have to start, obviously, with the very foundational notion of creation of Pakistan. Its establishment was based on the theory of two nations which clearly meant that Muslims constitute a separate nation. The theory of separate-nationhood may or may not have political justification, it certainly does not have sanction of the Koran. If anything, the concept of

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qaum (nation) in the Koran is composite. The believers and non-believers, according to the Koran, do not constitute separate *qaums* (nations). They belong to one nation, one group only.

Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani throws interesting light on this question (*Muttahida Qaumiyat aur Islam*). According to him the word *qaum* has been used more than 200 times in the Koran. He cites many Koranic verses to emphasise the following: (1) From the point of view of the Koran and its usage the word *qaum* is not applied to the Muslims alone but can be applied to any community, racial, geographical or linguistic. (2) Muslims and non-Muslims (even *kafirs*, that is, non-believers) can, according to Koranic usage, constitute a nation. (3) Even a prophet can and does have relationship with *kafirs*, *mushriks* (polytheists) and wrongdoers as a part of nation. (4) It is necessary to distinguish between *qaum* and *millat*. The latter term means a community of believers irrespective of tribe, race or nation. All believers are united to pursue common spiritual and religious goals.

Maulana Madani also follows the *Sunnah* of the Prophet for constituting composite nationality. The Prophet, after arriving in Medina, drew up an agreement with all sections of the population — Muslims, non-believers, Jews and Christians – to constitute a political community and clearly laid down the terms and conditions for the same. Ibn Hisham, biographer of the Prophet, has mentioned this agreement. (See Sirah Ibn Hisham, vol. I, p 2780). According to section 8 of this agreement all those Jews who have entered into the agreement with Muslim must be treated sympathetically and no injustice should be done to them and their oppressors should be fought. And according to section 15 of the agreement the Jews of Bani 'Auf were given freedom to follow their religion and the Muslims to follow their religion. Except in matters of religion, Muslims and Jews would constitute one group. Thus we see that both the Koranic concept of *qaum* and the Prophet's *Sunnah* do not support the theory of two nations.

Although Jinnah was instrumental in propounding the two-nation theory, he was essentially secular in outlook. He did not entertain any idea of creating a theological state in Pakistan. He assured the people of Pakistan immediately after its birth that "Muslims, Christians, Parsis are equals irrespective of caste, creed of colour". The Jamaat-e-Islami headed by Maulana Maududi was for the creation of a theocratic state in Pakistan. It all along opposed Jinnah as he was opposed to the concept of a theocratic state. It is interesting to note that Jinnah's formulation of the concept of two nations was hedged by secular rather than theological considerations. According to Bizenjo, a Baluch leader, the sum and substance of Jinnah's stand was not that the Muslims were a nation but that "Muslims of India had attained all the essential features and characteristics which were sufficient for differentiating them from the Hindus of India on the basis of culture, history, specific social and economic interests and different values and thus they were qualified to live in a separate territory of their own to safeguard their common interests and to that extent the Muslims of India should be treated as a separate nation." (Rajendra Sareen in *Times of India*, October 27, 1978).

Not that there is no fallacy in this argument, but what is important for us is to note that secular rather than theological considerations impelled Jinnah to demand separate nationhood for Indian Muslims. More than thirty years after partition the question of Pakistani ideology continues to be bitterly contested by the oppressed nationalities of Pakistan like Baluch and Sindh (the Bengladeshis of course separated from West Pakistan proving the absurdity of the concept of Muslim nationhood). Bizenjo keenly contests the concept of Pakistani ideology and asserts that the concept of Muslim nation is a non-issue which does not exist anywhere on earth. He also maintains that in the holy Koran the term Muslim nation has not been used anywhere (*ibid.*)

Another Pakistani intellectual Akbar Y. Mustikhan's is "one of the most coherent presentations of the case against the concept of Pakistan being a Muslim nation" (*ibid*). Pointing out inconsistency in the concept of Pakistan being a Muslim nation, Mustikhan argues, "To say that Pakistan is a Muslim nation is a negation of Muslim 'Ummat' as envisaged in the holy Quran. Secondly, when it is claimed that Pakistan is a Muslim nation, the existence of the Pakistani nation is being rejected. A nation must exist within certain territorial boundaries. But if it is a Muslim nation, then it becomes a transcendental one. In other words, any Muslim from any corner of the world ... can claim equal rights with us as part of this Muslim nation." (*ibid*)

THERE are several other issues involved in the process of state building. The question of nationhood is only one among them. As pointed out earlier, there is no theology of state in Islam and no state structure unanimously agreed to. Apart from the major schism between Shi'as and Sunnis on the concept of Caliphate and Imamat, among Sunnites themselves there are different schools of thought. The Jamaat-e-Islami, for example, believes in theocracy whereas the Jami'at al-'Ulama-i-Hind advocated the cause of composite nationalism. The Jami'at al-'Ulama, as pointed out earlier, bases its case on the Koran and the Sunnah. In matters of legislation too, there are widely differing opinions. There is bitter controvesy in Pakistan as to which school of theology out of the four major ones should have precedence in formulating legislations. Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani of the Barelvi 'Ulama and Mufti Mehmood of Deoband group are bitter opponents of Jamaat-e-Islami and they want the Hanafi school to have pre-eminent position in the country. (*ibid*, October 28, 1978).

Even the Islamic Ideology Council seems to have been caught in rough weather. Maulana Javed Nomani, a Pesh Imam of Karachi mosque, says: "An advisory Council was set up to Islamise the legal system but its members do not have even a remote relationship with Islam. Majority of its members have wallowed in corrupt and degenerate practices. The Council has been in existencee for the last four years and has held numerous sessions in Lahore, Islamabad hnd Karachi but all this mountain of effort has not produced even a mouse. No Islamic laws have been framed." (*Secular Democracy*, January 1982).

The Majlis-e-Shura' recently appointed by General Zia is similarly a target of fierce attack. "Recently", says Maulana Nomani, "Majlis-e-Shura' was constituted and the President declared that it had brought us closer to the ideal of Islam. He exhorted that every individual's life should be supplied with the ideals of Islam. Can he say the same about those who have been nominated on the Majlis? Most of them are negation of Islam, their lives being closer to the West than to the East." (*ibid*).

In an ideological state like Pakistan there are several dilemmas. There are always puritans who would not tolerate any deviation from ideological purity, howsoever inevitable it might become due to the developing situation. Those in charge of political or social management find it extremely difficult to adhere to ideological purity in the face of acute pressures arising out of a fast developing situation. It is much more so in the present era of rapid socio-economic and technological developments. Even modern political theories like Marxism need constant updating (of course the Marxist puritans too assume the same stance)[10] from time to time. There is another problem also. Around each ideology there crystallises a group of ideologues and leaders. When new developments take place and there is felt need for change, this group feels its position threatened and tries to protect its interests under the garb of ideological purity. New theorists of change emerge on the scene and intellectual battles are fought between old and new ideologues.

These battles are fought more furiously if the ideology in question happens to be means to achieving power. This is precisely what is happening in Pakistan. Maulana Maududi, chief of Jamaat-e-Islami, right from the beginning used theological idiom as a means for achieving power. In a backward country with an acute problem of poverty either religious ideology or Left ideology of some socialist variety has greater chances of success. In a backward country like Pakistan with a weak working class movement and an overwhelming section of the petty bourgeoisie in command of state machinery, religious ideology appears to have greater chances of success. This is more so as Islam, as compared to other religions like Hinduism, Buddhism or Christianity, has much greater potential of developing a coherent political theory. The ideologues of Islam, especially of the Jamaat-e-Islami variety, were fully aware of this potential and set out to exploit it.

However, in a complex socio-political situation and especially when changes are occurring, neat calculations cannot work whatever expertise may have gone into working them out. For a number of years after the establishment of Pakistan, theologians had to lie low for certain reasons. Jinnah and Liaqat Ali Khan's influence (both stood for a secularised state structure) could not be easily undermined. According to Ian Stephens, "Pakistan started independent life under a leader of extraordinary prestige. Almost any innovation that Mr Jinnah chose to ask for, in the early days, her people would have accepted." He further says, "Resemblances can be seen in him to Ataturk, to Tito, to Nasser. He wielded authority of an unquestioned, overriding sort, such as in India Mr Nehru has never quite achieved nor perhaps wanted." (*Pakistan — Old Country New Nation. 1964*)

It is not, therefore, surprising that both Jinnah and Liaqat Ali died in mysterious circumstances.[11] After Jinnah's death, the bureaucracy and the military on the one hand, and the landlords and the nascent capitalist classes on the other, became all-powerful. State power was virtually controlled by these classes. However, there were intersectarian as well as socio-cultural contradictions among these classes. It is interesting to note that Jinnah belonged to a heterodox mercantile Islamic sect but it was his great prestige with the people of Pakistan that pushed his sectarian background into almost oblivion. Not so for others. The military was predominantly Punjabi (specially its officers corps. The big landlords mainly came from Punjab, Sind and Baluchistan. The nascent capitalist class almost belonged to heterodox mercantile communities of Bombay and Gujarat like Memons, Khojas and Bohras. Tamachi rightly points out, "None of these merchants had roots in any unit of the federation and none of them had any previous experience of responding to the needs of industrialisation in the twentieth century." Lastly, the bureaucracy, at least its top echelons, came from the elite of UP immigrants.

Coupled with all this, this fact is also worth noting that Pakistan never developed firm democratic roots as its establishment was not the result of long-drawn-out mass struggle but that of religious chauvinism worked out by the Muslim elites for their calculated ends. The ruling classes, due to lack of homogeneous national character, soon developed sharp contradictions after the overriding authority of Jinnah disappeared from the scene. The so-called Pakistani ideology could not resolve these contradictions. On the contrary in Pakistan, as in any other backward country, these contradictions began to sharpen with the process of development, although it was quite slow. The protest of the suppressed peripheral nationalities like Sindhi, Baluch and Bengali became more and more shrill and accentuated the contradictions. Even the military rule, first of Ayub Khan and later of Yahya Khan, failed to suppress these contradictions between peripheral and core nationalities.

Even the violent break-up of Pakistan in 1971 could not finally resolve these acute contradictions. Democratic polity and culture had not organically evolved in Pakistani society when Bhutto took over in 1971. At best it was authoritarian personal rule grafted over military rule. In 1971 the Pakistani society was plunged into what Jurgen Habermas calls 'legitimation crisis'.[12] Bhutto tried to resolve this crisis created by the loss of legitimation by taking recourse to what he called 'Islamic

Socialism'. Islamic Socialism, concretised in the slogans of 'bread, shelter and clothes' won Bhutto's PPP a large number of seats during the 1970 elections. The Jamaat-e-Islami, despite its aggressive employment of Islamic idiom, failed to win public recognition in the election. However, in the post-break-up period, the situation in Pakistan was too complex to be resolved by the loosely structured PPP and its vaguely defined policy of 'Islamic Socialism'.

Aspirations of the people were aroused by raising radical slogans but it was not possible to fulfil them in view of slow capitalist development. There was even regression in industry in the post-break-up period. Bhutto faced a real dilemma. Tightening measures led to stealthy flight of capital. He settled for balancing between the haves and the have-nots but, as Tamachi points out, "Bhutto's policy of maintaining balance between 'haves' and 'have-nots' left things basically unaltered."[13] Land reforms, though more radical than those of Ayub Khan, were far from creating real momentum for capitalist development on the one hand and winning the support of the poor peasantry on the other.[14] Ronald Herring points out, "Even if Bhutto's PPP had not in part been composed of powerful landlords, the political capacity to carry out so fundamental a reorganisation of the agrarian sector was problematic in the Bhutto period. Bhutto himself argued, as had Ayub Khan before him, that a truly radical land reform would be politically impossible."[15]

BHUTTO'S failure led to a severe legitimation crisis in Pakistani society. Bhutto's was the last attempt in the last decade to resolve the acute contradictions of Pakistani society first within a secular framework and later within religio-secular framework. Bhutto began to employ Islamic idiom more and more as the challenge to his authority grew more and more acute. This led to enforcement of prohibition and to declaring Qadiyanis as a non-Muslim minority. It was the beginning of the process of acquiring Islamic legitimacy on the part of the Pakistani state authorities for their failure to resolve socio-political contradictions arising out of class contradictions in the society within the capitalist framework.

However, in this respect, Habermas makes an interesting observation: "The residue of tradition must, however, escape the administrative grasp, for traditions important for legitimation cannot be regenerated administratively. Furthermore, administrative manipulation of cultural matters has the unintended side effect of causing meanings and norms previously fixed by tradition and belonging to the boundary conditions of the political system to be publicly thematised."[16]

The Islamic traditions now acquired a momentum of their own, no longer remained boundary conditions of the political system, and began to shake "the structures of the depoliticised public realm so important for the continued existence of the system."[17] His political opponents employed the Islamic idiom more aggressively in order to fight the political battle on the Islamic plane. The wilful process of conforming reality to ideology produces more complex problems than the effort to conform ideology to reality. Pakistani society was caught, with the initiation of the former process, in a fresh set of contradictions. The ruling classes now headed by General Zia, a self-confessed dictator, are facing new dilemmas which are no less severe.

There are several 'ulama who are opposed to the Zia regime. These 'ulama have their own version of Islamic tradition and demand much stricter conformity to these traditions. According to a report appearing in *Economist*, London, "A number of religious groups call the council un-Islamic (that is, Majlis-e-Shura'); they feel that its name, Majlis-e-Shoora, taken from a consultative assembly of the Caliphs, is an insult to Islam's glorious past. Some Moslems have even started saying that military dictatorship is against the tenets of the Koran. Fundamentalists are irritated by what they see as unjustified delays in setting up a fully-fledged Islamic state."

The 'Ulama are perfectly right when they maintain that "military dictatorship is against the tenets of the Koran". The Koran, although it does not spell out form of state, condemns, in no uncertain terms, any form of oppression. The Koran clearly pronounces, "The last remnant of those who oppress has been cut off."[18] The Koran also says, "How many oppressing nations We have destroyed! Their cities lie in ruin; desolate are their lofty palaces, abandoned their wells."[19] Thus there is no place for oppression and injustice whatsoever in an Islamic society. The value system of Islam, it is very important to note, lays great emphasis on distributive justice, equality — in both material and spiritual realms — and fraternity. However, the ruling classes, who make use of Islam for their own ends, do not emphasise the value system of Islam. They, instead, show their enthusiasm for enforcing Islamic punishments, thus keeping the status quo undisturbed. In order to implement the core-values of Islam, it would be necessary to radically restructure society in favour of the weak and the oppressed. The Koran even talks of making the weak and the oppressed (mustad'ifin) the leaders of society.[20] It is for this reason that even Zia began his Islamising process by enforcing Islamic punishments like cutting off hands of thieves, stoning adulterers to death and publicly lashing other offenders. He never bothered to give a thought to the core values of Islam as he by no means intended to radically restructure society. His intentions were just the opposite.

The so-called fundamentalists all over the world are using Islamic jargon to throw dust in the eyes of their own people and to push under the carpet serious contradictions which they cannot resolve by maintaining the status quo. The ruling classes in Pakistan are playing no different game.

Notes and References

1. Munir Commission Report, Lahore, 1954, Cf. W.C. Smith *Islam in Modern History*, 1957.
2. Kamruddin Khan *Al-Mawardi's Theory of the State.*
3. The Koran 8:39
4. *Ibid*, 2:124.

5. *Ibid*, Chapter 104.
6. See for detailed discussion, Ahmad Abbas Saleh *Al-Yamin wa al-Yasar fi'l Islam*, 1973, Maxime Rodinson *Muhammad*, Eng. tr. 1971.
7. See Tarikh al-Tabari Vol. III, 1962, and Muhammad Husain Hykal, *Umar*, Urdu tr. Habib Ash'ar Dehlavi, 1971.
8. See Shibli N'omani's "Farouqe-A'zam ka Daure Khilafat" reproduced in *Naqsh-e-Kokan*, February 1982.
9. See Hasan al-Basri's letter to Umayyad Caliph 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwan in Rasa'il al-'Adl wa al-Tawhid Vol. 1.
10. See Dev Murarka "The Fedoseyev Thesis", *Mainstream*, January 9, 1982.
11. See Z.A. Bhutto's *If I am Assassinated*, 1979, and Anwar Tamachi's "Pakistan — Secret Pillars of Power", *Secular Democracy*, December 1981, for a detailed discussion on this. Also of interest is Sri Prakasa, *Pakistan: Birth and Early Days*.
12. Jurgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, 1976.
13. Anwar Tamachi, op. cit.
14. See Ronald J. Herring "Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Eradication of Feudalism in Pakistan", *Economic and Political Weekly*, March 22, 1980.
15. Ronald J. Herring, op. cit.
16. Jurgen Habermas, op. cit.
17. *Ibid*.
18. The Koran 6:45.
19. *Ibid*. 22:45
20. *Ibid*. 28:5

COMMUNICATION

CPI and Magarwara

I find that Rajeswara Rao has taken umbrage (*Mainstream*, April 17, 1982) at my report on Magarwara killing published in *Mainstream* (April 3, 1982), so much so that he has rushed to the press to defend himself and his Party. One would have expected that with half as much alacrity he would have rushed to the Chief Minister or the Home Minister or even to the Labour Minister of UP demanding an explanation for the carnage; but he did not. Nor did he call a press conference, as the situation demanded, to give the matter the widest possible publicity. He strayed into Dayalkhera village, almost incidentally — during his peregrination of UP on a fund-raising mission — ten days after the massacre. But it did not occur to him that his eminent comrades accompanying him (who presumably live in UP and read the local Lucknow dailies, which on January 5, 6, 7, 1982 were full of gory details of the event) had not even once visited their stricken comrades, neither in Magarwara nor in Unnao where several of them had fled. Or, was it more politic — with the Varanasi Congress looming ahead with all its crevices and quick-sand — to quietly ignore the whole issue?

Rao says, "We held a meeting in which we promised them (the villagers) that this issue would be taken up by us." Now may one ask what steps he has taken since that promise? Has he not been told that it was not Comrade Bhikhalal but Mahipal Singh, a Lok Dal leader. who raised the issue in the UP Assembly and "created a furore"? He says, "Later a detailed report of the incident, describing the atrocities, was circulated by our Central News Service which was published in *New Age* and other journals of our Party". But despite these strenuous efforts at publicity, this ghastly news did not seem to touch a single leader of his party. Is it possible that such important luminaries as the General Secretary of the AITUC, Indrajit Gupta, and Vice-President Joshi do not read the Party papers? And that is why they did not raise the issue in the Lok Sabha? And an Independent member, A.K. Ray, felt compelled to raise it and send a memorandum to the Prime Minister collecting signatures of 20 Members of Parliament belonging to different Opposition parties — Indrajit Gupta's was not one of those! Could it be that while waxing eloquent on Rajiv Gandhi's Budget speech, the General Secretary of the AITUC had just forgotten to mention Magarwara? Even on January 19, at the Boat Club in New Delhi, while protesting against ESMA and NSA, not a word did he say about those who had died in a protest against ESMA.

Rao mentions that *Patriot* gave publicity to the shooting. It certainly did — but when? — full two months after Rao's visit to Dayalkhera.

Would it be incorrect to conclude that the CPI and its trade union wing are no longer in coordination, that the cement which had joined them together is now full of sand, and concern over the fate of the workers has become secondary?

Amiya Rao

New Delhi

Hand-rickshaws in Calcutta

As a temporarily displaced citizen of Calcutta, who has equivocated on occasions before hailing a hand-pulled rickshaw in Calcutta, and who has finally learnt to walk when required in Delhi, I would take the opportunity of reacting to Unnayan's question, 'How do you think it should change? (*Mainstream*, March 27, 1982). My reactions are purely personal, for I have no access to official data on which the decision to take stringent action against unlicensed hand-pulled rickshaws was based.

However, using the figures given by Unnayan, it is interesting to note that not more than 10 per cent of Calcutta's population use rickshaws. (Unnayam has said that more than 10 per cent of the total number of daily trips — 6.8 million — are made by rickshaws. As per the 1981 Census the population of the Calcutta Urban Agglomeration is 9.6 million. Hand-rickshaw users are not only confined to the population of Calcutta Municipal Corporation — 3.24 million — but to all who are in Calcutta for official or personal purposes. Thus, less than 10 per cent of Calcutta's day population use rickshaws). Can we not conclude that its use is, perhaps, only a middle-class phenomenon, to enable those who do not have enough money to hire taxis, to do their shopping (23 per cent) and to pay social calls (23 per cent again, that is, 46 per cent together, of rickshaw travel)?

The hand-pulled rickshaw is essentially a short-distance mode of conveyance, for it is uneconomical, slow and hazardous for long distances. Its abolition would, no doubt, inconvenience the Bengali babu and wife, ever averse to exercise, but its departure would not greatly inconvenience the majority of Calcuttans who have to count every paisa before investment. The lucky children who go to school by rickshaw, go to elitist schools, and those who worry about their clothes getting wet during Calcutta street floods do not deserve special concern. The only segment who will be hard-hit will be those who, for medical reasons, are dependent on rickshaws for transport, and who, apparently, constitute 9 per cent of rickshaw ushers.

The crux of the question, however, is the health of the puller and not of the user. While Unnayan has referred to a Madras report which indicates that cycle-rickshaws pose a greater health hazard, ane would appreciate details as to the size of the sample, the time-span, method of examination, etc. The entire issue seems to hinge on this critical factor, and without details one cannot disregard the evidence of one's eyes. The angle of the hand-rickshawalla's arms, the lack of brakes, the bent back, all cry out to high heavens that the action is agonisingly painful. A cycle-rickshawalla does not grimace or grunt in the same manner. Apart from the medical aspect, the image of one man being 'carried' by another reeks of man's inhumanity to man. (The word 'carried' is deliberately used, for the person hiring the rickshaw sits at the level of the shoulder of the puller). It is the same sentiment that demanded the banning of movement of night-soil as head-load. A hand-pulled rickshaw is, indeed, 'a dramatic image of what is wrong in society', and by forcing those who take to this profession to confront their actual rural dilemma, possibly more good can be done, than by preservation of the status quo. Surely it is significant that the surplus labour of rural Bengal, where land reforms have been implemented to some degree, does not take to hand-rickshaw-pulling, while 92 per cent of hand-rickshaw-pullers come from outside Bengal? The choice must indeed be a very stark one, which motivates a man to leave his village for a totally alien place and profession. The pavements of Calcutta cannot be the safety valve for disordered agrarian conditions outside Bengal.

Extension of the logic used by Unnayan, while extolling the virtues of the hand-pulled rickshaw, would require the introduction, or re-introduction, of the contraption in every congested city of India. It would be labour-intensive, employment-generative, and a boon for the middle class family, hard-hit by cab-fare hikes. This is *reductio ad absurdum*. Then why single out Calcutta for the singular distinction of having hand-pulled rickshaws?

Unnayan has raised pertinent questions about the present licensed owners, and the scope for reform in this regard. Licensed pullers undoubtedly need loans and help, so that they may become owners of their rickshaws one day. As for unlicensed pullers, rural employment schemes, in the districts where they come from, would help to rehabilitate them. Surely it can be done?

K. Chaudhuri (Ms)

New Delhi

DOCUMENT

The Berlinguer Approach

Italian Communist Party's open differences with Moscow have become one of the major items of ideological-political disputation within the Communist World. While this development has touched off a volley of comments and polemics in the Communist as well as anti-Communist press, very little has appeared in the Indian press giving the authentic version of the Italian Communist stand. During the recent visit to Paris of the Italian Communist Party leader Enrico Berlinguer he talked to *Le Monde* reporters Jacques Amalric, Jacques Nobecourt, and Philippe Pons about his party's role in Western Europe's worker movement. This interview is reproduced here from *The Guardian*, weekly, London (April 25, 1982) with due acknowledgement.

During your press conference with Lionel Jospin, First Secretary of the French Socialist Party, you reiterated that you no longer take the Soviet Union as a model. What does the USSR represent for you then?

It's been a long time since we stopped citing the "Soviet model". We reject the very concept of a "model" We're trying to avoid peremptory slogans, societies. I would even say that wanting to impose this model on Eastern Europe was a mistake, and it is one of the origins of the distortions these societies have undergone.

How would you describe the recent goings-on between the Italian Communist Party and the USSR? As a quarrel, a rupture, a schism?

It's very simple. There has been no break and we aren't looking for one. There is a very bitter debate going on.

What you reproach the French Communist Party for most is its adherence to certain Soviet stands?

I don't think that the stands taken by the French Communists are determined by a concern to follow the Soviet line. They are simply choices which differ from ours on certain points.

Do you envisage talks with the Soviets, or will you let the controversy develop?

No meetings are planned for the moment, but we think it would be a step forward if our Soviet comrades published our answers to their criticisms and if they abandoned the tone of anathema or excommunication in favour of objective discussion. We fear that this tone could seriously damage the worker movement, as happened in 1948 in the controversy with Yugoslavia.

Is there a minority among the Italian Communist

Do you think that Poland is on the road to "normalisation", or do you think there will be a confrontation?

It's difficult to foresee. Since the state of emergency I've seen nothing to suggest any relaxation in the military regime's repression and rigidity. Naturally, I don't discount a new confrontation, which would be disastrous not only for the Poles but also for the international situation. I also think that a policy of reprisal through sanctions isn't the best policy to adopt.

Has your party taken a stand on the problem of Poland's debts?

We haven't taken a stand on this particular problem, but on the other hand we're in favour of maintaining and even expanding economic relations with Poland. Reprisal measures would be interpreted by most Poles as hostile and would weaken chances of attenuating repression and opening the way to establishing trade-union and political liberty. Europe's Left-wing forces and Western European governments must continue to call for an end to repression and a return to freedom. I don't see any contradiction in these positions because a policy of sanctions would result in a new crackdown.

Do you believe in the possibility of reform in the Soviet system? Or do you think it is in full decline?

Reforms are absolutely necessary so that Soviet society can resume its way forward. But I don't see any signs right now of reform. I don't think it's impossible, but two external conditions are also necessary: first, the spread of detente, which can have a positive influence on the process of reform in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and second, the Western European worker movement must demonstrate the possibility of socialism based on democracy.

Is this what you mean when you talk about a "third way"?

The "third way" means that within the framework of Western European societies we reject the application of the "Soviet model". But at the same time we note that traditional social democracy is no longer capable of solving the problems which have arisen from the crisis of capitalism and the international crisis.

Doesn't your reference to the "worker movements of Western Europe" impose a major limitation? With the evolution of Western societies, the worker movement has become a numerical minority.

"Worker movement" is a traditional term. But it doesn't exclude the forces which want to participate in the Western European socialist perspective. In recent months, the Italian Communist Party has put considerable stress on the alliance of the working class with the middle classes on the one hand, notably the intellectuals, and on the other through the unions and the political parties, with the sector we call "marginal".

In Italy this term designates the strata of the population which have no place in the modern production process or in industry. It includes youth, women, jobless intellectuals, the elderly — several million people in all. For us it's not a question of simply exploiting demands from social and intellectual quarters as well as the economic world. Our party must, for instance, incorporate feminist demands of all kinds into its own ideological platform.

Without citing him by name, you seem to be referring to Antonio Gramsci's view of the role of the intelligentsia.

Gramsci made a decisive contribution to the analysis of the relationships between the working class and the intelligentsia. But naturally these have changed a great deal. He gave special importance to two categories of intellectuals: schoolmasters and priests. Then came technical experts. These days we continue to pay the same attention to teachers of course, but we also take into consideration those specialists technological progress brings to the fore daily. This is a social stratum with decisive weight in Italy's economic life.

Isn't it paradoxical that there are fewer divergences of opinion with foreign socialists in this search for a "third way" than with the Italian Socialist Party?

That's true to some extent, and perhaps it can be explained by current differences in outlook between the two parties as well as by the fact that in Italy people try to deny or minimise the importance of the new moves our party has introduced and will continue to introduce.

Do you think that a party like the West German Social Democrats belongs to the European Left?

It's not a question of drawing up a list of parties which might or might not belong. In our view, the term is applicable to all groups with more or less of a basis in the working class and which call for socialism, or progress towards socialism. Many differences divide us from the Social Democrat Party but it is a major party of the German working class.

In the context of the "third way", as well as that of the European Left, what becomes of your slogan "historic compromise"?

I decided some time ago not to use it any more. I was weary of vainly stressing hundreds of times over that it didn't mean a government alliance between Communists and Christian Democrats. It wasn't a proposal for a coalition; the idea was that it was necessary for the Italian masses belonging to the three major currents, Communist, Socialist, and Catholic, to get together.

Now we're proposing the "democratic alternative": an alliance among the forces of the Left and eventually other democratic forces to govern without the Christian Democrats. This doesn't mean that we can't come to certain agreement with them on a few principles shared by all the parties which participated in the Resistance and which support the republican constitution. The time for the "democratic alternative" has come.

As far as the "third way" and the quest for a "democratic alternative" are concerned, one has the feeling that uncertainty pervades the Italian Communist Party grassroots after the quarrel with Moscow. How would you define the specifi-

city of the PU in relation to the Socialists?

We don't propose the "third way" as feasible for all the worker parties in Western Europe. But it seems interesting to us to observe that a few socialist parties realise that traditional social-democratic policies have been superseded.

In our party there have been not only very broad, very open discussion and widespread adherence to its decisions, but also a zone of disagreement or perplexity. The formula of the "third way" isn't new; it dates from our 1979 Congress. We are't moving towards social democratisation. Our concerns are two-fold; on the one hand we don't want to make the Soviet Union the villain by holding it up as the world evil by seeing only its negative aspects and contradictions, and on the other hand we don't want to make social democracy the culprit.

We're making a historical criticism of it, differentiated moreover from country to country. Above all we feel that in some countries it represents a majority of the working class. Without wishing to become social democrats, we think that it is necessary to attempt to cooperate with these parties to advance detente and further the worker movement in the direction of socialism.

What is your analysis of the European pacifist movement?

Very positive. It is one of the most important events in Europe in recent years. This spontaneous outburst has arisen among broad strata of the population — youth, the churches, the Catholic movement, and the socialist and social-democratic parties — out of a fear of seeing Europe become the theatre of a so-called limited nuclear war. I don't think it would be limited, but Europe would certainly be at its centre.

Aren't you in basic disagreement with the analysis made by the French Socialist Party?

There is disagreement here. I don't know whether it has to do with the different character the peace movement has taken in France as compared to Italy. In any case we think that the spread of the movement is necessary, also taking into account the events in Poland which have given it a certain impetus. But the conditions for reviving exist and it should be linked to a demand for an end to repression in Poland. We also feel that this movement, given its character in different European countries — though I want to talk mainly about Italy — can't be unilateral: that is, it can't come out against US foreign policy while approving the Soviet Union's. So far, it has been addressed to both big powers.

But in practice it has had an effect mainly on Western nations. It has no equivalent in Eastern Europe.

That does't depend on us.

How then can a unilateral pacifist movement be reconciled with the balanced disarmament you want?

We are, of course, asking that arms reduction on both sides should take security requirements into account, whether of the USSR, the US, the Warsaw Pact, or NATO.

In concrete terms, the spread of this movement in Europe could perfectly well end NATO's December 1979 project concerning Pershing and Cruise missiles, but have no effect on SS 20s, There are 300 of those and they will stay.

I would say all the same that the peace movement which got underway last summer and autumn has already to some extent influenced government positions and helped to set the stage for negotiations in Geneva. To prevent these from bogging down the movement should evolve along lines aimed at the Soviet Union as much as at the US and which also take into account the SS-20s. It is very interesting to see that a majority of the American House of Representatives has come out for a freeze on nuclear arms which would constitute a primary condition for discussing arms reduction.

What is your position in regard to conventional arms in Europe?

Here there is Soviet superiority. As for nuclear arms, it is so difficult to draw up a balance-sheet that we can't establish whether any superiority exists. It isn't to be ruled out, but we think that all nuclear arms and missiles must be considered, not only ground installations in the US and the USSR but also those in countries like France and Great Britain.

What place does the spread of terrorism, particularly in Italy, hold in your analysis of the international power struggle? Does such terrorism arise from strictly Italian causes, or does it proceed from something much more generalised?

We've never excluded the possibility that Italian terrorism has international connections. But what they are remains to be established. Terrorism is a political phenomenon. I would even say political rather than social; it has its social causes but its roots are in Italian political life.

It's sometimes claimed that the spread of terrorism in Italy came about because the Italian Communist Party was too rigid, too structured, because it didn't allow enough flexibility to the younger generations, all those who wanted to be heard and ended up terrorists.

We've heard this superficial analysis of terrorism as a phenomenon of extremist youth before. It should be realised first of all that terrorism isn't the prerogative of youth, and second, that there must be a distinction — which we make — between extremist youth on the left and those who follow the path of fascism. As far as we're concerned we make a distinction: we talk of youth tempted by extremism. At the same time, we're fundamentally opposed to those who choose terrorism. Among our activists there are thousands, even tens of thousands, who have experimented not with terrorism but with extremism and now accept our policies. That's to say, we've done some work in this area even if there are still a few gaps.

Could you develop this idea that terrorism is more of a political than a social phenomenon?

If you study, as has been done, the social makeup of terrorist groups you find people from all levels of society. You find workers of course but also teachers, fair numbers of students, people from society's wealthiest strata. Such social analysis therefore leads nowhere. Which doesn't mean that there are no social reasons for terrorism. But I say political because I think it's a phenomenon closely tied to Italy's political instability.

Isn't there a lot of talk about torture in Italy Right now?

I don't know whether one can speak of torture exactly: it's more a question of harsh treatment. In any case, we've put the matter before Parliament. We've asked for energetic measures against terrorism, but we are absolutely opposed to any process which isn't based on respect for the rules as defined by our Constitution and laws. Even though terrorism has lasted in Italy for almost 13 years the fight against it has generally been conducted in a democratic fashion.

What judgement do you make about the socialist experiment in France since the May elections?

In principle, I don't want to talk about French domestic politics. Still, I can say that overall I believe the Left's experiment to be positive.

What do you think of the nationalisations, for example?

I don't want to go into details and deliver a judgement on every measure that's been taken. The French experiment of the Union of the Left has major importance on the European scale. For Italy, it represents a big encouragement towards change. That said, the situation is very different in France and Italy. You know that in Italy we have a very extensive public sector.

How do you analyse this sector: as a phenomenon of state capitalism, or as a phenomenon which allows the advance of socialism?

If you want to use jargon, you could say it's state capitalism. The public sector can constitute an important lever for transforming society in a socialist direction. But we don't think that socialism has to aim for the nationalisation of all economic life, since a large place should be left for private initiative. □

Gathering to Fight Autocracy

ABHIJIT DASGUPTA

On April 24-26, 1982 a national conference to resist autocracy was held in Delhi. About 1500 delegates and observers came to attend the conference from 16 States and from about 150 mass organisations including those run by some prominent factions of CPI-ML. The idea of holding such a national conference was mooted at a two-day convention held in January in New Delhi.

The conference had two objectives; firstly, to exchange ideas and views among the members of different mass organisations; and secondly, to adopt a political resolution and to form a national council. The sessions of the first day began with the news of sudden death of C.A. Seshadri of *Tamil Nadu People's Front* who took an active part in organising the earlier convention and the present conference. Participants paid tributes to Seshadri's memory. Seshadri was a convenor of PUCL in Madras and one of the founder leaders of '*Tamizhaka Thakkal Munnani*'.

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The first day's session included speeches by some guest speakers and members of the organisation committee. A presidium and a steering committee were formed to run the conference.

The twelve-page Draft Document which was circulated among the delegates can be divided into three sections: (a) an introductory note which spells out the significance of convening a national conference to resist autocracy; (b) an apprisal of present economic, political and social situations as well as an assessment of the international political situation; and (c) a declaration of the significance of establishing an United Front to resist autocracy and some immediate and general objectives of the Front.

It may be noted that the Draft Document characterised Indian society as feudal and semi-colonial in nature. It takes note of the deteriorating economic situation. The draft points out that, "all social strata whether farmers, workers, students, government employees or employees of other sectors, cultural workers, intellectuals, and traders, minorities, backward castes, oppressed religious groups, petty middle-class capitalists are overexposed to a progressive shrinkage of their real income ... Heavier burdens due to foreign debts have considerably bent the already emaciated people ... our country today finds itself caught in an economic dead lock, political instability, social breakdown, cultural decadence and barbaric repression".

The Draft does not recognise "exclusive hegemony" of any particular imperialist power over India. It identifies some. For instance India in last January signed seven agreements with France. In 1980 India signed with USA two and a half times the number of contracts that she signed in 1979. BHEL signed an agreement with Siemens of West Germany for technical know-how. A British firm signed a contract with the Paradip Steel Plant. For the purchase of Mirage from France the spade work has already been finalised. In international affairs the present government has clearly departed from the actual implications of non-alignment.

The second section of the Draft deals with the theme of autocracy, particularly the nature of autocratic rule in India. It states, it is extremely essential to identify the Indira autocracy for it represents a particular political tendency, a tendency which serves the interest of the most reactionary, shrewd, ruthless and chauvinistic factions of the ruling classes and which obtain the active support of the imperialist forces. Today the Indira clique is making use of the provisions of the Constitution and equipping itself with all kinds of anti-people black acts and ordinances.

The Draft criticises CPI (M) policies in the following way: "CPI (M)'s Left and Democratic front is the electoral alternative to Indira Government. The CPI (M) made use of the Government machinery and the police in order to crush mass movements in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura. Besides, this party is extremely intolerant of popular initiative. It has always sought to strengthen the police and the government machinery."

On the second day the delegates were requested to comment on the Draft Document and to suggest amendment. The speakers included representatives from various organisations, for example, *Worker's Union*, *Janbadi Sanskritik Morcha*, *Jharkhand Mukti Morcha*; *Sangharsha Morcha* of Bihar; *Uttarkhand Sangharsha Bahini*, *Samjukta Morcha*, *Khet Majdur Sabha*, *Kishan Sanghursh Samiti* of UP; *Kishan Sangathan* of Rajasthan; *Pragati Sabha* of Haryana, *Rajya Krishak Samiti* of Tripura, *Tamil Nadu People's Front*, *Janabadi Krishak Morcha* of Madhya Pradesh; *Krishak Sangathan Samiti*, *Janasangram Parishad* of Assam; *Krishak Samiti. People's Front*, *Pragatisil Mahila Samiti*, *Worker's Solidarity Organisation* of West Bengal; *People's Democratic Front* of Andhra Pradesh; *Samakalin Teesri Duniya* of Delhi, etc.

The speakers suggested a few amendments to the Draft which were taken into account by the Steering Committee. A number of speakers narrated their experiences of mass struggles. Delegates from Chattisgarh presented an account of the struggle they launched against the oppressive measures. Delegates from Bihar talked about the recent peasant uprisings in various parts of Bihar, especially in Bikram. The delegates decided to form an united front, an executive council and a secretariat.

It should be noted that the deliberations have not touched upon two crucial issues. The first pertains to the role of present leadership in China in the international sphere; and the second relates to the course of action. One may hope that these issues will be discussed by the members of the Executive Council.

It was also stated in the Draft that the newly-formed front will comprise of democratic and struggling organisations and individuals who are not election-oriented. It will be based on the unity among workers, peasants and middle classes for waging peasant and anti-autocracy struggles. It will offer firm support to all just struggles to give them direction and make them countrywide.

The following immediate objectives of the Front were approved by the delegates:

(a) Ensuring distribution of land so that each peasant secures one acre of land;

(b) providing interest free loans to peasants for seeds and fertilisers;

(c) fixing renumerative prices for agricultural produce;

(d) implementing minimum wage fixed by the Government;

(e) providing oil, wheat, rice, pulses, medicines, kerosene free to poor landless peasants during the off season;

(f) ensuring withdrawal of Central Reserve Police Force and armed forces from all States and dismantling of police camps in villages;

(g) demanding arms for Harijans to defend themselves from landlords, casteists and other oppressors;

(h) lifting of ban on organisations of Naga, Mizo, Manipuri and similar other groups.

Some general objectives included (a) confiscation of capital belonging to foreigners and top twenty monopoly houses without compensation; (b) confiscation of lands belonging to big landlords without compensation, and promotion of land reforms on the basis of land to the tiller; (c) eradicating feudal remnants and imperialist infiltration in science and culture in order to allow it to develop in a democratic and patriotic manner; etc.

On the final day of the conference the delegates formed with applause the new front called Indian People's Front.

It was decided that the National Council of the Front will have 101 members representing various states. Out of 101, 81 members were elected by the delegates, A secretariat was formed with seven members. President and seven Vice-Presidents were also elected to help the Front to function properly. In the evening the delegates assembled at the Feroz Shah Kotla ground for an open mass meeting. The delegates, finally, pledged to fight against autocracy and all kinds of authoritarianism in India, and the slogan was raised *Unite to Fight and Fight to Change.* ☐

Scrap Book

(*from page 5*)

Kudremukh irritant is not being allowed to come in the way of mutual cooperation is to be welcomed. Dr Velayati specifically requested India's assistance for rebuilding the steel industry which has been badly affected during the war. According to a release, Industry Minister N.D. Tiwari's response to this request was positive.

The joint statement noted the similarity in Indo-Iranian views in many spheres. Among them was the need to convert the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace, and to resolve the West Asian crisis on the basis of withdrawal of the occupying Israeli forces from all Arab and Palestinian territories. While the littoral countries abutting the Indian Ocean have not had much of a success yet in selling the zone of peace concept to the one big power which matters, namely, the United States, non-aligned countries ought to persist in voicing the demand on every available occasion if only for building up international public opinion against big power presences in the region. From that point of view, the combined voice of Iran and India ought to make a notable contribution to the cause. ☐ *May 4*

Global Inter-dependence *(from page 10)*

for this conference when she said in her inaugural address that: "Inter-dependence is the rationale of the dialogue and cooperation between North and South, and that economic progress in the developing countries can rejuvenate the stagnating economies of the developed world."

The concept of collective self-reliance in the Third World is neither puerile idealism nor a challenge to the developed nations. It is an attempt to do whatever they can by themselves and to promote cooperation with the North. The Brandt Report had tried to show how North and South are inter-dependent and how the jobs and the daily lives of people in the North are interlocked with the interests of poorer communities at the other end of the world. There are nearly 3.25 billion people inhabiting the developing countries. According to Robert McNamara these are the fastest growing markets in the world and hundreds of thousands of jobs in the United States depended on improvement in the plight of the people in these regions. Quite apart from this enlightened argument of inter-dependence, it has also to be considered in a realistic manner whether the developed world can flourish indefinitely as islands of prosperity in a surging sea of deprived and discontented humanity.

It has often been asked, while countries of the North are themselves undergoing severe economic difficulties, how could they be expected to incur undue sacrifices for aiding people in other parts of the world? The economic problems of the North are real and these must be taken into full account in any scheme of North-South dialogue. But as has been argued earlier, aid for development in the South is one of the long-term methods of overcoming the problems of unemployment and slow growth rates in the North.

Perhaps it must also be pointed out that the economic hardships of people of the advanced countries fall in a category somewhat different from those of the developing countries where the struggle is for the basic necessities and amenities of life. An aristocratic character in Leo Tolstoy's novel *War and Peace*, who went to the battle-front in the war against Napoleon, and who had to sleep on the ground together with the common soldiers, mused that the discomfort a man in his bed of roses suffered because of a crumpled petal was just as much as what he suffered lying on the hard, damp ground. This may be psychologically true, certainly in the aristocratic scale of values. But to go without a second car, or an MX or SS-20 missile is perhaps not as agonizing and degrading as to go without a second meal or a primary school or a dispensary.

The role of private enterprise in relation to official development assistance, and aid through multilateral financial institutions has become a matter of policy differences today. As far as the developing countries are concerned, they believe that aid and cooperation must flow through all these three channels. Private enterprises, particularly the multinationals, have become major engines for investment and transfer of technology in the world today. It has been estimated that direct investments by multinationals in the world have reached the level of $ 500 billion. That they have a part to play in Third World development is undeniable. But unlike in the hey-day of capitalism when risks were taken almost recklessly, resulting in the building up of great fortunes and even empires, private enterprise today seeks cast-iron guarantees and the shelter and support of governments before they go into foreign countries, especially into Third World countries. And there are also areas of development in which they are not likely to show interest. This is one of the reasons why official developmental aid and assistance through international institutions like the World Bank and IMF are crucial for Third World development.

While I say this I must make it clear that in my country conditions have emerged, largely due to the stage of economic development that we have now reached, for foreign private enterprise to invest and involve themselves in a wide variety of economic projects. India is not only a vast potential market but a place for secure and lucrative investment by foreign companies. However, aid through multilateral institutions and official channels is indispensable for the developing countries for their development and for promoting larger cooperative relations with the countries of the North.

Official development aid has not only practical but profoundly symbolic significance in the sense of the commitment of the North to the development of the South and to the establishment of a better equation between the two. One of the disappointing trends of the times has been the diminution of this category of assistance. Even more disturbing is the threatened reduction in aid through IDA, the soft-loan affiliate of the World Bank. All these mark retrograde steps on the path of global inter-dependence. It was in the context of the American War of Independence that the greatest and the most far-seeing political philosopher of conservatism, Edmund Burke, told the British parliament that "a great Empire and narrow minds go ill together". I think Edmund Burke would have told the advanced nations of today that great affluence and a narrow world vision go ill together. That the affluent and the advanced have responsibilities to the developing nations is not the argument of the beggar for charity.

Indeed, the scientific technological advances and the present prosperity in Europe and America have not come about suddenly or entirely indigenously. They have been the product of long interaction among nations over many centuries — products, if I may put it irreverently, of the harlotry of international exchange, cooperation and exploitation. It is known that the European Renaissance was impelled by knowledge and ideas that travelled from the East to the West through the Arab lands, and my own country, India, had contributed some of the basic concepts in mathematics and geometry without which the scientific-industrial revolution would have been inconceivable. And the economic development of the United States owes much to the capital and technology first brought and then dramatically expanded in this New World. Thus it ought to be remembered that the advanced knowledge and the affluence of the North is the outcome of a prolonged historical process of inter-change and inter-dependence among peoples and nations. And this process is not likely to stop where it is today, unless those who have attained this power and wealth turn to the final folly of self-annihilation.

While the problems of the Third World are those of food, energy, capital, finance and trade, behind these lie the even more basic questions of educational, cultural, scientific and technological progress. Unless these basic questions are tackled, the gap between the developed and the developing countries will become in the future wider and unbridgeable. Hence the relevance of the question of transfer of technology and the development of education and knowledge in the Third World. The efforts of the developing countries to advance in the higher realms of science and technology, like nuclear and space science, are sometimes looked upon with amusement and suspicion.

It is asked why a poor country like India should indulge in nuclear research and set up nuclear reactors, or try to launch space satellites, or send expeditions to the Antarctic and be concerned with the sea-bed and the laws of the sea and the outer space. The answer is that in order to deal successfully with the colossal elementary needs of our people, while working and sweating on our soil and in our factories, we have got simultaneously to try to reach out to the stars and into the depths of the oceans. The present tendency is for nations that are technologically advanced and militarily strong to corner what they want often disregarding the rights of others and the interests of humanity as a whole. If the disparity in scientific-technological know-how and in the application of it to the undiscovered and unexploited regions of the universe persists and widens, we would be facing a situation in the future when the developing countries might find themselves relatively even less developed than today, and when a few advanced nations might well emerge as the new technological overlords of the world.

The progress of the Third World is, therefore, an indispensable factor for global inter-dependence and for a healthy balance in the world order. The struggle of the developing nations for a fair share in wealth, resources and technology, for better living conditions for the millions of people who live there, for balanced and rapid development, and for acquiring individual and collective self-reliance to the maximum extent possible, is thus of far-reaching significance.

On her part India has right from the beginning of her independence adopted a strategy for development geared to these objectives, but not in an isolationist or autarchic manner, but by remaining in the mainstream of international cooperation. The attainment of basic self-sufficiency in food production is evidence of the priority we gave to the needs of our people in our developmental strategy. I must here acknowledge the contributions made by the United States to our Green Revolution in India. We have, however, not neglected our industrial progress, and even though India today is a predominantly agricultural country and shall remain so in the future, it is ranked as the tenth industrialised nation in the world.

Further, notwithstanding the fact that we have yet to catch up with the rest of the world in general educational progress, we have even today the third largest pool of scientific and technical personnel in the world. The industrial and technological infrastructure built up in our country is of such diversity, sophistication and magnitude that the prospects are bright for further rapid advance in industrialisation and modernisation. In spite of this achievement the problems of development, of equitable distribution, and of fulfilling the needs and aspirations of our people remain gigantic tasks yet to be accomplished. The growth of population is an enormous problem in itself. It has, however, not been understood that during the last one decade we have managed to slow down the rate of population growth despite a radical decline in the death rate and downward trend in infantile mortality. In some parts of the country like the State of Kerala, the family planning programme has been so successful that the growth rate has come down to 1.8 per cent. Our experience in family planning has shown that population control is not the result of a special or separate effort, but of development itself, especially of advance in the education of women. I should like to say that the rising status of women in India is one of the important factors contributing to social, economic and cultural development in our country and it has facilitated our cooperation with the developing and developed countries.

One of the lessons we have learnt from our developmental experience is that maximum degree of self-reliance in agriculture, industry and science and technology has to be acquired if we are to maintain our independence and independent policies, and cooperate with the advanced nations on terms that are not entirely unequal. We believe that the developing nations, by concerting their policies and programmes on basic issues of common interest and by building up collective self-reliance, could generate sufficient strength and confidence for dealing with the powerful and rich advanced nations. India has tried her best to share the industrial and technological know-how it has acquired with other developing nations, and we have today some significant collaboration projects in various countries of Asia, the Middle East and Africa. We believe that it is by beginning with a network of cooperation in our region and in the Third World that we can negotiate credibly with the developed countries for meaningful cooperation. I must add here that we believe very strongly that in all this the UNO and its agencies have a crucial role to play.

One important feature of India's development strategy is that it has been conceived in democratic terms and carried out within the framework of democracy. The application of the democratic method to social and economic development of such massive proportions is to my mind a unique experiment in development. The economic successes of the capitalist system were achieved in Europe before the advent of full democracy, while the colossal social and economic changes brought about in the USSR, China and other socialist countries were under the aegis of totalitarian political systems. At first it was believed that to develop India democratically would be choosing the slowest road to progress. But it has now turned out that progress, though gradual and peaceful, has been steady, substantial and enduring.

One question is asked of India and other developing countries. Are they embarking upon a mere mechanistic process of accumulating and accelerating material production and imitating the pattern followed by the developed countries of today? Or are they adapting industrialisation and science and technology to their specific needs and trying to fit them into their indigenous social-cultural milieu? Our endeavour in India has not been blind imitation. We have tried to create a mixed economy combining elements of socialism with some of the dynamic incentives of private enterprise.

I must, however, emphasise that in the Indian economic system, while the heavy industries and undertakings of public interest are in the public sector, the entire agricultural and small and medium scale industries are in the private sector. It was necessary in our situation, as in most developing countries, to bring about a balance in our strategy between production and growth and the compulsions of social justice. There is one more aspect of the Indian development which deserves emphasis. Being an old society and an ancient civilisation, while speeding up material progress we also maintain our cultural traditions and values which we believe will have a softening as well as enriching effect on development; our endeavour is to add a cultural dimension to our industrial and technological advancement, at the same time rejecting traditions and values which have become outmoded and which impede progress.

As the developmental process in India has moved within a complicated social-cultural system and within a peaceful democratic framework, there has been no high drama attached to this experiment as in the case of changes brought about by violent upheavals in some other societies; but the results have been considerable and have given hope to over the one-sixth of mankind inhabiting our country, and provided a basis for meaningful cooperation with the developing as well as the developed countries for fashioning a new and just international order. □

A Visitor to India

IBNUL HASAN' well-known Pakistani journalist, is on a visit to India and has already met many friends, here. We publish below a sensitive piece he wrote just before leaving Karachi for India. It is reproduced with due acknowledgement from *Pakistan & Gulf Economist*, April 24-30, 1982.

The moment one decides to visit India from the good neighbour, Pakistan — even if the visit is to 'make friends and influence people' — all the physical bigness and military might of India is reduced to a very threatened and harassed India. Similarly, as soon as an Indian plans to undertake a journey to Pakistan, the latter loses its sleep. Already there are more than two and a half million refugees from Afghanistan to be looked after. An Indian, in addition, would ruin the economy of Pakistan and, for sure, upset the demographic balance in the country.

Thus, as I am embarking on a three-week journey to India through a firm and unalterable point of entry and exit, an unchangeable mode of transportation and an irrevocable itinerary, I am terribly conscious of what embarrassment I must be causing to the host country, and what dangers I must be subjecting her to in the next 21 days of my stay there.

First, I am a former army officer and so I must be a great strategist with very keen and observant eyes to pick up all the secret information that is scattered in that vast land, merely to be gathered and passed on to the right people in Islamabad. Second, with my menacing beard and a pugnacious rightist mind, I must be a chauvinist Pakistani out to incite insurgency in India where they have been occupying the Red Fort which my forefathers — notwithstanding the possibility of my being a progeny of some latter-day converts to Islam — had built and from where they ruled the "infidels". And, third, I may actually succeed in making friends and influencing people in India, in which event life in the subcontinent would become so colourless and uneventful that India would be left high and dry, having lost its very precious and only option — war with Pakistan. I really look like a cad in my eyes. I hate myself for my perniciousness.

And yet, there must be something terribly compelling for me to be going to India. I do not have an ailing father there. He died here in Pakistan before my eyes on the night the Indian planes had pounded Karachi most ferociously in December 1971. I do not hold it against India. He would have died one day anyway. So will I. I also do not have friends and relations in India to visit. Mine, fortunately, is not a divided family.

I am going to India because our man of La Mancha, A.T. Chaudhri, asked me to act as his side kick during his three-week tour of India, where he, for a change, was not going to fight the windmills, but wanted to touch the feet of our captive sovereign, Dulcenia del Tobasso, Mother India!

To begin with, I was not too sure if I should be tempted to go to India in April and May when the weather shall be really enervating and Karachi is still cool and breezy. Meanwhile, Rajendra Sareen, my crazy journalist friend from India, who is such an excellent host there, came to my office full of enthusiasm about prospects of good relations between India and Pakistan in spite of whatever might be officially and unofficially poured out through the media to vitiate the climate. He said it was worthwhile to keep backing a good and noble cause even if one has to die a disappointed man.

He sounded right and honest. "So be it", I said, and rang up A.T. Chaudhri in Lahore telling him, "Here I come, your Sancho Panza!"

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Elections: Mood and Morale

IF the elections to four State Assemblies of Haryana and Himachal, Kerala and West Bengal, along with the by-elections in seven Lok Sabha constituencies, scheduled to take place on May 19, are to be regarded as a sort of "mini-General Election" — as some commentators have chosen to characterise them — it are to be admitted that the Indian political scene today is bereft of any live national issue affecting the life and living of the overwhelming majority of the population.

Neither any economic issue nor concern for national security in the critical regional environment of today has figured prominently in the poll campaign of any of the parties. No doubt the Opposition has in its electioneering campaign harped on the continued impoverishment of the common man under the Indira raj, ignoring the fact that their own performance record on this score when in office was hardly better, if not worse. As for the issue of security, the Prime Minister did make passing references to Pakistan's acquisition of US arms in electioneering speeches in Himachal Pradesh and Haryana, but one can hardly call these references part of a move to make this the centre-piece of the Congress-I election campaign.

What has figured prominently in the poll campaign — particularly in Kerala and West Bengal — is the question of the States' autonomy contraposed to the Centre's authority. While the Left Front in West Bengal has made this issue virtually an article of faith with it, the Opposition parties, by and large, have expressed themselves strongly in favour of more powers for the States. How far this urge towards the States' autonomy is a reflection of the Opposition having lost hopes of coming to power at the Centre and how far it is a genuine interest in more decentralisation, is yet to be examined.

The important point to note is a perceptible trend towards States-level politics and consequent withdrawal from playing a national role on the part of almost all political parties. Perhaps the only exception to this attitude is BJP which has been calculatedly planning to emerge as the national alternative by breaking out of its traditional grooves in the Hindi-speaking regions of the North. Despite their sign-

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boards of being national level parties, the two Communist Parties have for all practical purposes chosen to withdraw into the two pockets of Kerala and West Bengal. As for the other parties in the Opposition, they have no aspirations nor pretensions to be anything but regional or local political entities.

As a matter of fact, this is true of the Congress-I as well. Take away the personality of Indira Gandhi and what is left of the Congress-I is a motley assortment of politicos who can function only at the State level and have hardly any all-India standing. In the Indira Cabinet at the Centre, there are hardly three or four who can claim to have a political footing anywhere outside their native State.

So far as the party organisation is concerned, the Congress-I has shown up that it is riddled with intense group fighting. This has come out very conspicuously in the current election campaign: from the selection of candidates to the arrangements for electioneering, in-fighting has become the bane of the Congress-I. How deep is the malady could be seen from the fact that in West Bengal, where it has been fighting with its back to the wall, one of the main advantages of its adversary, the CPI-M, is the faction-fighting within the Congress-I. In Haryana, where the Congress-I could manage to return to office in 1980 only by the wholesale migration of defectors led by Bhajan Lal into the Congress-I, there has been this time a spate of revolts mostly among these 1980 turncoats, a matter of no small concern for the Congress-I leadership: the rebels standing against the official Congress-I candidates seem to be sanguine about holding the casting vote in a contest in which the two sides — the Congress-I and the Opposition — are expected to end up in a close finish, so that they may be able to bargain for their price when the horse-trading for Ministry-making would start after the poll. In other words, the rebels look forward to rewards instead of punishment for defection.

This election campaign has brought out more strikingly than at any time in the past the one-pillar structure that the Congress-I has become. None of the Pradesh level leaders has any image to present before the electorate. It is as if Indira Gandhi has been contesting from every constituency. A sample survey of her campaigning shows that she tries to cover almost every constituency in a State. For instance, in the first two days of her hurricane tour of Haryana, she covered as many as 27 centres — perhaps a world record for whistle-stop electioneering. While all this is impressive as a heroic feat of human endurance, it brings out in equally bold relief the lack of a party machinery worth the name behind the ruling party of India. Peronism could not have done better on this score.

Another feature of the present election battle which also provides a touch of Peronism in the Indian situation has been the persistent talk of the elections being likely to be cancelled on some plea or other — in one state or the other or all over the country. While Indira Gandhi's irrepressible Home Minister has mercifully refrained from alleging such rumours of poll postponement as being foreign-inspired, the fact that the apprehension in the mind of a large section of people all over the country about poll cancellation persists even at the time of writing these lines, is an index of the erosion of public confidence in the Indira Government's commitment to run the parliamentary system in a normal manner. The reason for such erosion could be traced to the memory of the imposition of Emergency (1975-77) and the intermittent campaign by the frontmen of the Indira Congress about the need for a presidential form of government instead of the parliamentary system. Add to this the precedent created by the blatantly repeated postponement of the Garhwal by-election for the Lok Sabha, and one realises why such misgivings about poll postponement persist. In this background, the Chief Election Commissioner's repeated assurance that the poll would take place as scheduled assumes significance and so does the Prime Minister's effort at dispelling any fears on this score.

If the current round of elections are to be taken as the mid-point sounding board of the electorate's mood for Indira Gandhi's present five-year term as Prime Minister (1980-85), then the dominant feeling is that the nation's morale is at a low ebb. The electioneering of course saw the usual turn-out of crowds but there has been no evidence of a massive response anywhere. Anger may not be writ large on the voter but his sullenness, bordering on cynical indifference, is unconcealed over a large part of the country. This is certainly not a sign of health for the body politic. A politically debilitated India can very well tempt the external forces that threaten the country's security while parochial and regional elements can certainly make the most in such a state of sagging morale.

Not a very promising prospect for a nation that has a major role to play in the troubled world of today.

May 12 *N.C.*

COMMENTARY

Signals from Kashmir

FACED with the ticklish problem of whether or not to give his assent to the highly controversial legislation enacted by the Jammu and Kashmir legislature, the Governor, B.K. Nehru, has adopted the line of least resistance by referring it to the Attorney General of India for his opinion. Governor Nehru may only be buying time with this manoeuvre. Irrespective of the AG's opinion, the new Kashmir "resettlement" bill is likely to prove a factor of acrimony in Centre-State relations which have not in any case been blessed with any marked degree of cordiality of late. If the Attorney-General opines that the measure is morally untenable, all that the Governor can do is to return it to the State Assembly for reconsideration. But, under the State Constitution, he will have no escape from giving his assent to it once the State legislature passes it for the second time. The Attorney-General will find it hard to challenge its constitutional validity. The State Constitution clearly empowers the legislature to enact such a law under Section 6; the second proviso to Article 7 of the Indian Constitution also confers the required powers on the State legislature. And herein lies the dilemma facing the Governor.

The bill empowers the State Government to regulate through permits the return of State subjects living in Pakistan and their resettlement. Applications for such permits can be made directly by the concerned persons or through their relations in the State. Widows and direct "descendants" of such persons are also eligible to apply. The bill is ostensibly aimed at reuniting the families separated by partition and the subsequent Pakistani invasion of Jammu and Kashmir. If it has become highly controversial and evoked strong regional, communal and political reactions, it is because in effect the legislation can legalise the influx into the State of people who are by now Pakistani citizens, and in the process throw the floodgates open for the entry of what its critics have described as "all and sundry" into the Valley.

The bill is not so "new" after all. Introduced unofficially in March 1980, it languished in the select committee for the last two years. Sheikh Abdullah chose to resurrect it in March this year and get it enacted in the face of strong objections from the minuscule Opposition which staged a protest walk-out at the stage of its adoption. The Sheikh couldn't care less; he had an overwhelming majority in his National Conference to back him. More than its contents, the timing of the enactment has raised the hackles of his critics, who have linked it to the imminence of the Assembly poll. The Sheikh could not have been unaware that this precisely would be the reaction. There is good reason to regard this as a populist ploy to get support of the Muslim majority in the State. Imminence of elections invariably provokes populism in all rulers, and it would not be fair to the Sheikh to think that he is an exception.

Were it only an electoral gambit, it would have passed muster. But it is more than that, and some of its implications are quite disconcerting in the context of the tenuous state of Centre-State relations at present, and potentially mischievous in the context of the political mileage the Sheikh can draw for himself in both events — either the Governor assenting to it or withholding assent. Here is a situation which the Sheikh can turn to his advantage either way. If the bill becomes law, he can claim credit for having asserted once again the special status Jammu and Kashmir enjoys within the Union. If it is prevented from becoming law, he can berate the Centre for trying to dilute the meaning of Article 370.

The trauma of separated families was common to both the border States of Kashmir and Punjab, but more so in the case of the former since a large number got caught or chose to stay in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. It is on the grounds of humanitarianism that the Sheikh now commends the bill which he suggests would remove the legal barriers standing in the way of divided families reuniting. Has the Sheikh turned soft-hearted purely for humanitarian reasons? It was he who had arranged for large-scale deportations of thousands of persons across the border during his first term of office between 1947 and 1953 (when he was overthrown) merely because he felt then that they would endanger his political survival. He seems to want their return now, ironically enough, for immediate political gains. In their own way, G.M. Sadiq and Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad had arranged for the return of several thousands of those deportees without dangling before them the prospect of Indian citizenship.

The Kashmir bill is basically a citizenship bill and it has been rightly argued that the State legislature is within its rights to enact laws regulating the status and privileges of its permanent residents. Once permits are granted to applicants and their resettlement facilitated, they will not only acquire permanent residentship of the State but also acquire automatically Indian citizenship. Article 370 may have been conceived in special times in the face of special circumstances, but its retention in the Indian Constitution permits such an anomaly. In the event, both the State legislature and the Indian Parliament possess the right to grant citizenship. The bulk of those aspiring to return to Kashmir and resettle have been Pakistani citizens; their descendants have acquired Pakistani citizenship automatically by virtue of their birth in Pakistan. Their resettlement would entitle them to claim Indian citizenship. Is it the Sheikh's intention that citizenship is to be conferred on them merely on a technical enablement, irrespective of any mechanism or provision for satisfaction, if not guarantee, of their commitments and loyalties? Both the Sheikh and the bill are silent on this issue. But the fact remains that the Kashmir bill clearly envisages and endorses the possibility of aliens becoming Indian citizens. Is it the Sheikh's intention to burden Jammu and Kashmir with "foreigners" almost on the pattern of Assam, which is currently in convulsions over this very anomaly? Further, it is to be noted that the population of the Jammu and Ladakh regions has not endorsed the bill's provisions. They see in this a threat to the delicate balance between the three regions of J & K.

The bill has no provisions defining the rights and privileges apart from citizenship of those who return. This has, naturally and with good reason, sent shivers down the backs of those who came into the State as refugees and have since settled down there. There are two aspects to Jammu and Kashmir's "refugee problem" which are unique to the State. Firstly, the refugees from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir who have settled down on evacuee lands, particularly in the Rajouri and Poonch areas of Jammu, have been clamouring for proprietary rights over the land. Secondly, refugees fleeing from Pakistan after partition have been clamouring for citizenship rights. The "refugee problem" invariably looms as a major issue in elections, and political parties have seen nothing wrong in exploiting it to their advantage. The problem evokes strong emotional overtones. However, the State Government has kept the demands aside while promising redress and relief at each successive general election. The new bill has naturally engendered fears among these refugees that they will be uprooted in the event of the resettled claiming their property.

Largely because of haste, impelled no doubt by the possibility of an early poll ahead of the scheduled June date, the bill as enacted is stated to contain any number of lacunae. For one thing, it was a private member's bill and apparently the State's law department never studied its implications. No attempt was made in any case to consult the Centre. Secondly, there is no evidence of the Select Committee having had a say in the matter. Consequently, the legislature was not given an opportunity to assess the provisions in terms of the interaction between it and Central laws and regulations, especially in relation to Pakistanis wanting to visit the State and the State subjects wanting to visit Pakistan. There is no cut-off date for the return of Pakistani nationals of Kashmiri origin, nor has any time-limit been specified within which applications need to be made. (The Sheikh has already had a running battle with the Centre over the alleged appropriation by the Union Home Ministry of the State's right to check the antecedents of Pakistani applicants for Indian visas. He contends that the chore falls within the State's jurisdiction.) The bill does not specify the authority who will certify the entitlement for resettlement. On the contrary, it confers omnibus powers on the State Government.

It was not surprising therefore that the Governor was in two minds when the bill reached his table for his signature. Sheikh Abdullah has made conciliatory noises since then, but given his unpredictable temperament, his critics contend, he may resort to using the Governor's hesitancy as an alibi for embarking on a collision course with the Centre. Even otherwise there are good grounds to infer that the Sheikh is sending signals to the Centre through the new bill. It is yet another move of his to impress on the Centre that he is the undisputed boss in Kashmir and Congress(I)-sponsored attempts to topple him will be resisted. The bill is basically the Valley's signal to the Centre and is of a piece with the oft-resorted-to ploy of the Lion of Kashmir to demand the reopening of the Srinagar-Rawalpindi Road.

The Centre must forthwith initiate a dialogue with the Sheikh to work out a modus vivendi. The legislation has raised many questions of national import which should be brought to the notice of Sheikh Abdullah and thrashed out in consultation with him. ☐

May 12 *Observer*

Urs's Kranti Party

THE formation of a new regional party by Devaraj Urs in Karnataka — the Karnataka Kranti Ranga — has not come as a surprise. After his bizarre experiments in many parties bearing the Congress label, he decided to have his own special set-up, presumably to avoid imposed or invited embarrassments arising from being leader of a party unit without seeing eye to eye with the "national" leaderships concerned and without any prospect of his own acceptance as supremo *a la* Charan Singh. The only question that was being debated in quarters interested in him was whether he would link his group with the Lok Dal or float his own outfit. The latter course, for which he has finally opted, obviously leaves him with elbow room for negotiations with other parties well in time for the State Assembly elections some time hence.

It is an open question whether indeed Devaraj Urs and his party can be taken very seriously yet. It is true that despite his political antics in the last four years or so he continues to have a following in his home State. But what he has cannot be seen as a fully organised political structure; he has plenty of admirers who see him as the leader if not saviour of certain middle or backward castes, and he does have a basic organisation. The word "cadres" is not quite appropriate here, for that is a category which few of our numerous parties can boast of. There is also the fact that he is not the only backward castes leader in the State; there are others. But having been Chief Minister for a time and having carried forward or initiated activities for the benefit of the backward castes, he does appear to have more weight still than most of the backward caste leaders in other parties including the ruling Congress-I.

It is clear that the Karnataka Kranti Ranga will be the equivalent, more or less, of Charan Singh's Lok Dal in Western UP and Haryana — after all, Charan too began with his own brand of 'Kranti' (the formation of the Bharatiya Kranti Dal, which took many forms and finally emerged as the present Lok Dal, will be remembered). The political approach, the slogans and the vote base to be sought to be attracted will be practically on the same lines. The only difference is perhaps that, first, Devaraj Urs is a more sophisticated political hand than Charan Singh, and second, he has the advantage, if he knows how to use it, of starting almost from scratch in the matter of relations with other non-Congress-I parties in Karnataka.

Some recent occasions have shown that Devaraj is by no means a spent force. Additionally, there is the dissidence in the ranks of the Congress-I. Janata Party is in disarray. Whatever there is of the Lok Dal is bound to be with Urs when it comes to the crunch. Possible political rivals do not have his stature, even if it may seem rather diminished at the moment. It is quite possible that he can bring together these different elements to give his new party flesh and bones. The naming of the new party was preceded, at the recent convention of Urs supporters, by an assurance from the leader that he would not lead them into the Lok Dal or the BJP.

All this does not mean however that a new force has already emerged on the Karnataka political scene — though Devaraj Urs remains a formidable force. There is a long way to go, and Urs knows from experience that if there is no unremitting build-up, many of his present supporters may leave him high and dry. Another aspect is the fresh spurt of regional parties, with Andhra film star N.T. Rama Rao showing the way, by forming his Telugu Desam. Urs has an advantage over Rama Rao; he is no novice at the game of power politics, and can prove quite a headache for the Indira Congress. Whether Urs suceeeds in his brave new adventure or not — there is no reason why he should not—there is no doubt that he will be a problem for the Congress-I leadership in the months ahead.

The language agitation in the wake of the Gokak report raises another question. What stand will Urs take? Will he be the reconciler or a partisan? Would he be content to be a regional factor when it is possible for him to emerge later as a national factor?

May 11 *C.N.C.*

Assembly Polls Scenario

NARENDRA SHARMA

FOUR States—Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Kerala and West Bengal—go to polls on May 19. The Himachal and Haryana Assemblies were dissolved on April 17 and the two States are under caretaker Congress-I Governments. Kerala came under President's rule in March this year, while West Bengal continues to be ruled by the Left Front Government elected in 1977.

Each of these four States has passed through different sets of circumstances, leading the various national and State parties to evolve different sets of strategies to face the elections. Elections to the Himachal and Haryana Assemblies were last held in 1977 during the heyday of Janata rule. After the massive victory of the Congress-I in the 1980 Lok Sabha poll, en masse defections from the two Janata Legislature Parties led to Congress-I Government being formed in these States. The CPI-M-led Left Democratic Front Government headed by E.K. Nayanar survived only for 26 months and fell in November last year following the exit of the Congress-S and the Kerala Congress-(M) from the Front as a result of convulsions in the Front and the sectarian attitude of the CPI-M. The United Democratic Front Government headed by Congress-I leader K. Karunakaran, which came to power in December last, had to quit exactly 80 days later following its failure to muster a majority in the Assembly. In West Bengal, the CPI-M with 178 MLAs commanded a substantial majority on its own in a house of 294, though it governed the State along with other Left Front partners who had to be under the overall guidance of the leading partner. However, the Left Front Government did not face any convulsions within.

This provides an insight into the combinations and alliances that have come into being in the four States for fighting the forthcoming elections. It is to be noted that none of the national parties has been able to evolve a uniform pattern of alliance which could be said to be based on common policies and principles.

Haryana on its own; it is virtually on its own in Himachal Pradesh as well, except that it has conceded one seat (Solan) to the AICP. It is leading an eleven-party United Democratic Front, comprising partners ranging from Congress (Antony) to SRP (a sectional party of Ezhavas) and NDP (political wing of the Nair Service Society), besides the two groups of Kerala Congress (Christian) and the Muslim League. In West Bengal, it has among its alliance partners not only the Congress-S and the AICP but also smaller groupings like Muslim League, Gorkha League, Christian Democratic Party; the West Bengal Janata Party too would have been in the Congress-I-led front but for the dispute over the number of seats.

The Left parties can hardly take exception to such alliances and describe them as unprincipled. For, only the other day the Kerala Congress-(M) was an important partner of the Left Democratic Front in Kerala, and after the elections, if the balance of forces so demands, the LDF leaders may not hesitate to have a deal with it again. The same has been the case with the Muslim League. Of course these compromises with communal and sectarian groups in Kerala by both the Congress and the Left parties have given some strength to the communal RSS-BJP in that State.

Even in the current State elections, Left parties like the CPI-M have followed devious tactics, though unsuccessfully. The CPI-M, for instance, tried hard to come to terms with the Lok Dal for a seat or two in Haryana though the Lok Dal had entered into a firm alliance with the BJP. Interestingly, the CPI and the CPI-M, both of whom claim to be committed to forging unity of Left forces, could not reach an understanding on joining forces in Haryana and Himachal; the CPI is contesting only 14 seats in Haryana and 20 in Himachal, while the CPI-M has put up candidates for 5 and 3 seats respectively in the two States.

More interesting is the fact that both the CPs are now cooperating with the anxious to forge an alliance with the Lok Dal even if the latter had seat adjustments with the BJP; his objection was to the Lok Dal-BJP alliance as such. Moreover, a large number of Congress-J candidates in Haryana are those who had been denied tickets by the Congress-I and whose post-election career will be unpredictable.

The case of the apparently formidable alliance between Lok Dal and BJP appears no different. In fact, it is confined only to Haryana where Lok Dal is fighting 67 seats (two of them could not get the election symbol in time and are contesting on free symbols, and BJP 24. Despite overall alliance between these two parties in Haryana their candidates are confronting each other in the Nuh constituency of Gurgaon district; the BJP has taken exception to the Lok Dal giving ticket at the last moment to Deen Mohammad in Nuh, on the ground that he is a protege of Congress-I leader Bansi Lal and therefore cannot be relied upon after elections.

In fact, it can be said that the BJP has successfully put into practice its original election strategy according to which it seemed anxious to have electoral alliance with the Lok Dal but wanted it to be confined to Haryana. The Lok Dal sought to force the issue by announcing a list of 38 candidates for Himachal on the very first day of filling nominations. The BJP refused to be cowed and offered only 12 seats to Lok Dal, which was not acceptable to the latter. Now they are confronting each other in 30 of the Himachal Pradesh constituencies. But the Lok Dal can only split Opposition votes in half a dozen constituencies in Himachal to the detriment of BJP.

The Lok Dal-BJP alliance is inoperative in West Bengal and Kerala, because Lok Dal hardly exists there; moreover, BJP has gone it alone in these two States with a view to expanding its base in order to be able to emerge as a focal point for the anti-Left forces in both Sates with the help of the RSS. Significantly, in Kerala, the BJP has not put up candidates for the seats allotted to the NDP and SRP by the UDF; nor is it averse to an unofficial arrangement with the CPI-M in some areas where the CPI-M believes that a division of votes would help the CPI-M candidates against the UDF. The BJP strategy in Kerala has imparted a peculiar character to the fight between the two Fronts.

The Janata Party appears to be at the cross-roads. It has alliance with the Congress-S in Haryana and Himachal, which means little for either, for the Congress-S is non-existent in both States. After the split in the party's Kerala unit in December last, the official group is now a partner in the LDF and the rebel group is a part of the UDF. Janata's ally Congress-S is in alliance with the Congress-I in West Bengal without the central leaders of the Congress-S or the Janata being in a position to do anything about it.

The present pattern of alliances holds out prospects of greater opportunistic horse-trading in the post-election period than was witnessed ever before. This is a clear possibility at least in the case of Haryana, Himachal and Kerala.

West Bengal **Total Seats 294**

	Legislators before elections	*Contestants*
Cong-I	19	249
Janata Party	17	93
Lok Dal		16
CPM	177	209
CPI	3	12
Cong-S	1	28
BJP	2	54
DSP	4	
RSP	20	23
Forward Bloc	27	34
RCPI	3	4
Muslim League	1	5
Biplabi Bangla Cong	1	1
SUCI	4	
W. Bengal Socialist Party	3	5
Forward Bloc (Marxist)	2	
CPI (ML)	1	
Gorkha League	1	2
Independent (left)	1	3
Jharkhand Party		1
AICP		4
Christian Democratic Party		1
Nominated	1	
Independents	6	
Vacant	1	
*Others including SUCI		461
		1205

Kerala **Total Seats 141**

	Legislators as on 1-3-82		*Contestants*
Cong-I	17		33
CPM	35		42
CPI	17		25
Cong-S	6		18
BJP	—		68
Janata (G)	3	(5)	
Janata (A)	2		13
IUML	14		19
AIML	5		14
Cong (A)	15		28
NDP	3		
RSP (B)	5		9
RSP (S)	1		
Kerala Cong (M)	9		25
Kerala Cong (J)	6		13
PSP	1		
*Others and Independents	1		392
Nominated	1		699

Haryana **Total Seats 90**

	Legislators as on April 1	*Contestants*
Cong-I	50	90
Janata Party	4	57
Lok Dal	22	65
CPM		5
CPI		14
Cong-S		2
Cong-J		42
BJP	I1	24
Socialist Party	1	
Doordarshi		53
Janawadi		5
*Others		33
Independents		705
		1095

Himachal Pradesh **Total Seats 68**

	Legislators as on 1-3-82	*Contestants*
Cong-I	38	67
Janata Party		50
Lok Dal		30
CPM	1	3
CPI		20
BJP	24	67
Independents	3	204
Vacant	2	
		441

*'Others' include smaller state parties

Corruption: Who is to Fight It?

C.N. CHITTA RANJAN

THE steady growth of corruption in practically every walk of life which threatens not only India's democratic framework but its very moral fibre and the future of its impoverished millions, has been so much discussed over the years, particularly in recent years — witness the columns and columns of allegations, counter-allegations, denials, commission reports, court proceedings, learned speeches and theses and what not that have filled the media — that the five-hour debate in the Rajya Sabha on the subject on May 6 came as quite an anti-climax. Indeed, despite all the fuss that preceded the debate and the smug air of self congratulation that seemed to fill almost everyone present, it was no serious debate at all. One member, who caused a mild flutter by comparing politicians denouncing corruption with prostitutes preaching chastity, later described the whole exercise as a waste on "hot air" of the time of the house and money from the public exchequer. It is difficult to disagree with him.

Curious was the willing-to-wound-but-afraid-to-strike attitude that marked most of the speeches from both sides of the house. Perhaps this is not difficult to understand, considering that it is not only the politicians in power at the moment who can claim the distinction of misusing authority in overt or covert ways. After all those who are now in Opposition in Parliament did wield power at the Centre not so long ago, as also in several States, and thus have what may be described as a "past" of their own not qualitatively very different from the past or the present of today's rulers. Bringing out skeletons from cupboards is a game both sides can play, and they are only too conscious of this fact. Hence the colourlessness of last Thursday's debate which brought out nothing — neither facts nor serious thinking about ways to check the growth of malpractices of all kinds.

Of course it is easy enough to go back into the dim corridors of history and show, for example, that even Kautilya in his *Arthashastra* had listed the numerous ways in which the king's courtiers could cheat him and promote their own interests and had spoken of the difficulty of detecting corruption among government servants. From those distant days to the present, in West and East, and in our own sub-continent including the goings-on in the many small kingdoms, the glamorous Mughal court and in British imperial years, there is no dearth of evidence of the crafty and the influential cornering wealth and exploiting the majority through both terror and trickery. But all that is hardly any consolation for present and future generations in this country, pinning their hopes on a Constitution based, at least theoretically, on egalitarian concepts.

In the debate, naturally, some debating points were duly made. Were not Pratap Singh Kairon, Ghulam Mohammed Bakshi, Biju Patnaik dealt with? Nobody seemed keen to ask how they were dealt with, or how their families are fairing now. Whether the handful who could be identified as practitioners of political corruption in the early years of freedom were given the punishment they had earned is one question. Whether the enlargement of the areas of corruption and political malpractices in the subsequent period, say the sixties, the seventies and the early eighties, has been dealt with seriously by any section of the ruling elites, is another. If the corrupt politicians at top levels in the fifties could be counted on one's fingers, that is a proposition which simply does not apply to the present period. Cement, to mix a metaphor, is only the tip of the ice-berg. For one Saklecha or one Antulay who has been brought to public notice, there are umpteen Antulays and Saklechas — not to speak of Jagannath Mishras and Gundu Raos and Bhajan Lals and Bansi Lals and Karunanidhis — who are not even discussed properly. Here we are talking mainly of use or misuse of political power and administrative machinery; and this according to some of our pundits, including newly-emerged "leaders", is hardly to be equated with "personal corruption". If Maruti is twice blessed, so is Kanti Desai's record.

The simple truth is that no politician who really matters is in a position to cast the first stone. It is hardly possible for those holding forth about corruption and its eradication to demand, much less insist on, a full inquiry into the connections, within India and without, of politicians who have held office in recent years, of administrative officers patronised by them and of their near and dear ones. Who would want to open that foul Pandora's box?

Nobody takes Home Minister Zail Singh seriously any more, so consider what Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee says. According to him, it is no good questioning the integrity of everyone. True. But then he claims that corruption is confined to a "microscopic minority". This surely is a highly questionable assertion. It is not as if the public are not aware of the many things going on around them, even if they do not become fully aware of the quiet, large-scale operations at the topmost levels of administration and between politicians and bureaucrats on the one hand and the urban and rural millionaires and multinationals on the other. Even granting Mukherjee's theory, the number of industrial houses that have multiplied their assets to astounding proportions despite the MRTP Act and other laws, constitute only a "microscopic minority", statistic-wise, of the number of the industries, big and small, all over this vast country. Is the political clout and the capacity to corrupt of this "microscopic minority" negligible? Even Mukherjee cannot deny that the opposite is true.

Home Minister Zail Singh readily agreed to a suggestion for a code of conduct for political parties to end the evil of corruption. Both the suggestion and the acceptance must be said to be hypocritical. It is not as if the problem of corruption has not been considered in this country at various stages and remedies, howsoever limited, suggested. There was the Santhanam Committee whose report has been gathering dust for two decades or so. That committee had made several recommendations for dealing with corruption at the political level. Then came the Administrative Reforms Commission. And then the Sachar Committee. Every time the authorities could not avoid facing a public outcry on charges of corruption and misuse of power, there was a commission of inquiry. All these reports add up to very much more than a code of conduct. And the Government has not taken any action aimed at ending corruption on the basis of even such reports. So what does Zail Singh mean by lauding a code of conduct? He does not approve of a permanent machinery because he cannot find "angels" to fill it with. He does not want Confucius to be brought in because there was no democracy around when Confucius was around. Now we have Zail Singh around, and that makes a deal of difference to everything, including corruption.

Not to go too far back, and not bringing in politicians with an axe to grind, let us consider what Jammu and Kashmir Governor B.K. Nehru said in an important lecture at Madras in December last. "It is unfortunately undeniable that corruption has spread to every part of the governmental apparatus: the record in office of no political party is better than of any other....An uncomfortably large number of politicians and Ministers are corrupt; corruption is universal in the lower ranks of the public services, it has affected the middle ranks as well and is now infecting the apex of our administrative structure...The consequence is the abnegation of the rule of law. The honest man cannot enjoy the rights the law gives him; the dishonest cannot be punished for any transgression of it." B.K. Nehru went on to discuss the system, the cost of elections and the rest, and suggested certain remedies which, however, would not seem adequate to meet the situation. For instance, what he wants done to the electoral system would mean a virtual rewriting of the Constitution. In any case he boldly pinpointed the disease and examined its dimensions. Much earlier the then President, V.V. Giri, called in a Lucknow speech for an end to political interference in the administration. Nothing seems to make any impact on the quarters concerned. Drift is the watchword. If it is not drift, then it is acquiescence. No one kills the goose that lays the golden egg, not the beneficiaries anyway.

It is not only among politicians and in the executive that such degeneration has taken place. Even the judiciary which, despite its generally conservative if not reactionary attitude on socio-economic questions, had maintained a tradition of integrity and uprightness, would seem to have been invaded by dubious personalities. The weakness of some of the high-ups in the higher judiciary for their relatives, especially in the Bar, was noted with regret by no less a person than the Chief Justice of India not long ago. Among journalists, the self-styled watchdogs of democracy, there is no dearth of gentlemen who know which side of the bread is buttered, and conduct themselves accordingly in matters professional. Lawyers and doctors — making due allowance for the honourable exceptions as in the case of journalists — generally are more concerned with status-giving income which is not always accounted for. Many in these various categories need to be looked at rather closely by the tax and other authorities concerned.

In recent times it has been the fashion for one regime to throw the blame for everything on the previous regime. But, except for the sharp contrast in the style of functioning, say, of the Janata and the Congress-I, it is difficult to see any difference in the way the country has been governed or in the way certain small sections of influential people have continued to benefit. The large houses grow larger, whoever is in power. Published figures prove it. Smugglers and dacoits have increasingly become a major factor in political operations and have their own impact on the administration. The Dhanbad mafia and the UP or Madhya Pradesh dacoits may have caught the eye, but they are not the only ones with political clout and posing a constant threat to clean administration. They and their political and other patrons can get away, literally, with murder. Despite the unending tears of Charan Singh and company, nobody, either of the Congress-I or of the old Janata, has tried to implement land reforms honestly, with the result that the Harijans and the landless poor generally, apart from the hard-pressed marginal farmers, continue in their traditional state of misery and fear. Who then is preaching about corruption to whom?

Not that corruption is limited to politicians and bureaucrats (in the case of the latter one would question B.K. Nehru's tacit assumption that corruption moves from bottom to top instead of the other way round – Vohra and Appu are among exceptions). The British rulers corrupted a certain class of people — the rich and the educated middle class — and made these their allies in establishing colonial rule. Of course they did not bargain for the revolt that arose later on, but that is another matter. It is those some classes, with their numbers increased in keeping with the vastly increased population of the country and the new opportunities for self-aggrandisement opened up by the achievement of Independence, who are today playing the corruption game to the increasing disadvantage of the already disadvantaged and deprived sections of the population. It may be true that controls have engendered corruption to some extent, but the basic fact is that the corrupt elements in society — from politicians and officials at one end to big business, rich farmers and the underworld of gangsters and smugglers at the other — are taking advantage of every opportunity provided, not only by controls but even by loopholes in the various laws. The existence of an estimated Rs 12,000 crores of black money in the economy — and that may be an under-estimate — speaks volumes. And the official attitude to black money is patent in the Bearer Bonds Scheme which unfortunately even the Supreme Court has blessed. Tax evasion and cheating of the public have been officially rendered honourable. Where then do we turn for remedy?

It has often been said that the most effective remedy for this state of affairs lies in electoral reform. It is true that elections are becoming ever costlier, so that no honest man who earns his livelihood by the sweat of his brow can hope to contest any election, from panchayat level to Parliament level; why, even to contest student union elections in the universities one needs quite a pile of money, and much of it is black. There have been many recommendations about limiting election expenses; there are even laws. But to what purpose? Can anybody keep track of the crores of rupees spent on elections in this vast country? Are parties and individual politicians made to keep honest account of what they get and what they spend on elections? The prescribed limit is entirely farcical and irrelevant, and even the illiterate voter is aware of this truth. The vast election expenses, met by the interests that stand to gain by utilising the influence gained thereby, are certainly the biggest source of corruption of public life. But can it be made different by law or pious declarations? Experience shows that it cannot. B.K. Nehru's proposals for a total overhaul are as unrealistic as the latest suggestions for committees & codes. Krishan Kant's suggestion for provision for positive rejection of candidates/parties has a moral point, but whether it will work in the prevailing climate is doubtful. Again, it is a question of educating the voter and strengthening his/her will to register resentment. It is true that if it happens it will bring about a sea-change in the atmosphere, for it will then not be a choice of the lesser evil as those who cast their votes see it but an assertion of popular will not to allow undesirable groups to hold office and fatten themselves and their kind. As things stand, however, the idea must be shelved as no more than an exercise in fantasy; it cannot be tried out even as an experiment, for obvious reasons.

Elections do form the most important pillar of democracy. And the way money flows like water during elections makes it a poor support for genuine democracy which is what we the People have given unto ourselves under the Constitution. But the rot begins elsewhere. It is in the primary and secondary schools, in the universities, in the "temples of learning". Those who do get educated are not educated to run an efficient democracy based on the awareness of the masses. There is corruption in the education system, which affects and shapes future rulers even if it serves little purpose so far as the vast poor millions of the country are concerned. There is corruption in the implementation of projects and schemes meant for the weaker sections; the intended beneficiaries are where they were, while intermediaries, including officials and contractors and political operators, have flourished on the proceeds. As in the case of the Green Revolution, whatever is done for improving agriculture and rural life has benefited only the top crust of rich people who in turn are the real wielders of power, with control over the administration, including the police, and the political machine. Fund-raising for election purposes, once a fine art and now crude arm-twisting and plain quid pro quo business, is part of the process of degeneration of public life.

What then is to be done? Even the parties claiming to be progressive and to be espousing the cause of the poor majority do not have the vaguest idea. They never had, perhaps, for otherwise over the years a mass movement would have been built up and drastic changes would have been forced on the status quoists. Even now there seems to be no other viable answer except organised mass protest and mass action against corruption and corrupt persons whether in the political set-up and the administration or in the private sector, urban and rural. It has to be seen as a shame that in what we boast of as the world's largest democracy a handful of corrupt elements, with backing from layers of allies-cum-beneficiaries, remain respectable. Even those found guilty of malpractices are back as respectable politicians or businessmen or public figures of one sort or another. And there are the defectors. Even in 1967, when Charan Singh crossed the floor with some of his followers to bring down the Congress Ministry and head a non-Congress coalition himself in UP, defection was widely considered detestable. No longer is defection a dirty word. It is indeed easier to count politicians who have stuck to one party than those who have been changing sides for considerations of office or at least some influential position in the Establishment. No one is interested in banning defections though almost everyone has been talking about it for years — for who knows when and to whom floor-crossing will prove profitable?

Clearly, then, tinkering with the electoral system is not the answer. Nor allowing known corrupt parties and individuals to get into the seats of power again and again, strengthening themselves by virtue of the power of patronage that election to office bestows upon them. The answer is to organise public opinion, especially among the exploited majority (the majority who in the Rajya Sabha were described as being "honest people" and most of whom are below what our statistics-minded rulers would call the Poverty Line), to rise against corruption and its practitioners.

Even if such a course upsets elections and electoral calculations of our parties, including the Left, it is worth it. For, such mass awakening and action will mean redemption, if not in the short run, at least in the long term. That will make sense only if it is realised that India does not end with this or the next generation. India, as has been said, is eternal; we cannot permit corruption and prostitution of democracy also to become eternal.

That was what Gandhiji said once — that corruption by the few must be fought by the many. The logic remains valid.☐

Technology, Management and Productivity

Y. NAYUDAMMA

THE major problems that face India today are its large population, poverty, unemployment, under-employment and equity. Technology, management and will of the people properly applied can produce the desired results to raise the capacity of man to produce and consume and to enhance productivity. This year, 1982, is the Productivity Year. Productivity as a way of life, has existed from times immemorial, but as a concept of efficiency and as a means of improving the standard of living of people it is of recent origin.

The need for increased productivity arises out of the availability of limited resources like capital and under-utilisation of existing human and material resources. Optimisation of productivity is more important than maximisation. High increase in productivity of a small percentage of the working population is less effective than small increase in productivity of a large percentage of the population.

The concept is not to make the 'poor wealthy' but the 'poor productive', releasing their resourcefulness, creative innovative attitudes and problem-solving capabilities. The key to increase productivity in India is to motivate, mobilise and utilise human resources more effectively.

Productivity is not synonymous with increase in production. Productivity is only an indicator of the ratio of output of goods and services to the input factors. European Productivity Agency (EPA) defines productivity as "an attitude of mind — a mentality of progress — of the constant improvement of that which exists ... to do better than yesterday ... to continuously apply new techniques and new methods...It is faith in human progress."

What is Research? Research means many things to many people. It is essentially an attitude of mind — an open, analytical, critical, creative, inventive and innovative mind; always looking out for change; to better the best performance. It is tomorrow's mind instead of yesterday's mind.

The result of research and the product of problem solving mind is technology. Technology increases productivity combining both quantity and quality of goods and services. Technology has social dimensions too.

The job of management is to make use of all resources including human resources efficiently and effectively, working with people, putting them together and getting things done. The poor capacity utilisation is directly attributed to poor management in both private and public enterprises. The fundamental strengths for production's enhancement lie in people and their attitudes, skills and motivation.

The Asian Productivity Organisation published in 1980 an "Integrated Report on Factors which Hinder or Help Productivity improvement in the Asian Region", based on an Analysis of Cross Country Experience. I was associated with this Report. The major factors that affect productivity in the manufacturing sector appear to be (1) Government Policy; (2) resource endowment; (3) cultural and social values and institutions; (4) industrial relations; (5) management style; and (6) technology.

Allow me to disuss the last two important factors — technology and management.

Technology today is mankind's main enterprise. There is no escape for us from the accelerating effect and massive impact of technology on our outlook, life styles, social development, industrial and economic growth and increased productivity. The contribution of technology to development is rated at between 50 and 60 per cent and much more than labour and capital outputs. Technology is a change agent — bringing about changes in attitude and life styles of people. Managers are makers of change in an orderly way, as technology is changing fast. Changes in technologies and social values go hand in hand, each affecting the other. It is the social values that decide life styles; the life styles dictate the needs, and the needs decide technologies. The job of the manager is to bring about a healthy orderly change for the small group he is working with and bring about a satisfactory life, improving the working and living conditions of people. The job of the manager is not necessarily problem solving but problem prevention. The most significant thing for him is to look far into the future. While the captains of industry and the leaders are pushing for short-term gains, the management has to think ahead.

Technology is a resource. It has a cost, life cycle, long gestation period, involves risks, and is transferable, marketable and negotiable. Therefore, technical literacy of management is crucial for bargaining, particularly when it is common knowledge that technological knowledge and use are avilable with only a small group of nations and transnational corporations that exercise a cumulative hierarchical control.

Generating technology without making use of what exists in the world and importing technology without the ability to assess, bargain, choose, adapt and assimilate it are inefficient and/ expensive. Technology import advocated as a short-cut, allows only ready-made technology applied to an existing environment in advanced countries; has resulted in imitative growth practices, undesirable modes of consumerism, not based on actual social needs, serving only the narrow elite and not the majority;

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Bangladesh: Crisis of External Dependence

REHMAN SOBHAN

The crisis situation that bedevils the economy of Bangladesh has many dimensions as well as lessons for all developing countries. The question is one of understanding the country's relationship with the world economic system, and of finding out where to draw the line in respect of dependence on foreign aid and assistance, keeping self-reliant internal development in view. Dr Rehman Sobhan, noted economist who was a member of the Planning Commission under the first Government of independent Bangladesh and is now Research Director, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies Dacca, attempts in this paper candid in-depth, analysis. It is reproduced with due acknowledgement from *Development and Change*, **London, Vol. 12, 1981.**—*Editor*

ON the face of it Bangladesh would appear to represent a relatively low level of interaction with the world economic system. If this process of integration is measured in terms of the contribution of external trade to GDP or to the control of foreign investment over the domestic economy, Bangladesh comes fairly low down in any league table of external penetration into various developing economies. It is the central theme of this paper, however, that within the prevailing structural constraints of Bangladesh society, the process of development has itself contributed to the growth of external linkages, dependency and domination of the domestic polity. These external linkages have in turn become critical to the emergence and development of an indigenous bourgeoisie, whose entire fortunes are intimately tied up with access to external resources in the name of development.

This particular pattern of dependent development has contributed to the increase in poverty, along with concentrations in the ownership of wealth and inequality in the distribution of income without leading to a significant expansion of the reproductive forces within the economy. This growing immiserisation of the masses in juxtaposition to the parasitice and unproductive character of the dependent bourgeoisie has accentuated the need for external resource flows to both sustain subsistence consumption and to feed the growing appetites of the aspirant bourgeoisie. The incapacity of the system to involve the masses in the development process and their consequent marginalisation from the productive process is likely to threaten the stability of the domestic social order and, by extension, will affect Bangladesh's linkages with the world economic system.

The traditional pattern of interrelationships between the metropolitan colonial powers and the developing countries was determined by the extent of penetration of foreign capital into the domestic economies of those countries and by the integration of components of these economies into a world market. External capital was used to exploit the natural resources of the recipient country through development of productive forces and/or through trade. The bourgeoisie of the colonial power tended to dominate domestic production for export and external trade and to control the service infrastructure which sustained these enclave economies. In the post-colonial phase this external penetration was diversified into import-substituting industrialisation in the developing country to serve its domestic market, usually in collaboration with an emerging indigenous bourgeoisie. The balance of power between the metropolitan and indigenous bourgeoisie reflected the growth of a domestic bourgeoisie and the extent of neo-colonial domination of the particular economy.

In the last decade there has been a further development of this relationship through the TNCs of the metropolitan countries. Faced with rising costs of production at home, these TNCs have responded by moving both capital and particular production processes into selected developing countries (Amin 1974; Iconicoff n.d.). This reflects an attempt to forge a new international division of labour in order to utilise the cheaper labour of these countries to meet the domestic demand within the developed world for the more labour-intensive types of products.

It may be useful to analyse Bangladesh's external linkages within the perspective of relationships identified above. Bangladesh was liberated from colonial domination on December 16, 1971. Between August 1947 and December 1971 it had been part of Pakistan but the eastern region, now Bangladesh, had been politically dominated and economically exploited by the ruling elites based in West Pakistan. The metropolitan elites of West Pakistan had not only monopolised claims on external and domestic resources but also dominated industry, external trade, banking, insurance and even inland water transport within Bangladesh. The liberation of Bangladesh saw the physical withdrawal of the Pakistani bourgeoisie from Bangladesh and the resumption of control over their abandoned assets by the government of Bangladesh.

This peculiar pattern of domination meant that from the outset of its liberation, a major part of the domestic and external economy of Bangladesh was indigenously owned and controlled and at least in the urban sector, was within the control of the government. The more traditional pattern of external penetration manifested in the extent of outside ownership and control of domestic capital and economic activity had been pre-empted by the domination of the West Pakistani bourgeoisie over the Bangladesh economy in the pre-liberation period to the exclusion of foreign capital. As a result only one per cent of fixed assets in industry in pre-liberation Bangladesh was owned by non-Pakistanis who also exercised marginal control over banking, insurance and transport (Sobhan & Ahmad 1980). In the immediate aftermath of liberation the position of non-Pakistani capital was further abridged by the government's nationalisation programme which affected foreign enterprises in the jute industry and trade and in inland water transport. Following this, foreign capital was limited to dominant control by TNCs only in the pharmaceutical and tea industries, a marginal share in banking, and peripheral control in some industries such as tobacco, toiletries and oxygen. In all the industries the Government of Bangladesh emerged as a minor partner through takeover of shares originally owned by the departing Pakistanis.

The low exposure to foreign penetration of the Bangladesh economy may have owed to the historical legacy of Pakistani rule, but it was compounded by Bangladesh's low exploitability. The country has few natural resources which are internationally marketable. Jute is the only resource with a significant external market where Bangladesh enjoys any sort of international comparative advantage. As a consequence, Bangladesh's external trade is heavily dominated by exports of jute and jute goods which account for around 80 per cent of commodity exports. In turn Bangladesh accounts for around 75 per cent of world exports of raw jute and 50 per cent of exports of jute goods (World Bank 1973).

Apart from its jute, foreign capital has found little occasion to rush to Bangladesh. It had involved itself in tea plantations in the northeastern region of the country from the period of British colonial rule. The British originally had also dominated the export trade of jute. But they gradually gave ground to local traders, initially from India, then from Pakistan and finally from Bangladesh itself, so that today the trade in Bangladesh is largely in indigenous hands, both in the public and private sector. A large part of the international market for jute and jute goods, however, even now continues to be controlled by intermediaries operating from London and New York who cream-off part of the surplus. As a result, the jute economy in Bangladesh remains highly sensitive to the level of activity in the world economy, which contributes to considerable instability in the earnings of jute growers and the jute industry.

Besides renewable resources such as jute and tea, Bangladesh's sole non-renewable resource is natural gas, where it has an estimated reserve of nine trillion cubic feet. Current levels of exploitation are low, its use being limited to feeding an indigenous fertilizer industry, power generation, and domestic consumption in a few urban areas. Its extraction and marketing are currently within the state sector. External involvement has been mariginal though attempts are now under way to invole TNCs in the liquefaction of natural gas for export.

Outside of exploitation of natural resources, TNCs have been marginally involved in import-substituting industrialization. Philips is one example of a TNC involved in the assembly of a narrow range of consumer durables and also in tne manufacture of bulbs. Imperial Tobacco has invested in cigarette manufacture; Lever Brothers is dominant in the manufacture of soap and detergents; and British Oxygen produces oxygen. Apart from the case of oxygen, none of these companies enjoys a monopoly of the local product market, having to contend with competition from both local private enterprise and the state sector. The products of these overseas brand products, however, are favoured by upper income consumers.

It is only in the pharmaceutical sector that TNCs have played a prominent role in monopolising the local market by substituting imports. A number of well-known TNCs such as Pfizer, Hoecht, ICI, May and Baker, Squibbs, Organon, have investments in Bangladesh, all in equity partnership with the Government. Their operations largely consist of importing their own formulatious, which are then bottled or tabletted in their plants in Bangladesh. This is seen as a cost-saving exercise as much as a device to vaultover tariff bariers on finished imports of pharmaceutical products. Whilst the TNCs dominate the local market, there is a growing indigenous industry, some of which produces TNC brand products under licence but without equity asssociation.

All these industries with foreign equity still do not account for more than one per cent of fixed assets in the manufacturing sector, so that the TNC presence, whether in resource exploitation, import substitution, or export of labour-intensive products, is negligible. To this extent, the various cycles of dependence identified by various writers on the world system are not fully relevant to the Bangladesh experience.

THE absence of foreign control in the classical sense over the domestic economy has meant that the dominant social formations within Bangladesh are largely indigenous. In the initial period after liberation the state sector, dominated by petty bourgeois elements which had led the nationalist struggle, became the dominant decision maker. This became an important factor in abridging the scope of penetration into Bangladesh by external capital. With 85 per cent of fixed assets in the manufacturing sector, along with the bulk of banking and insurance, foreign trade, communications, and power all under state ownership, decision making and investment priorities, on the face of it, were largely indigenously determined.

This tendency experienced some erosion as a consequence of a change of regime in 1975 following the assassination of the then President, Sheikh

Mujibur Rahman. Power then moved from the regime which had led the liberation struggle into the hands of a more affluent segment of the bourgeoisie deriving its power from the military coup, which put a regime favourably disposed towards the West in control. The new regime sought to promote the development of a local capitalist class and to open up the economy to private foreign investment. Though some enlargement of the private sector has occurred in recent years, there has as yet been no quantitatively significant erosion of the dominance of public enterprise over the non-traditional sector or in the indigenously-controlled character of the domestic economy.

This recent strategy of promoting, under state patronage, some segments of the local bourgeoisie to constitute a private capitalist sector has had important consequences for opening-up the economy to external penetration. The historical legacy of of external political domination up to 1971 over the areas that now constitute Bangladesh, meant that the indigenous bourgeoisie remained an underdeveloped social entity (Sobhan 1980). Most upward mobile elements of the petty bourgeoisie sought outlets in the professions or in the state machinery. The growth of an indigenous bourgeoisie in trade and industry was a phenomenon of the 1960s. It was the direct result of the Pakistani colonial regime to create a comprador class which could act as local surrogates in the exercise of their colonial domination of Bangladesh. The sudden withdrawal of the colonial power not only created a major social vacuum within Bangladesh but, as a result of the post-liberation nationalisation policies, drastically abridged the power and prospects of the nascent capitalist class indigenous to Bangladesh which had grown up under colonial patronage (Sobhan & Ahmad 1980).

The further growth of a domestic bourgeoisie from the outset of liberation thus came to be tied-up with access to external resources. For the aspirant private bourgeoisie who enjoyed limited control over productive assets, it meant that their only vehicle for linkage with the world system was through the role of an intermediary.

The volume and distribution of earnings from performing the role of intermediary depend critically on the volume of external assistance coming into Bangladesh and on access to state patronage. The higher the inflow of external assistance, the more profits accrue to this class. External resources inflows directly and indirectly further the growth and prosperity of this class of intermediaries. Directly, the intermediaries function as commission agents for foreign suppliers, tendering for development projects and supplies of a wide range of intermediate and finished goods such as raw cotton, fertiliser and cement. Indirectly, this class derives profits from the distribution of goods imported by the state trading corporation or finished goods manufactured in public enterprises through the processing of imported intermediate. The volume of external resources available to the economy was and remains a critical determinant of the fortunes of this class.

To the extent that Bangladesh came to be dependent on foreign aid to fund 60 per cent of its investments, 85 per cent of its development budget, and 63 per cent of its commodity imports, the level of external resource inflows was critically dependent on the volume of aid available to the economy. This aspirant bourgeoisie has thus come to acquire a material stake in an aid-dependent regime. Any trend towards abridging external dependence, at least in the short run, is likely to be directly inimical to the interests of these commission agents of foreign suppliers. To the extent that the growth of self-reliance remains contingent on expansion in import-substituting domestic production of goods and services, the bourgeoisie could be compensated through control of domestically-traded goods produced in the state sector or even directly produced in the state sector or even directly produced by the private sector. Insofar as the level of domestic output is itself contingent on aided imports, however, even this class of distributors of manufactures remains critically dependent on maintaining the level of aid-financed imports.

In the case of the private sector, liquid resources generated from agency commissions provide the basis for diversification into capitalist production, but few of this class are inclined to reinvest their trading capital directly in industry. As a result, under state patronage extended to the local bourgeoisie through loan and equity financing from state-owned financial institutions, the state itself has become the main source of capitalist growth in Bangladesh. The capacity of these state institutions to promote expansion of the capitalist sector is itself contingent on foreign loans to the state financing institutions, largely extended through multinational financing institutions such as the World Bank and Asian Development Bank. Thus, capitalist development in Bangladesh has become a direct function of aid availability intermediate by the state.

THE dependence on aid flows is not restricted to the growth aspirations of a domestic capitalist class. A growing state bourgeoisie, both within the permanent bureaucracy as well as the executives of the state enterprises, has also become heavily dependent on inflows of external assistance to further its sectional interests. Part of this compulsion originates in the power and patronage which drives from initiating and executing large aid-financed development projects. Both in terms of intra-bureaucratic power and within the polity, control over such projects become a major resource for those contending for state power. Patronage derived from such projects extends over employment as well as the dispensation of favours to suppliers of goods and services and to construction contractors. Vast fortunes can accrue so both these categories of beneficiaries as a consequence of expenditure decisions within the state sector. Some of these benefits may even return to the decision makers, who thus acquire a material stake in aid-financed projects.

The built-in drive to seek more and more foreign aid is thus a common feature of the development process in Bangladesh. Many state functionaries, however, seek more aid to serve as a cushion for their own managerial inadequacies. Thus, for example, the capacity to ensure capacity utilisation of mechanised irrigation facilities provided by the state to farmers, generates pressure for more aid-financed import of irrigation equipment rather than for fuller utilisation of installed capacity. Thus, new aid becomes the main source for expanding acreage under irrigation or even for maintaining current levels of irrigation. Aid in these situations becomes the soft option designed to mitigate the consequences of deteriorating operating performance within the economy. Given the contingent benefits which accrue to particular classes from aid, we can get some insight into the low and deteriorating performance of some state-run enterprises.

The aid compulsion of the private and state bourgeoisie is reflected in the character and aspirations of the political leadership. The dominant political party currently administering the polity in Bangladesh is itself an expression of the interests and ambitions of the aspirant local bourgeoisie. This element seeks to control the state machine in order both to dispense patronage as a basis for expanding its power over the polity, and to seek material benefit from the dispensation of this patronage. This entente between the party and state machine, however tends to be strained by intra-class conflicts over control of the patronage derived from access to foreign aid. Indeed, where the ruling party express its class character through the aspirations of the private sector, some element of contradiction arises with the state bourgeoisie over both control and perspectives towards foreign aid.

The critical role of foreign aid in the development of the bourgeoisie is reinforced by the essentially parasitic and unproductive character of this class. The private sector has shown little capacity to generate surpluses to finance capital formation. The low level of private savings, manifested directly in direct equity investments and in contributions to direct taxation, is a measure of the unproductive character of this class (Government of Bangladesh 1980). A low savings capacity is compounded by high levels of conspicuous consumption based largely on consumption standards and on goods imported from abroad. The appetite of this class even absorbs the savings of overseas migrants, who provide a growing and variable source of foreign exchange remittance to Bangladesh (Mahmood 1980). To the extent that state controls over investment limit the extent of import-substituting investment derived from imported consumption standards, both imports and overseas travel to spend their earnings have become an outlet to the comprador bourgeoisie for the incomes derived from acting as intermediaries to foreign suppliers. What investment is made by this class is in part channelled abroad, both for profits and as an insurance against domestic upheaval. At home a high rate of investments in luxury housing is encouraged by state-financing institutions and generates rentier income from foreigners who come to live in Bangladesh as another by-product of the aid regime. Along with urban landlordism, preferred domestic investments of their equity by the bourgeoisie are directed to trade and speculation.

The pattern of the urban economy is paralleled in the rural areas where rich farmers use their access to state power to monopolize imported fertilizer, irrigation facilities, pesticides and aid-financed credit programmes (Devylder & Asplund 1979). To this end, the growing affluence of a section of the rural bourgeoisie has emerged as another by-product of the aid regime.

IT would be misleading, however, to see aid serving solely as a prop of the bourgeoise in Bangladesh. Within the present social framework, aid has now become central to the expectations and conditions of life of a much wider segment of the urban and even rural populations of Bangladesh. Some of main social classes who are directly or indirectly dependent on aid for their subsistence consumption and livelihood are drawn from the following social groups: rural poor, urban population of six major cities, government employees, workers in public enterprises and in large-scale manufacturing enterprises school teachers in state educational institutions, college and university students resident in hostels, the armed forces and other instruments of state power. The nature of this dependency may be reviewed in relation to the rural and urban segments of the population.

The dependence of the rural poor is part of a built-in structural crisis within Bangladesh society. At present, 50 per cent of all rural households are classified as functionally landless, whilst another 25 per cent find it difficult to ensure subsistence from their cultivable land and have to seek supplementary sources of income. This indicates that some three-quarters of rural households in Bangladesh are now dependent in all or part on the market economy, as opposed to subsistence cultivation, for their basic staple diet. This large category of the rural population is now directly touched by the world economic system to the extent that the regime for foodgrains in Bangladesh has over the years become critically dependent on imports. Today some 12-15 per cent of foodgrains consumed in Bangladesh are imported, but at least 50 per cent of domestic output is not marketed. Of the grain entering the market, imports account for 30-50 per cent, depending on the size of the domestic crop and the marketable surplus derived from this. The availability of grain imports has a crucial importance for the volume of marketed grain and consequently the market price of grain. Both factors are critical to the level of consumption of the rural poor, for whom scarcity of grain on the market, operating through the price mechanism, may make all the difference between starvation and subsistence. This was made apparent in 1974 when the delay, for political reasons, by the US Government in sanctions US PL-480 food aid, precipitated a severe famine in Bangladesh where some 30,000 perished (Sobhan 1979).

Foodgrain aid has acquired a further dimension in the lives of the rural poor. It is now being used to underwrite the Rural Public Works Programme and the Food for Work Programme which are becoming increasingly important as a source of livelihood for a growing segment of the rural poor. To the extent that aided imports of fertiliser and irrigation equipment determine the spread of HYV cultivation, this is again affecting the lives of sharecroppers and wage laboureres who benefit, from the employment-enhancing features of the new technology.

Outside of the rural areas, food aid is directly instrumental in providing consumption of basic staples to the entire population of six major urban centres in Bangladesh. These areas are covered by what is known as 'statutory rationing': a basic supply of rice, wheat, sugar, edible oils and kerosene is guaranteed to all households through the issue of ration cards. Ration shops sell a fixed quantity of these basic items at a controlled price. This ration is extended to cover all Government employees wherever they are posted in Bangladesh, workers in state enterprises and large industrial units, students resident in college and university hostels, Government school teachers, and all personnel of the armed forces and other related law and order agencies. An estimated 4.5 million people are covered by this ration programme (Zahir & Kamal n.d.). A large and at times overwhelming part of the ration programme sustained by food imports, mostly procured under various aid programmes. These people identified above are a priority group for determining access to food aid, which includes both foodgrain and edible oil, and are particularly vulnerable to any major change in the level of external assistance, though less so then the rural poor since any cut in aid flows is usually passed on to the latter as long as government policy gives priority to meetiag obligations to the statutory rationing areas and special groups identified above. The political assumption underlying this policy is that these groups are politically the most volatile.

The mechanism of aid dependence, however, does not restrict itself to direct consumption of food items. Many items of daily consumption produced by the domestic manufacturing sector have come to depend on aid-financed imports. The level of output of the textile industry depends on aid-financed imports of raw cotton. The textile industry not only provides a basic need for the whole industry, but is a source of livelihood for 160,000 industrial workers and another 300,000 artisan households who depend on supplies of yarn made available by the state-owned textile industry to feed their handlooms. Cuts in the supply of raw cotton thus have wide ramifications in the price of cloth and in the income of those involved in its manufacture.

In other import-dependent sectors of industry such as steel which produces corrugated iron sheets, a basic item in rural housing, the engineering industry which contributes to rural development and public transport, and the chemical industry which produces soap and refined petroleum products, commodity aid is crucial to ensure capacity utilisation. If one allows for the crucial role of spare parts and supplies of other intermediates, then in most sectors access to foreign exchange for imports is a critical variable in determining levels of domestic output. Scarcities in domestic output cannot readily be be compensated by imports due to foreign exchange constraints. Thus, a reduced level of imports of intermediates as a result of aid cuts can have far-reaching repercussions on domestic price levels and levels of consumption of basic necessities.

IT may be useful at this stage briefly to identify the main parameters of external dependence in Bangladesh and to trace this to the systemic constraints which perpetuate this dependence. In 1978-79 the share of aid in Bangladesh in relation to GDP had risen to 8.5 per cent compared to three per cent in 1973-74 (Government of Bangladesh 1980). The rising importance of aid was even more critically apparent in areas relating to the external economy of Bangladesh and in the financing of its development programmes. In 1978-79 foreign aid effectively financed 65 per cent of Bangladesh's annual import bill and enabled Bangladesh to cover a balance-of-payments gap which was 116 per cent of its external earnings. This growing dependence on aid to finance Bangladesh's foreign exchange gap corresponds with a decline in the importance of Bangladesh's own external earnings. Two decades ago, in 1960, Bangladesh's external earnings effectively financed its entire import bill compared to 46 per cent in 1978-79.

The mounting foreign exchange gap is matched by the growing importance of aid to finance the domestic resource gap. The share of aid in financing domestic development expenditure on government account was 75 per cent in 1978-79, but if we measure aggregate investment which includes private and public investment and excludes the non-investment component of development expenditure, aid financed 60 per cent of investment in 1978-79 compared to 41.6 per cent in 1973-74.

That aid financing is even more crucial to government expenditures is apparent from a review of the development budget. Aid is now, both directly and indirectly, an important sourcee of revenue to the Government. If we look at its direct contribution, food aid contributed significant resources to the exchequer. All food aid provided to the Government and sold through the public rationing system generates counterpart funds in domestic currency. These funds are then directly available to finance Government expenditures. In 1978-79 16 per cent of domestic revenue was provided by these counterpart funds. Any measure to cut down food aid through increasing self-sufficiency in domestic food production is not likely to provide for a compensating source of revenue and will create a financial crisis for the exchequer.

Indirectly, aid generates revenues through the revenue income of the Government. In 1978-79, 56 per cent of tax revenues and 48 per cent of all revenues were contributed by taxes on imports. To the extent that aid was a major factor in determining the level of taxable imports, it contributed indirectly to government revenue income. A fall in aid working though a fall in imports would have an immediate impact on domestic revenue generation. To the extent that aid-financed imports contribute to the level of domestic manufacturing output, and this output generates domestic revenues, both through excise and sales tax and through direct contributions to public revenues from the state enterprises, aid flows have even wider repercussions on the domestic budget.

From a review of these basic indices of dependence it becomes apparent that employment for the rural poor, domestic revenues, development expenditure, fixed investment, imports, the balance-of-payments deficit and levels of output in specific sectors of the economy, are all directly or indirectly dependent on levels of external resource flows. If to this we add the role of aid in specific sectors to finance expansion of capacity and enhancement of services, aid would appear even more critical to the performance of the economy.

In the modern manufacturing sector, power generation and distribution, modern transport, health services, family planning, there is not a single project designed for expansion of capacity which is not funded by aid. In all these areas, which must include health and education, and upgrading of services through overseas training, as well as in the import of expatriate expertise, aid plays a critical role. Current domestic revenues could perhaps run available infrastructure and social services but could afford few resources for expansion of capacity. Where particular operational facilities are contingent on imported spare parts and services for maintaining operational efficiency, aid constraints could affect even ongoing services in most sectors. Currently, aid programmes are even financing projects for institutional improvement such as the Integrated Rural Development Programmes, as well as paying salaries of family planning workers and school teachers, and teaching aids in the educational sector.

It would appear that any sudden suspension of aid or even an appreciable decline in its availability would have far-reaching consequences for the economy, society and polity of Bangladesh. We have seen that significant segments of the urban and rural populations now depend on aid for their employment, income and consumption. Virtually every area of Government activity in relation to revenue generation, development, external trade and provision of goods and services, is now contingent on aid availability. Bangladesh, in consequence, is as integrated into the world economic system as any classically dependent Latin American or African country. The policies of aid donors in the developed world, specific not only to aid but to decisions affecting the production and the pricing of commodities imported into Bangladesh, for example foodgrains, cotton, soyabeans, petroleum products, fertilizer and steel, are of growing consequence to a rising proportion of Bangladesh's population. This factor gives policy makers abroad an unusual measure of leverage over countries such as Bangladesh, and drastically abridges Bangladesh's autonomy of action in matters of domestic policy, investment priorities, choice of technology, and programming of its development expenditures. In each area its decisions have to be tailored to the ideological predilections of donors, the types of aid provided, and the terms on which it is made available.

IN THE concluding part of this paper we shall briefly discuss the systemic constraints which have contributed to this crisis of dependence within Bangladesh and the economic, social and political consequences which flow from this particular pattern of linkage with the world economic system.

Bangladesh's dependence on aid is not a new phenomenon and, in fact, has progressively increased over the years. Its dependence is tied into the compulsions of demography, geography, history and politics. Bangladesh inherited a situation where the size of its domestic population and its rate of increase was juxtaposed against acute scarcity of cultivable land and natural resources.

This unfavourable environmental situation could have been compensated by a systematic attempt to optimize available resource use. More productive use of available external assistance could have enabled Bangladesh to move to a higher threshold of productive activity from which it could cope with the mounting pressure of population. At a time when other countries were moving towards independence, however, Bangladesh's emergence in 1947 as part of the independent nation state of Pakistan was characterised by a form of internal colonialism practised by the Pakistani-based ruling elite. Monopoly of state power to the exclusion of Bangladesh was used initially to divert Bangladesh's export surplus to finance the industrialisation of West Pakistan. By the 1960s, when this surplus had been exhausted, the rising volume of aid designed to cover Pakistan's external resource deficit was channelled towards financing West Pakistan's development. As a consequence of this incapacity to utilise Bangladesh's own resources and subsequently to derive an equitable share of external aid, Bangladesh faced economic stagnation which helped to accentuate its inherited environmental and structural problems which had constrained its development capacities.

At liberation in December 1971, Bangladesh inherited an economy where external dependency on food had increased, its external resource gap had widened, the number and proportion of landless peasants had increased. Along with the incidence of rural poverty, its exports were stagnating and indeed facing a decline in the world market, and its rate of domestic resource generation was contracting. Its limited capacity for self-reliant growth had thus been substantially eroded. The traumatic legacy of the liberation war with its massive visitation of death, dislocation of millions of people, damage to the infrastructure of the economy and, last but not least, the major social dislocations caused by the withdrawal of the Pakistani bourgeoisie, posed a crisis of survival for the infant nation state.

This crisis inherited as a legacy of nature, demography, history and politics, could have been confronted by a major effort in social engineering to mobilise the collective energy of the masses to share austerity and to rebuild the war-shattered economy on a drastically restructured social base. But the political leadership of the day, constrained by its political support base, was hesitant to embark on such heroic feats of social reconstruction for fear of aggravating the dislocations inherited from the war (Sobhan & Ahmad 1980). The logical consequence of this incapacity to use the dynamic of the liberation war to transform the social order was to condemn Bangladesh to a pattern of dependent development. Foreign aid became the initial source for rehabilitating the ten million refugees displaced by the war and for reconstructing the war-damaged infrastructure of the economy. The external dependence became cumulative as the food gap, the savings gap, and the revenue gap, all came to be covered by foreign aid. The incapacity to generate domestic resources owed in part to narrow margins of surplus left within the domestic economy, but it also reflected the political constraints in extracting resources from those segments of the elite groups which monopolised these resources. To the extent that parts of the aid channelled into the economy were used materially to benefit these same classes and enhance their power within the polity, the scope for generating internal resources deteriorated rather than increased over the years.

THE violent change of regime in 1975 was designed to legitimise the power of those classes which sought to institutionalise their monopoly over domestic and external resources (Lifschultz 1979). The contradictions which characterised the post-liberation regime were subsumed in the united pursuit of bourgeois accumulation and integration of the economy into the world economic system. State power was directed towards channelling a rising pool of external resources towards building up an indigenous capitalist and rural bourgeoisie. Conversely, there were few compulsions to improve the utilisation of installed capacity and to generate domestic revenues from increased output generated by increased availability of external assistance.

The consequence of this growing tendency towards a dependent development strategy was the proliferation of aid-dependent projects and of people seeking to enhance their fortunes from them. Starting from grandiose capital-investment projects at the top, to small infrastructure development projects at the village level, these came to be tied to the specific interests of particular elite groups and their need to appropriate more resources to enhance their power base. As a consequence, it was rare for any autonomous development initiative to emerge which was not underwritten by state patronage from above and by external resources mediated through the local administration and local power-brokers who provide the base of the ruling party. This strategy seems destined to perpetuate a nation of consumers, and a system which destined to perpetuate a nation of consumers, and a system which disproportionally rewards those with access to power at the expense of those who actually work. The system therefore carries certain built-in disincentives to sustained productive effort, internal resource mobilisation, and reduction in external dependence.

This systemic crisis of dependence is likely to perpetuate Bangladesh's image as an 'international basket case'. Special appeals designed to emphasise its 'least-developed' character and distinctive status among developing countries are likely to reinforce the symbioitic links between aid donors and Bangladesh's dependent bourgeoisie. The enhancement of the power of this class as a direct consequence of growth in the aid regime is likely to make it less inclined to surrender part of its surpluses, so that the compulsion for aid is likely to become self-perpetuating. To the extent that this class is disinclined to use its aid-induced surpluses to significantly expand productive forces within Bangladesh, the capacity for transforming a parasitic trading bourgeoisie into a modernising capitalist elite seems limited, and aid will continue to be needed to build up this class.

The East and Southeast Asian models of once-dependent regimes gradually transforming themselves into dynamic capitalist regimes do not appear to be an available option to Bangladesh. The progressive marginalisation of a rising proportion of the landless and land-poor rural population is projected to increase absolutely under-employment and poverty over the years whilst polarising ownership of assets and incomes distributed between different social groups. The incapacity to give a growing number of the nation's poor a stake in the development process or to enhance their levels of living and improve their conditions of life, is likely to accentuate the social tensions that already strain the polity to breaking point. The progressive marginalisation of a rising part of the population is going to make rhetorical appeals for mass mobilisation for production progressively less credible, and hence will further devalue the legitimacy of the regime in the eyes of the masses.

To the extent that Bangladesh is a relatively politicised nation, having lived through the political mobilisation and direct involvement of the masses in a bloody war of liberation, their capacity passively to accept an absolute and relative deterioration in their conditions of life is likely to be less durable than in many other developing countries. Given the relatively recent ascendancy to social power of the aid-subsidised urban and rural elites, the dominant groups not only lack social legitimacy needed to contain tension within the polity, but their very elevation is a provocation to the masses and thus a threat to the stability of the regime. The relatively limited coercive capacity of the bourgeois state to enforce its cohesion is compounded by actual and potential divisions within the instruments of coercion, which stem from the insurgent origins of these forces and the successive breaches of internal discipline and cohesion which have characterised the role of these forces in recent years. □

Nishing Women of Arunachal

KIRAN MISHRA

THE Union Territory of Arunachal Pradesh, formerly called NEFA, is situated in India's north-eastern corner bordering China with an area of 83,578 sq km. According to the 1971 Census, the population was 4,67,511, which has become over six lakhs according to the 1981 Census. In 1954 this North-Eastern Frontier Agency beginning from the western side bordering Bhutan was divided into a number of administrative divisions and given their present names — Kameng, Subansiri, Siang, Lohit and Tirap. There is a distinct topographical distribution of land in this Union Territory. The plains and foot-hills cover about 15 per cent of the total area, broad valleys, plateau and steep slopes about 35 per cent, snow-clad peaks and pastoral land about 18 to 20 per cent. This is why only 2 per cent of the reported area, that is, about 1,06,838 hectares, is under cultivation. This figure is quite low considering the fact that the people here depend entirely on agriculture for their livelihood. Lack of plain fertile land is another reason why 70 per cent of Arunachalis are engaged in slash-and-burn cultivation, locally known as *jhum* cultivation. Only 30 per cent of the households depend on permanent settled cultivation.

The climate of Arunachal is varied. Pre-monsoon rain begins early in March and goes on till the end of September. The annual rainfall varies from 1000 mm to 6500 mm. Winter is cold and damp. Snowfall is experienced in the higher regions. Lower regions are humid and temperate. Humidity even in winter months is high. Because of such varied conditions, several types of vegetation are found in this region. In the lower regions one sees clusters of trees with thick vegetation underneath. Natural flora and fauna in the hill setting add up to a beautiful colour scheme. There is a variety of evergreen forest ranging from tropical green to temperate green in the middle ranges, coniferous and alpine in the higher ranges. There is a profusion of all kinds of orchids, some of which are of rare species. Forest is the natural wealth liberally bestowed by nature upon this territory. Important timbers like hollock, hollong, mekari, bola, khokon, nahar, fir, oaks and pines are sent to the plains of Assam. The Forest Department is trying to give a more scientific orientation to this natural vegetation. By artificial regeneration method, 20,000 hectares of teak, 11,000 hectares of hollong and 1200 hectares of pine sapling have already been planted.

In 1975, the popularly elected Government of Arunachal Pradesh passed its first Bill relating to the Forest Department, known as "Constitution and Maintenance Act 1975," relating to "Anchal Reserve Forest". According to this Act "economically viable forest areas could be handed over by the anchal sumitis for management to the Forest Department." Creation of anchal forests has induced people to preserve and protect forests. Local people are becoming conscious of the economic viability of cash-crops. More and more tribes are coming to take help from the experts of the Forest Department.

The total jhum land in Arunachal is 1269 sq km There are many factors to be kept in mind while selecting a *Jhum* field for cultivation. The land selected should not have a steep slope. Vegetation cover should be thick so as to provide enough ashes as top cover. The undersoil should be fertile so as to provide good nourishment to the plants later. The jhum field should not be too far from the place of residence. When the crops are semi-ripe there is a constant danger of wild elephants damaging the crops and herds of mithun entering the fields. So, jhum fields have to be properly fenced and a constant watch kept on the crops. Burning of cut-down forest for jhum fields is mostly done at night so that insects and pests get attracted by the light and get destroyed. It has been scientifically proved that once jhuming is stopped in a particular area, there occurs an influx of insects and pests. Ash content in the earth reduces soil acidity and balances its fertility.

The tribe inhabiting most parts of the lower and upper Subansiri divisions and a small part of eastern Kameng is known as Nishing. Subansiri division, home ground of the Nishing, has an area of about 17,000 sq km. Nishing is the largest tribe of Arunachal. According to the 1971 Census its population was over one lakh, living in about 13,000 long traditional houses and spread over 1,100 villages. Most villages are small in size, with population ranging from 50 to 250 persons. Females predominate, there being 1,021 females per 1,000 males. Men have more than one wife and the number of wives a man has shows his economic and social status. Literacy level among the Nishing is poor. Only a little over 6 per cent of the population was literate and women lagged far behind men.

Besides tending to semi-wild cattle *mithun*, the second main occupation of the Nishing is agriculture. As people depend on jhum farming, it becomes necessary for a family to have as many jhum fields as they can cultivate to meet subsistence needs. Jhum fields are usually scattered and success in cultivation depends on a large family household. The role of women is crucial for culture of crops, and this is another reason for a Nishing man to have as many wives as he can, provided he is able to pay the bride price. Since each wife has her own jhum fields, the larger the number of wives the more the jhum fields and the higher the social status of the household. Nowadays in the Subansiri region a

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jhum field is given up after three or four years of consecutive farming. While the men mostly reclaim the lands, burn the slashed tress and bushes and fence off the new fields, women do the cultivation work such as sowing, dibbling, weeding, harvesting, threshing, etc. Hunting and fishing are done only by men. Women gather food, vegetables, etc., from nearby forests. Men may help women in this; there is no taboo nor any strict division of labour.

In the recent past, with state-sponsored development plans, this primitive tribe, like others, has been exposed to modern techniques and methods of cultivation. As a result, settled cultivation with irrigation facilities and application of modern inputs is beginning to develop. A total of 34,007 hectares of land has been converted into permanent fields. Previously there used to be only one *(kharif)* crop in a year. Now *rabi* crop has also been introduced. State support in the form of subsidy given to convert jhum fields into permanent irrigated land has encouraged some, specially the younger generation of men, to take to settled irrigated cultivation. Indeed, settled cultivation is gaining ground. Some of these people can even be seen using plough and bullock in the lower valleys as in Doimukh region. High-yielding varieties of seeds, plant protection measures, chemicals, fertilisers, better tools have all appeared, though it may be a long time before people give up shifting cultivation altogether.

Due to efforts at modernisation, sheep-breeding farms, hybrid poultry, and Jersey cows for milk have now caught the fancy of the educated Nishing. They respond well to extension services and make efforts to achieve better results. The Nishing have also started taking to orchard cultivation. Apple, plum, pear, walnut, chestnut, orange, pineapple, guava, etc., have begun to be planted.

The busiest months for Nishing women are April to June, for most of the sowing is done during this period. Thereafter weeding has to be done constantly in one jhum field after another. August to December are the months when reaping is done. Harvested grain is stored in small huts adjacent to the long houses. It can be a single storage system for the whole household or each wife may have a separate storage hut of her own. In case there is one granary for all the wives, then either the eldest or the youngest of the wives takes the responsibility of distributing the grain to each hearth. Each member gets according to her needs. By January Nishing men start looking up the hills for flat land which in due course would be converted into a jhum field. Women get busy preparing the old plots for early paddy plantation. In this system, though the life of women revolves around economic activities and they are the main producers of income, they do not have much social standing.

Nishings have developed an interesting way of mobilising labour for agricultural work, house construction and common community works like making hanging bridges, etc. This system reduces the dependence of a woman on her husband or any male member of the household to the minimum. There are three ways to mobilise labour. These are known as Ray Yanam, Dorum Ray, Goya Ray. For agricultural work generally the procedure adopted is to send word to different households that so many workers are needed in a particular field on a particular day. If a household calls for *Ray Yanam,* then the labourers who come to work for the whole day are given a hot meal in the evening before going back home. Generally this meal consists of rice, vegetable, meat and chutney. Men, women, young and aged, all can participate in Ray Yanam. Apart from food, appung (a local millet or rice beer) is provided intermittently to those who come to participate in the collective work. In Ray Yanam there is no reciprocity involved. Generally it is called by rich households or by those who have less working hands. A woman can always call for Ray Yanam for agricultural operation on her jhum field.

Dorum Ray is a reciprocal exchange of labour. If two members from a particular household come to help in A's field, it becomes obligatory on the part of A's household to go to work in equal number when people of that particular household require assistance. Only appung is provided by the party which calls for Dorum Ray. If possible people of the same age group and sex go in exchange, though this is not a strict requirement.

Community cooperative work, such as linkage of two villages by a bridge or a road, comes under Goya Ray. Any common facility or service which is enjoyed by two communities or villages comes under it. For such community work, members go without any compulsion. The village which traditionally has been providing material would do so and the other would provide the labour. Cooperation and sharing are two distinct characteristics of these people. Because of such cooperation a thirty metre long cane-bridge can be completed in a few hours.

Many traditional crafts like weaving, carpet-making, pottery, etc., were women's preserve. Modernisation of the traditional crafts has also been taken up. The new crafts centres opened by the Government are helping to give extensive training to young Nishing boys and girls. Importance is given to traditional crafts like weaving, carpet-making, wood-carving, silversmithy, blacksmithy, cane and bamboo work. Apart from giving training to the young boys and girls, it is also kept is mind that the goods produced here have utility. During the training period, the trainees get a stipend of about Rs 200 per month. This enables the boys and girls to earn their own living while undergoing training. This income is one not based on agriculture. While interviewing some of the officials of these craft centres, it was found that not many tribal boys were willing to come and work, because craft as a vocation is not yet a very attractive proposition for them.

Due to the spate of construction work on state projects, women too have started coming out to work on them. This has helped them earn cash income apart from their own farm income. As a result, one finds a lot of new consumer items being purchased. / Major preferences is for mill-made cloth for sarong, aluminium utensils, lanterns, plastic goods, cosmetics; shoes, etc.

Under traditional jhum cultivation a village or a clan had the right of ownership over a particular area. Each member had the right of possession of his jhum field and if due to some personal problem he was not able to cultivate his jhum field, it is reverted to the village community. In this community-based system women had no specific rights. A woman could either work in her parents' jhum fields or in her husband's after marriage. If a woman preferred to remain a widow after her husband's death, she had the right to look after the fields of her husband. We have already seen that Nishing women from their childhood are real labourers, absolutely indispensable for agricultural activities as well as for household chores. Male members help them, but it is the women who do the sowing, weeding, harvesting, dehusking grain by pounding and later cooking and feeding the children. Besides jhum fields, animals like mithun are predominantly owned by male members, though some women also own these.

Women of course have their own personal property primarily in the form of *sampatti,* that is, ornaments and gifts they bring at the time of marriage and whatever they acquire subsequently. This consists mostly of beads, silver bracelets, waist ornaments, headgear, etc. If calculated in terms of dowry and bride price the value of goods exchanged between the bride's and bridegroom's households comes almost to the same amount, specially if it is the first marriage. If a man already has many wives then naturally he has to pay more for a new wife, more than what she brings by way of *sampatti.* Relatives find out the economic condition and status of both parties and bride price is settled accordingly. After the settlement, it becomes difficult to break it. If due to some problem, the settlement has to be broken, then the offending party has to pay compensation to the aggrieved party for loss of honour in the community. Marriage, among the Nishing, is the occasion when *sampatti* passes from one family to the other. It is a matter of prestige and no Nishing would like to violate this tradition. It should be made clear here that it is the mother who gives away her own ornaments to her daughter at the time of marriage. But it is the father or the brothers who generally receive the bride-price in the form of *mithun.* One or two *mithuns* are sacrificed at the time of marriage, according to the status of the family. The rest of the mithuns may be kept and used by the male members of the family to pay for a new wife. A married woman later in life may, on her own, buy a *mithun* or pigs and poultry which she may later sell to educate her children, etc. Because of the cash income available now, every Nishing woman wants to buy a *mithun* of her own.

Today, after the introduction of modern form of settled irrigated agriculture, locally known as Pani Kheti, land under such cultivation no longer reverts to the village community. It becomes the private property of the household concerned. Similarly orchard land has also become private property. There already occurs sale and purchase of such lands now. Those in Government service and educated people do buy or keep orchards in the name of their wives. It is also found that women occasionally buy Pani Kheti in their husband's or son's name. This is however true generally only the Nishing inhabiting the lower regions of Subansiri division. In the upper regions people do not believe that *maati* (land) can be sold or purchased. This is perhaps because the new 'culture' has not yet not reached these regions.

In the household, quite often each wife has her own granary. Whatever she produces from her jhum fields or from Pani Kheti land she keeps in it. Major part of the grain produced by her is used for feeding her own children and herself. The common husband can of course partake of the food cooked by her in her own hearth. The surplus grain she is free to dispose of in several ways. A part of the previous year's paddy or millet is used to feed the collective labour which she may require for cultivation of her jhum or Pani Kheti land. Besides, she may occasionally have to contribute for her own long house, village community or clan functions, and feasts. A part of the surplus may also be bartered. Nowadays she also sells it to acquire *sampatti* or for her children's education. In most cases mothers interviewed by the author reported that they were supporting their children's education. Apart from giving a rough account to her husband there is no other restriction on a women's freedom to dispose of her own produce.

Almost all domestic labour is performed by her, assisted by her children, particularly daughters. This includes cooking, washing, weaving, collecting firewood and vegetables, fetching drinking water, feeding poultry, pigs, etc. Educated housewives too have similar chores to do, the only difference being that they might be assisted by some members of the household.

No doubt developmental efforts and incentives have brought about a lot of change in the Nishing community. Men are enjoying this sudden, induced change as far as their life-style is concerned. When it comes to girls or women, they do not appreciate it much. Women even now are expected to stick to their traditional way of life. With a black cloth wrapped around her waist the woman is expected to go out and work in the jhum field. If someone deviates from it she has to pay a price for it as the story of Saba Mano shows clear. (The names of the person and places given here are factitious, for obvious reasons).

Mano is a 25-year-old woman now. She had no formal education. From the upper regions where her family has a house she came to yazali about 10 years ago, in 1973. Luckily the State Government had just opened a weaving centre there. She joined the centre and learnt weaving. In 1975 a working shed was provided by the State Government. Gradually, Mano became the head of this centre. In 1977 she wanted to change the centre into a co-operative complex. This she could not do then, for some girls opposed the idea. Now once again she is making an attempt in that direction for the simple reason that thread and spun yarn have become too expensive in the open market. If the centre becomes a co-operative complex she could buy the yarn at subsidised rates from fair-price shops. This she is not able to do because of local pressures and indifference. When I asked her whether there were social workers and young teachers who could help her, she replied, "They do not like my taking up weaving as a profession". At times in the past young Nishing men had directly boycotted her, and now they have resorted to non co-operation. She had to be careful about talking to men outside her clan. She makes it a point to take one of her sisters with her when she has to go out. Though Nishing men claim that their female folk are capable of looking after themselves, yet Saba Mano has to suffer all this social stigma just because she chose to do something different.

There are many spinsters who live with their parents and work in their jhum fields. Taba's sister was unmarried and was staying with his parents. There was no social stigma attached to it. In fact girls who looked after their old parents got much approval. Yet the understanding was that one day she would get married. It was different in the case of Mano for she was quite vocal and has decided never to get married. It hurts the male ego to see a young girl running an establishment on her own. In a traditional society and more so in a tribal society, any deviation from approved norms is always initially resented.

For the first time educated Nishing boys have begun feeling insecure. They openly say: No Nishing girl will be allowed to marry an outsider. In all societies, be it old Hebrew, Hindu or American, it is taken for granted that a good wife needs to be understanding, sober, competent and economical. In the Nishing society parents mostly choose the bridgegroom for their daughter. A man so chosen may often be much older than the girl but one able to pay the bride price. Nishing women's expectations of married life were quite realistic and in this respect they fulfilled all social commitments.

All patriarchal societies in the past made sure that their women automatically adhered to the old traditions and norms and only grudgingly gave way to new ideas. Nishing women, in spite of changes, remain the repository of conservative moves and forces of Nishing society. For some of them it will take more time to get used to the idea that opportunities to go forward are awaiting their daughters. Modern education is in some measure helping the younger girls to become freer and more at ease in their attitude and life-style.

Many educated women are now going in for Government service and taking up other professional jobs, such as teaching, training, etc. As a result, conditions is being created which will affect the prevailing customs and traditions. Already the bride price of educated young girls has started showing a downward trend. The reason given by Nishing elders is that educated girls are no good to work in the jhum fields compared to uneducated village girls. Due to fall in the bride price of educated girls, some parents were quite apprehensive about sending their daughters to school. They said most of the girls got attached to boys at school and once the girl decided to go in for love-marriage the bride price, which should have legitimately gone to the parents, is usually not given by the boy's side. In some cases the parents were quite unhappy about it. It must; however, be added that some Nishing mothers showed keen interest in the education of their children including girls, although greater emphasis is still given to a son's than to a daughter's education.

To conclude, gradual introduction of new form of property relationship, opportunities for new occupations and education are creating conditions in which traditional customs and practices are becoming less and less effective. There is no doubt that in a few years Arunachal will be marching ahead and outdated social customs and practices will disappear. ☐

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DISCUSSION

Press Commission Report

Discussion on the Report of the Second Press Commission — which is yet to be officially published — began in these columns (*Mainstream*, April 17, 1982) with a contribution from G.N. Acharya. This was followed by articles, by S. Viswam, A. Raghavan and R.C. Dutt (*Mainstream*, April 24 and May 1). This week we publish two contributions, one from M.K. Ramamurthi, senior Advocate, Supreme Court, and former Secretary-General, Indian Federation of Working Journalists, and the other from Meenakshi Sundaram, former President, National Union of Journalists, and an activist in the working Journalists' movement. —*Editor*

Parameters of Freedom

M.K. RAMAMURTHI

THE summary of recommendations of the Second Press Commission from which excerpts have been published in newspapers contains this conclusion in Chapter IV. 4: "No useful purpose will be served by inserting a separate provision in the Constitution on freedom of the Press as that concept is already embodied in Article 19 (1) (a) and by inserting such a provision no particular benefit can be conferred on a non-citizen like a company".

In the absence of the full Report it is not possible to say whether the Commission has come to this conclusion after examining the suggestions made by the Indian Federation of Working Journalists, the representative organisation of journalists, in its Memorandum. The IFWJ's plea for a separate Article dealing with freedom of the press was based on its overall approach to this question. It was the view of the Federation that freedom of the press in the 20th the century was not just the freedom of the owners of newspapers to publish freely whatever they choose, without prior restraint, but included the right of readers to receive full information, and the press could not claim as a part of its freedom, immunity from laws to prevent monopoly and ensure fair competition. It was the considered view of the IFWJ that freedom of the press, understood in this sense, should receive a guaranteed position in the Constitution not liable to be abridged or taken away under any circumstances — even in an emergency.

Paradoxically enough, while recommending the retention of Article 19 (1) (a) of the Constitution as it stands, the majority report of the Commission declares in Part IV. 33: "There is no reason why the services of the press should not be available to citizens for exercise of their fundamental right of freedom of speech and expression on a non-discriminatory basis subject, of course, to availability of space and other relevant considerations. A revised realistic view of Article 11 (1) (a) should permit encouragement of expression by providing not only for its protection 'after publication' but also for its 'emergence by publication'. The press Council should be empowered to look into complaints of arbitrary and malafide denial of access to the press".

It would appear that according to the majority of the members of the Commission the citizens should be able to exercise their right of freedom of speech and expression by requiring the newspapers to publish their views on a non-discriminatory basis; still a complaint of arbitrary and malafide denial can be made only to the Press Council and not to courts! And how can such a right be attributable to the guarantee under Article 19 (1) (a) if a complaint can be made only to the Press Council, after that body has been invested with powers to go into this question, and not be enforceable by courts?

Such inconsistencies could have been avoided by the Commission if it had properly understood the implications of the recommendations it has made in Chapter X. 34 while dealing with the delinking and diffusion of ownership and control. The Commission says: "Freedom of the press is not merely a professional right that inheres in journalists. It is essentially the reader's right to know. As William Barnest Hocking put it in *Freedom of the Press* (1947), "The phrase 'freedom of the press' must now cover two sets of rights and not one only. With the rights of editors and publishers to express themselves there must be associated a right of the public to be served with a substantial and honest basis of fact for its judgements of public affairs. Of these two, it is the latter which today tends to take precedence in importance."

If this is the concept of freedom of the press which the Commission accepts, then there is no reason why it could not have been spelt out in the Constitutional guarantee embodied in Article 19(1)(a). Failure to accept this logic has rendered many of the acceptable recommendations made by the Commission constitutionally vulnerable. It has recommended the introduction of the price-page schedule in the face of the decisions of the Supreme Court declaring previous laws enforcing it to be unconstitutional as violating the constitutional guarantee of freedom of the press contained in Article 19 (1)(a) of the Constitution, While making the recommendation, being conscious of these Supreme Court decisions, the majority of members of the Commission seem to think that any new legislation embodying the price-page schedule may be given effect to by having the Supreme Court review its earlier decision in Sakal Newspapers case in the light of the new arguments which, they think, had not been considered by the Supreme Court while deciding the case.

Equally, the recommendation for a law insulating the press from the dominating influence of other business interests, though most commendable, is likely to face the same fate as the price-page schedule unless a new concept of freedom of the press replaces the existing one. It is well to remember that under our Constitution, freedom of the press can be abridged or taken away only within the narrow limits prescribed under Article 19(2).

The Supreme Court has observed in the Sakal Newspapers: "It may well be within the power of the state to place in the interest of the general public restrictions upon the right of a citizen to carry on business but it is not open to the state to achieve this object by directly and immediately curtailing any other freedom of that citizen guaranteed by the Constitution and which is not susceptible of abridgement on the same grounds as are set out in clause (6) of Article 19. Therefore, the right of freedom of speech cannot be taken away with the object of placing restrictions on the business activities of a citizen. Freedom of speech can be restricted only in the interest of the security of the state, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, decency or morality or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence. It cannot, like the freedom to carry on business, be curtailed in the interest of the general public".

The Court proceed to state: "It is argued that the object of the Act was to prevent monopolies and that monopolies are obnoxious. We will assume that monopolies are always against public interest and deserve to be suppressed. Even so, upon the view we have taken that the intendment of the Act and the direct and immediate effect of the Act taken along with the impugned order was to interfere with the freedom of circulation of newspapers, the circumstance that its object was to suppress monopolies and prevent unfair practices is of no assistance."

In spite of the categorical statement of the law made by the Supreme Court, the majority of the members of the Commission have chosen to make recommendations for introduction of the price-page schedule and for a law for delinking the press from business interests, without suggesting corresponding changes in the concept of the freedom of the press guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a) because of the mistaken belief, as set out in paragraph IV.20 that "there is a wrong notion that apart from the reasonable restrictions that could be imposed on the freedom of the press under Article 19(2), there can be no interference in the exercise of that freedom". Unfortunately, this notion is not wrong but is based upon a series of decisions of the Supreme Court starting from Ramesh Thapar's case delivered in 1952. It is because the majority of the members of Commission have chosen to assume that restrictions other than those contemplated by Article 19(2) could be imposed, that they have fallen into the error of making these welcome recommendations without redefining the concept of the freedom of the press guaranteed by the Constitution. □

Freedom, Funds, and Control

L. MEENAKSHI SUNDRAM

THE recommendations of the Press Commission headed by Justice K.K. Mathew have belied the great expectations of the journalistic community. They are like the proverbial curate's egg. Even before the report was signed the dissenters leaked their recorded views to the press to confuse the reading public, and the whole thing has become murky. The Government of India should release the full report early, so that there will be a public debate on the reasons given by the majority for its recommendations. From the published excerpts it is clear that the majority has ratified the actions of the Government during Emergency.

Briefly stated, the majority recommendations relate to the setting up of a Newspaper Development Corporation to ensure growth of the press; levy of newsprint cess and advertisement tax; enactment of a Freedom of Information Act to provide right of access to Government information; greater say for editors; price-page schedule; fixing of news-advertisement ratio; delinking of big newspapers from other business; modification of the Official Secrets Act; right to privacy; guidelines to determine what is public interest; right of journalists to keep sources of information confidential; liberalisation of defamation law and the Contempt of Courts Act; right of pre-censorship; justification of interception of mail by the P & T department; prohibition of advertisements exploiting women; non-inclusion of Freedom of Press in Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution; penal powers for the Press Council; and so on.

On the whole, the majority recommendations will please the Government. The 'free press' in India is more a fiction than a fact. For the owners, freedom of the press means the right to propagate their ideas and to promote their business and political interests.

The First Press Commission, appointed in 1952, submitted its report in July 1954. Between then and now, the newspaper industry has moved from the bullock-cart age to the electronic age, with big business entrenching itself firmly in the industry, and many newspaper establishments have the dubious distinction of having unceremoniously sacked or forced out several eminent editors and assistant editors. In many cases, however, editors continue to be 'literary agents' of proprietors, broadcasting their master's voice and writing 'proprietorials'.

The print media now have concentrated groups of educated people to fuel their development. The rapid increase in urban population has aided newspapers' steady growth. The growing population in urban areas and the emergence of new cities and urban agglomerates at the expense of the rural areas have benefited the print media. Despite the advent of Doordarshan and commercial broadcasting, seven major industries — textiles, electronics, automobiles, tobacco, publishing, foods, and hotels — which also control newspapers, provide all national advertising in major newspapers. The top twenty newspaper undertakings operate within an inter-locked corporate form, controlling over 80 per cent of the total circulation, and this underlines the importance of economic and/or political gain and profitability as relevant yardsticks of success. They have no other motive, and public accountability is alien to them. Their cupidity has no limits. Truth is what they prescribe for others, not for themselves. These big newspapers have quite a few skeletons in their cupboards.

The press in India, by and large, has not understood its real role. It is said that the press should play an 'adversary' role vis-a-vis the Government. But many newspapers, during Emergency, when they were asked to bend, crawled before the powers-that-be. Barring some newspapers, the press proved servile. It is not yet clear whether the Press Commission went into these aspects in detail to provide a historical prespective.

Freedom of the press does not mean what the newspapers want the readers to know, but what the readers want to know and have the right to know. In the words of Justice Brandeis of the US Supreme Court, it is the public's right to know rather than the journalist's right to publish, which is the root of freedom of speech and expression. The big press in India makes fitful gestures to demonstrate fairness. Some newspapers have in-house critics, but their criticism has no lasting effect. This self-criticism is similar to that of a monkey picking lice off its body. It gives some relief to the monkey but it does not change the ways of the animal. Journalists must realise that their profession is not an easy one. No amount of outside protection will help them. Freedom must be exercised by journalists despite criticism, even under threat. There should be freedom to communicate without prior restraint, and citizens must secure the right to know, if democracy is to function effectively. Journalists are only instruments to help citizens exercise this right.

It is not clear from the published excerpts whether the Mathew Commission studied carefully the financial structure of the newspaper industry. The Commission may in effect be deemed to be the third one. The second Press Commission headed by Justice P.K. Goswami had to go when its formal resignation was promptly accepted. In between the Rajadhyaksha Commission and the Mathew Commission, several bodies like the wage boards, the wage committee, the Small Newspapers Inquiry Committee, the Mahalanobis Committee, the Monopoly Commission, the Fact-finding Committee on the Economics of newspapers, and the National Wage Tribunal studied different aspects of the newspaper industry. From the published reports, one is constrained to conclude that the Mathew Commission may not have gone into newspaper economics in detail.

As one who has critically studied the financial base of the newspaper industry, I can say that the progress of the industry has been phenomenal. Table 1 relates to the top 10 newspaper establishments, which are: Bennett Coleman, Hindustan Times, Kasturi & Sons, Express group, Ananda Bazar group, Statesman, Free Press Journal group, Saurashtra Trust, Jugantar, and Amrit Bazar Patrika.

The increase in paid-up share capital was mostly due to issue of bonus shares. Secured loans and fixed deposits, which were considerable, are from banks and the public respectively. In short, deve-

Table 1

(Rs in lakhs)

Year	*Share capital*	*Net worth*	*Fixed assets*	*Gross revenue*	*Reserves*
1953	199.31	424.70	387.36	774.05	225.39
1967*	347.76	848.56	1,441.37	4,035.76	500.80
1978/79*	402.83	1,639.97	3,716.07	10,203.56	1,237.14

(_*Jugantar and Amrit Bazar Patrika not included as figures were not available._)

Table 2

34 Establishments *(Rs. in lakhs)*

Year	*Capital*	*Net worth*	*Gross revenue*	*Gross block*	*Gross profit*	*Net prnfit*	*Reserves*
1967	576.63	1191.13	3972.73	2300.96	342.55	257.47	614.50
1978/79	929.09	2655.95	14815.58	4762.71	1145.47	842.47	1726.86

lopment of the industry was mainly due to use of public funds and the efforts of the employees. The public and the employees have a right to have a say in the administration of the newspaper industry. It should not be the close preserve of share-holders.

There was a minute of dissent appended to the report of the first Press Commission and that was confined to a narrow compass. Acharya Narendra Deva, A.D. Mani, M. Chalapathi Rau and Jaipal Singh expressed their dissent in regard to the scope of Article 19(2) of the Constitution, the Press and Objectionable Matters Act, Sections 108 and 202 Cr. PC. For a proper understanding of the majority and minority reports of the Mathew Commission, it will be relevant to recall the recommendations of the first Press Commission suggesting amendment or introduction of new legislation. The first Commission recommended that the newspaper and periodicals industry be brought within the list of industries under the control of the Union Government. It said law should be passed to regulate the industry which should inter alia provide for the following matters: (1) appointment of Press Registrar both at the Centre and in the State; (2) collection of statistics of the newspaper industry; (3) fixing by Government from time to time, of a price-page schedule; (4) definition and punishment of practices which are unfair and restrictive; (5) laying down the manner in which the accounts of different enterprises shall be maintained by a proprietor controlling more than one newspaper or publishing them from more than one centre; (6) making the issue and publication of fraudulent advertisements punishable; (7) prescribing the method of assessment and distribution of profits from the industry, including payment of bonus to employees; (8) making it compulsory for newspapers to publish periodically a statement of ownership and control in the form prescribed; (9) new enactments for establishing a Press Council; bringing into existence a State Trading Corporation for dealing in newsprint and for furnishing finances for the operation of the Press Council; establishing a public corporation to take over the Press Trust of India; defining the powers, privileges and immunities of legislatures; amendment of the following legislation on the lines suggested by the Commission in the case of the Press and Registration of Books Act — the Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act; the Post Offices Act; the Indian Penal Code (repeal of Section 124A, addition of a new Section 124B, amendment of Sections 153A, 295A, and 499); Criminal Procedure 99A, 198* and 202*); the Sea Customs Act; and the Indian Telegraph Act* not accepted by the minority).

The Mathew Commission recommendations are silent on many matters like the definition and punishment of unfair and restrictive practices; prescribing the method of assessment and distribution of profits from the industry; establishment of a public corporation or corporations to take over the news agencies; and defining of the powers, privileges and immunities of legislatures.

The dissenters' opposition to the price-page schedule cannot be sustained now in the light of the changed conditions in the industry. The Supreme Court, in the *Sakal* case, struck down the price-page schedule as violative of Article 19(1)(a). It accepted the immediate danger theory put forward by the petitioners. The petitioners contended that if the price of newspapers was raised even by a paisa, the circulation would fall, resulting in fall of advertisement revenue and consequent closure of business, and this violated Article 19(1)(a). These 'fears' were proved wrong subsequently. *Sakal* itself later nearly doubled its selling price without any appreciable increase in the number of pages. The circulation did not fall, but zoomed. This has been the case with other papers also. The *Sakal* decision of the Supreme Court needs review. The present price structure of language newspapers is such that in their case the selling price not only covers the cost of newsprint, but leaves sufficient margin to cover other expenses, making advertisement and job revenue a profit. In the case of English language newspapers, the cover price meets almost the cost of newsprint. The industry is planning to increase the prices further in the near future. Therefore, the introduction of price-page schedule will not only ensure fair competition but will prevent further growth of monopoly conditions.

The same owners' views and interests being propagated by a newspaper from 12 different centres is definitely harmful, if expression of a plurality of opinions is thereby prevented. Under-cutting is a common feature in the newspaper industry. The same newspaper, published from different centres, is priced differently, though the number of pages is the same. Should this be allowed? It is too late for newspapers to contend that they must be left free to determine the prices. The only point that should be ensured is that the growth of revenue is not curtailed. Readers should be ensured a fair return. The cost of production will come down considerably with the introduction of photo and electronic typesetting and offset printing. Let the newspaper owners publish any number of pages, but the size should be related to the price. Newspapers after all sell space — partly to advertisers and the balance to readers. In this pricing system, there should be an element of fairness. The Mathew Commission has only recommended the introduction of a price-page schedule, and said that the schedule should be worked out by an expert committee *after taking note of the economics of newspaper publication.*

The Mathew Commission has suggested fixing a news-to-advertisement ratio of 60:40 for big newspapers, 50:50 for medium newspapers and 40:60 for small newspapers. The Press Registrar has defined big newspapers to mean newspapers with a circulation of over 50,000 copies; medium, 15,000 to 50,000 copies; and small, below 15,000 copies. Small newspapers generally publish four pages priced at 40 paise per copy. They get imported newsprint. They consume one kg of newsprint per copy in 40 days, getting Rs 16. Allowing a sales commission of 30 per cent, the net income per copy for 40 days will be Rs 11.20. With the cost of newsprint at Rs 7 per kg, they get a clear margin of Rs 4.20 per copy in 40 days. In addition, under the new recommendations, they will get several facilities. If the ratio is fixed, small newspapers will become advertisement sheets inasmuch as 19.2 columns out of 32 columns will be devoted to advertisements. Mast-head and headlines will take away much space, leaving only a small position for news. There is no guarantee that if the advertisements to big newspapers are restricted they will automatically go to the small and medium newspapers. The fixing of news-to-advertisement ratio is a futile exercise.

The Mathew Commission has said there is no need to amend Article 19(1)(a) to include freedom of the press specifically. At a recent convention in New Delhi, the Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Vasant Sathe, said the Government is not opposed to amendment of the Constitution to include freedom of the press specifically. The First Amendment of the US Constitution specifically prohibits the making of any law abridging freedom of the press. Under our Constitution, reasonable restrictions can be imposed. Even the US Supreme Court, despite the First Amendment, was willing to, and did, curb 'dangerous', 'seditious', 'subversive', 'prurient', 'obscene', 'libellous', and several other undesirable modes of expression. That being the case, it is unfortunate that the Mathew Commission has chosen not to recommend amendment of the Constitution for specific inclusion of freedom of the press.

One of the major recommendations of the Mathew Commission is that the "press must, in public interest, be insulated from the dominating influence of other business interests". Are not our politicians businessmen? Why should business interests alone be curbed? Why should political interests be excluded? This insulation cannot be done overnight. In any event, this recommendation taken as a whole is self-contradictory. The Commission also says it is in favour of statutory limiting of the 'interest' (shareholding included) of persons with other business to 10 per cent of the 'total interest involved in the publication' of a newspaper. At the same time newspaper publishers are to be required to limit their interest in other businesses to 10 per cent of their interest in their own newspapers. Implementation of the proposal in the form recommended will only open Pandora's box. Why should this arrangement at all be allowed? Newspaper owners should not be allowed to divert funds from the newspaper business to other business enterprises, that is, non-newspaper activities. The funds of the newspaper business should be used only for the development of newspapers. Newspapers should be free from any type of domination by other interests.

The solution suggested by the Commission to insulate the newspaper from business influence is that the editor should be vested with ultimate responsibility for its production. It proposes statutory 'interposition' of a Board of Trustees between the management of a large daily newspaper with a lakh or more circulation, and the editor. The dissenters have opposed the whole idea. They are not alone, *The Hindu*, for example, has reacted strongly against the proposal for a Board of Trustees. It says in an editorial (April 8, 1982): "The recommendations seems to flow from the facile thinking that the editor is in all cases a man of superior integrity and judgement who needs to be protected from the meddlesome publisher with an axe to grind. Indeed the actual position in the newspaper world is vastly different, with the two working in close unison and conflicts being the exception rather than the rule. The interposition of outsiders on a board of trustees, far from promoting a balanced and proper relationship, may well become the starting point for new conflicts and misunderstanding between the two key decision makers in a newspapers". The experiment of a Board of Trustees in *The Statesman* did fail miserably. The Board was unceremoniously sacked.

Any dispute between the editor and the proprietor, according to the Mathew Commission, would be umpired by a Board of Trustees. *The Hindu* of Madras might not have had the experience of sacking an editor, because the owner himself is a working editor. But in the newspaper world, sacking of editors is a common feature. In some newspapers, a change of Government results in a change of editors. This proposal of the Commission should be debated further in a proper forum by professional organisations and others interested in the press. The aim should be that once policy has been clearly laid down in writing, how the policy is to be implemented should be determined by the editorial staff. The editorial department should be autonomous. The editor is only the first among equals. He should be guided by a staff council consisting of senior journalists of 10 years standing in the professsion. Instead of a Board of Trustees, the Press Council may be asked to umpire any dispute after ascertaining the opinion of the staff council. Till the Press Council pronounces its decision, the editor should not be changed. If the proposal of the Commission is implemented in the present situation, there is every possibility of newspapers circumventing it. Owners of big newspapers having a circulation of one lakh and above, can conceivably take steps to bring down the circulation to less than one lakh by raising the price of the paper sharply. The loss of revenue due to fall in circulation will to a large extent be offset by the price increase. At that price they can publish more pages to accommodate more advertisements. These practices were a common feature in the past to get more newsprint.

Another important recommendation relates to the right to information about affairs of state. Invasion of the privacy of the citizen should be guarded against. The Press Council Act should be amended so that newspapers would show 'respect for privacy' while publishing reports. At present the prohibition only covers reports offending 'public taste'. The Commission feels that sensitive private facts relating to a person's health, private behaviour, home life or personal or family relationships should not be published, except where it is in public interest to do so, if it would cause distress, annoyance or embarrassment to the person concerned. To determine what is in public interest, the exceptions listed in Section 499 IPC (defmation) should be the guide.

Reports touching on the privacy of a citizen could be permitted in the case of a public servant insofar as they pertained to his precise public functions.

Enactment of a Freedom of Information Act should be welcomed. Such legislation exists in Britain and the United States. The Reagan Administration has taken steps to amend the Freedom of Information Act to enable Government to withhold information and make it harder for people to obtain it. It only shows that no Government is willing to function openly. Withholding of informotion about affairs of state will only undermine democracy. Gag on officials, as in Tamilnadu, is equally obnoxious. Ours is an open society, and there is also a place for secrecy. It is hoped the Government will accept this recommendation of the Commission.

In the United States, there is a Privacy Act, but that Act provides safeguards for an individual against invasion of personal privacy by Federal agencies. The exceptions given in Section 499 IPC list what acts will not constitute defamation. Imputation of truth which public good requires to be made or published; public conduct of public servants; conduct of any person touching any public question; publication of reports of proceedings of courts; merits of case decided in court or conduct of witnesses and others concerned; censure passed in good faith by persons having lawful authority over another; accusation preferred in good faith to authorised person; imputation made in good faith by person for protection of his or others' interests; and caution intended for good of person to whom conveyed or for public good — these are the listed exceptions. It will be advantageous if there is a separate enactment on privacy.

Newspapers have a special role to play in relation to public good. Personal life and political life of politicians and businessmen are so intermixed that in many cases they cannot be separated. In such cases it will be difficult for a journalist to perform his duty in the absence of clear provision in law. It should be made clear that a public official or even a public 'figure' should not be entitled to damage unless he or she proves actual malice, that is, proof that the defamatory statement was made in the knowledge that it was false or with reckless disregard of whether it was false or not, which, rather than simple truth or falsehood, should be made the test. The media should not be subjected to either civil or criminal liability for disseminating accurately any data that are available from public law enforcement records.

To conclude, there should be a full debate on the recommendations of the Mathew Commission and on the minority note.☐

US Policy towards Cuba

Perspectives and Consequences

ASH NARAIN RAY

RONALD Reagan's installation at the White House and the intensification in the civil war situation in El Salvador allegedly aided and supported by the Cubans added a dramatic element to the already complex political situation in the Central American region.

The provocative statements made by the US State Department and other top level officials left no one in doubt that the US was set for a tougher line towards Cuba. Since the Presidential inauguration, hardly a week goes by when some official does not adopt a new get-tough policy posture against Cuba. Although Reagan says that the US has no plans to militarily intervene anywhere in the world including Central America and the Caribbean, recent statements of US Secretary of State Alexander Haig contradict this, indicating that the US is looking for a way to flex its muscles towards the Castro regime in Cuba and the Sandinista Government in Nicaragua.

As early as February 18, 1981, Haig described Cuba as the "source of the problem" in El Salvador. This charge was renewed on February 23 of the same year when the State Department released the so-called "White Paper" which claimed that the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries were channelling arms for El Salvador through Cuba. On April 6, 1981, *US News & World Report* revealed the "Haig Plan", cataloguing a number of measures calculated to bring the Cuban leaders into line — including a possible blockade and military action.

However, a real tremor was created in political and diplomatic circles when on November 6, 1981 Haig confirmed the existence of a US plan to take military action against Cuba. Even more indicative than a verbal warning was Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger's statement issued in the last week of November about the establishment of a new united command in Central America and the Caribbean. According to reliable sources, his announcement amounts to reorganisation of US army, air force and naval units stationed in Florida, Texas, Louisiana, Puerto Rico, Guantanamo Bay and the Pacific region areas bordering Central America. In fact, US military manoeuvres have already begun which are aimed at blockading Cuba and Nicaragua. According to a report published in the Mexican daily, *Excelsior*, US marines and some special local troops have already started

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practising hidden night landings and withdrawals on the nearby island of Vieques, using both planes and ships.

The State Department further released in December the mini White Paper entitled "Cuban Covert Activities in Latin America", accusing Cuba of sending advisers and providing training, shelter, communication links and some financial support to the guerrilla movements in Latin America. This document charged Cuba with "destabilising directly the neighbouring governments through its large-scale military support to the Marxist-Leninist elements of Nicaragua". It further accused Cuba and the Soviet Union of "seeking to extend their influence in Latin America and the Caribbean region".

All the above charges have been denounced by the Cuban Government which, in turn, accused the Reagan Administration of looking for a way to attack Cuba and the Central American countries. *Granma*, official daily of the Cuban Communist Party, exhorted the Cuban people to "resist the overpowering, arrogant and fascist policies of the Yankee Government at any cost". About the US allegation that Cuba has 500 to 600 troops in Nicaragua as part of an action designed to establish a Marxist government in the eastern part of El Salvador, Castro, while denying the charge, asserted that "Cuba has not sent a single soldier of the special forces or any other force to Nicaragua. Cuba has never sent troops to Nicaragua. This is a big lie ... "Castro also challenged the US Government to prove exactly on what day, at what time and in which plane those soldiers were sent. The US Government has so far maintained meticulous silence on this question.

On the other hand, in recent months, the Reagan Administration has intensified military manoeuvres in the Caribbean region with the introduction of a warlike operation, "Ocean Venture 82". This includes amphibious landings at the naval base of Guantanamo. Between February 27 and March 3, the United States conducted heavy military exercises in the Gulf of Mexico and the Florida Straits in which 19 US naval units combined with units from NATO allies have participated. Since March 8, under another US military operation named "Safe Pass 82", 10,000 armed forces, 30 war vessels of countries such as Canada, Britain, West Germany, Holland and Belgium, as also 80 US war-planes have been taking part. According to *Prensa Latina*, "Safe Pass 82" operations are taking place in an area where the US rapid interventioa corps command is stationed in Tampa and Cayo Hueso in the Caribbean, both of which are close to the northern coast of Cuba. And as mentioned by the Pentagon, "Ocean Venture 82" will take place in April in which army, air force and marine units of the United States will take part.

Such military operations undoubtedly pose a grave threat to the national security of Cuba. Although the Reagan Administration has declined to disclose the nature of the US plan against Cuba indications are that the United States is bent on cutting Castro to size by making the risks to Cuba seem more costly than the advantages accruing to it out of an activist role in Central America. Cuba does not seem to be alarmed at such threatening postures and there are no indications that the Castro regime will modify in any way its present policies in Central America. Such postures on the part of the two governments are apparently aimed at precipitating a showdown. As things stand today, the United States has only five basic options in Cuba:

(i) *Direct Invasion of Cuba*: This option available to the US Administration entails considerable risk and guarantees no big gains, and therefore seems to be severely limited. Cuba has a well-trained and well-disciplined army of nearly 100,000 men and women with an almost equal number of reserves which can be mobilised at very short notice. According to reliable sources, Cuba has so far established a half-million strong militia to defend the Revolution. Given the size and morale of the Cuban army, the US, in order to crush the Cuban resistance, will need to undertake massive bombardments, including perhaps the use of atomic weapons. If this be not so, the US will need to enter into a prolonged war with Cuba without the guarantee of final success. It may be recalled that the United States used this option in April 1961 during the Playa Giron (Bay of Pigs) invasion at a time when the Cuban revolution had not fully consolidated its gains and when Cuba was not defended by such huge army and popular militia as it is today. And therefore today such a misadventure can be even a greater disaster for the US. Further, US invasion of Cuba will provoke intense reactions and condemnation all over the world, especially from the socialist countries and the Third World and inside the US itself. Above all, the Soviet Union's counter actions may lead to the Third World War. Thus, given the tremendous risks and high political costs such a course is unlikely.

(ii) *Naval Blockade*: This option is being seriously considered in the State Department in order to cut off Cuba's food and fuel supplies. But this is also full of risks and promises no tangible results. Like invasion, naval blockade would require a task force so large that other important theatres of operation, such as the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf, will have to be suspended. Moreover, for stopping Cuban arms supply to the Central American region, the US would require to intercept Soviet vessels in international waters, which would provoke a direct naval conflict between the two super-powers.

(iii) *Effective Economic Sanctions*: New economic sanctions against Cuba could produce only marginal results since there is already a United States embargo on all kinds of trade transactions with Cuba. What the Reagan Administration can at best do is to pressurize its subsidiaries operating in other countries to stop the flow of American products to Cuba. Reagan may also try to persuade US allies to impose sanctions against Cuba. But it is doubtful if his European allies or the OAS could be so easily pressurized. •Thus, this tactic too will hardly be effective against Cuba.

(iv) *Hitting Cuba where it Hurts*: Ever since

Reagan's election the anti-Castro Cuban exile community in Miami, inspired by Reagan's get-tough policy, has started openly operating guerrilla training camps and launching small raiding parties against the island from the Florida Straits. At the end of July 1981, anti-Castro group Alpha-66 announced that it had sent six landing parties to Cuba and placed about 40 commandos on the island. Another anti-Castro group, Omega-7, attacked and destroyed the Mexican consulate in Havana on September 13, 1981, to protest against Castro's meeting with the Mexican President, Jose Lopez Portillo, at Cozumel. Similarly, US-based Radio Marti has started transmitting provocative news to the Cubans. This is very much like Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty directed against the Soviet bloc countries. The prospects of such attempts at fomenting internal subversion are very dim, since Castro remains highly popular in Cuba.

(v) *Entering into a Political Dialogue with Cuba*: The fifth option has been advocated for long by a host of US Congressmen, businessmen and intellectuals. But, it requires a virtual reversal of Reagan's stated objective — that is cutting Castro down to size. It is argued in the circles mentioned above that Cuban-US rapprochement would serve as a web of restraints on Havana's willingness to support revolutionary forces in Latin America. The absence of normalised trade and diplomatic contacts with Cuba makes it free to pursue a whole gamut of options detrimental to US interests, that would otherwise be foreclosed. For example, Cuba has diplomatic and commercial relations with the Argentine military junta even if Castro calls it fascist. But since Argentina has not engaged in aggressive postures against Cuba, the Castro regime has also responded favourably. Therefore, Abraham F. Lowenthal, a leading US Cubanologist, suggests that Reagan's best weapon against Cuba may be a threat of peace. Such a threat of peace would reduce or eliminate the political and moral capital of Cuba's 'David' image vis-a-vis the US 'Goliath'.

This, by all accounts, is the one US option rated very low by most observers. The Reagan Administration has reversed the trend towards rapprochement with Cuba and has renewed and intensified bitterness and hostility towards the Castro regime.

An analysis of these options shows that all of them are highly problematic and risky, promising no concrete results, and they are therefore, severely limited. Since early 1981, the State Department has been dropping hints that a big plan is under way to draw a line against Cuba's "expansionist designs" in Central America. However, nothing concrete has come out in terms of action plans so far. Thus, the State Department's loud warnings to Cuba have proved to be a damp squib.

In fact, the United States is well aware of the limitations of the military options in Cuba. Its objective is not militarily taming the Castro regime but frustrating and discrediting Cuba's revolutionary model and isolating Cuba from the rest of the hemisphere. The apparent contradictions in the statements of different officials are motivated by intentional ambiguity which are designed to worry the Governments of Cuba and Nicaragua and to intimidate them into discontinuing or reducing the general activist policy in Central America and the Caribbean.

The present policy, like six previous US Administrations' policies, is based on the erroneous assumption that Castro can be made to budge by bluster. On the contrary, past experience shows that when pressed, Castro becomes more aggressive. He has a tremendous capacity to transform US hostility into political victories for himself. If the past is any guide, it can be safely predicted that Reagan's policies will also fail. On the other hand, they will strengthen Castro's position at home. Castro has already ruled Cuba for 23 years. The US embargo against Cuba and the policy of isolating Cuba have failed. CIA attempts on his life have met with a similar fate. The Cuban revolution has withstood US hostilities and has remained socialist and popular in Latin America and the Third World.

In sum, the US policy of considering Cuba as the "source" of all troubles in Central America is based on false assumptions. The popular discontent and the serious economic malaise in the region are rooted in the basic underlying structural problems and vulnerabilities where movements for change have been frustrated by represions, torture and electoral manipulations. As a result, where legitimate channels of redress are charged off, the popular forces tend to be pushed to extremes and take to arms. Thus, the US policy is self-defeating, since extreme poverty, deep class and ethnic divisions, endemic violence and unequal distribution of national wealth are at the root of the crisis in Central America. ☐ *(April 12)*

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Quality vs Quantity

Costs of Modernizing Chinese Education

SUZANNE PEPPER

If the basic cause of the problem is diagnosed as too many candidates chasing too few seats in college, what is the remedy? The answer obviously is either to increase the number of seats or decrease the number of candidates. The turn of phrase is inspired by a recent statement from the Chinese Minister of Education, Jiang Nanxiang.

Responding to points of criticism raised by deputies at the National People's Congress meeting in December last year, the Minister agreed, as do educators throughout the country, that the competition for admission to college is being waged more fiercely now than at any time in the past. But he concluded that the reason for the competition was not the newly restored college entrance examinations. Rather it was the "extremely sharp contradiction" between the low college enrolment quotas and the vast numbers of senior middle school graduates created by the "rash popularisation" of secondary schooling during the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution decade.

In accordance with this diagnosis, which has been reached for a number of other problems as well, the Chinese are now trying to reduce that contradiction. In 1977, there were 584,000 students in China's colleges and universities. By the 1980-81 academic year, the figure was just over one million. But during that same time, also according to official statistics, the number of students at secondary level was reduced by approximately 14 million.

These statistics highlight the key difference between the strategy of educational development promoted during the now discredited Cultural Revolution years, and that being implemented by the present Administration in Beijing. The increasing number of college students by comparison with the 1966-76 period, is among the most highly publicised features of present education policies together with the new emphasis on quality. Much less visible are the costs of implementing these policies and the social assumptions on which they are based.

The preliminary diagnosis of the earlier strategy was announced in 1979. The rapid development of secondary education which actually continued through the 1977-78 academic year, was said to have "spread financial resources very thinly, and aggravated the shortage of qualified teachers". The number of students graduating from China's senior secondary schools — 7.2 million in 1979 — was also said to be far greater than the annual enrolment of the nation's colleges could ever be in the foreseeable future.

And not only had Cultural Revolution policies aimed to universalise (*puji*) secondary schooling, they had in addition sought to unify (*danyihua*) it. This was done both by downgrading the elite college preparatory schools, and also by discouraging the development of specialised technical and vocational institutions at the secondary level. The ideal then was that everyone should attend ordinary neighbourhood schools all following essentially the same curriculum to which had been added significant components of practical learning.

Quality naturally suffered with the demise of the college preparatory or keypoint schools, as they are called, and the admixture of practical learning. Similarly, the effect on quality of combining all kinds of students in the same schools and classrooms, was enhanced by the effort to create a system of mass education providing seats for as many children as possible.

In 1965, the total number of students in China's secondary schools was 14.4 million. The figure for the 1977-78 academic year was 68.9 million with an additional million enrolled in various kinds of specialised schools. The antidote, as dictated by current Chinese thinking on educational development, is to cut back sharply on secondary school enrolments, close large numbers of middle schools, and reorient those remaining in the direction of technical and vocational training.

During 1980 alone, according to official statistics, the new policy resulted in the closure of 23,700 secondary schools. The State Statistical Bureau acknowledged in its reports a decline in national secondary school enrolments totalling 10 million for the two years 1979 and 1980. By comparison with the earlier 68.9 million enrolment figure for 1977-78, however, the 55 million announced by the Bureau for 1980 indicated a decline of nearly 14 million.

The cutbacks have apparently been concentrated at the senior secondary level where enrolments for the current 1981-82 academic year are down by two-thirds compared to 1978, as reported by the intellectuals' newspaper, the *Guangming Daily* in Beijing.

The increase in technical and vocational enrolments has been nowhere near sufficient to match this reduction of general secondary schooling. Indeed, there has been no suggestion of any attempt at an immediate proportional shift of student bodies from general to vocational schools. The decision to curtail the former is being implemented separately throughout the country, in rural areas as well as in the largest cities. Enrolment in technical and vocational schools increased only from 1.2 million nationwide in 1978, to 1.7 million two years later.

Nor has there been any attempt to coordinate the reduction in secondary school enrolments with the declining numbers of that age group that will occur with the more rigorous implementation of family planning. The school-age population is already declining in some cities such as Shanghai where birth control began to be seriously promoted in the early 1970s and even earlier by some accounts. But the curtailment of secondary schooling has been immediate and has proceeded independently of this demographic trend as well as the expansion of technical schooling.

In Shanghai, school administrators interviewed by this writer in late 1980 told of a major reduction in the number of senior secondary schools planned to begin functioning there at the start of the 1981-82 academic year. As a result, according to subsequent press reports, only a little over 20,000 students or about 30 per cent of the 75,000 junior secondary school graduates in Shanghai in 1981, were allowed to continue on to the senior secondary level.

In Beijing, where family planning was not enforced as early as in Shanghai, a total of 139,000 students graduated from the junior secondary level in 1981. Only 54,000 or 39 per cent were permitted to continue their studies.

Both Beijing and Shanghai had achieved universal senior secondary education. But with the reintroduction of the secondary school entrance examinations in the late 1970s, entrance to schools at both the junior and senior levels is now governed by a system of admission quotas and minimum passing scores similar to the procedure at college level. According to regulations announced for Beijing, junior secondary graduates who do not gain admission to the next level may attend special make-up classes for one year in preparation for a second try at the entrance examinations. Those who fail a second time must leave school to "enter society" and "await employment".

A few provinces have also announced statistics on their cutbacks. The most drastic is that for Liaoning in the Northeast. Between 1978 and 1980, the number of secondary schools there was reduced from more than 3,000 to only about 600. Total senior secondary enrolment in the province had grown to 1.4 million by 1977, or 18 times the 1965 figure. By 1980, there were only 140,000 students in general senior middle schools with another 171,000 in various kinds of technical and vocational institutions.

As a result of this retrenchment, estimates announced in late 1981 showed that at most 40 per cent of those graduating from junior secondary schools in the cities are now able to continue on to the senior level. The proportion will be considerably lower in the rural areas.

In the countryside, moreover, the reductions in accord with current education policy are occurring simultaneously with the now acknowledged rising drop-out rates resulting from the changes in agriculture. Children have always contributed to the rural division of labour. But the incentives for them to participate in the family's money-making ventures are now greater than before, outweighing in many a rural family's calculation the benefits to be obtained from educating its children.

These individual family decisions are reinforced by the new emphasis on reducing collective expenditures in order to expand individual peasant incomes. Since education falls under the category of collective expenditure, this has meant a reduction in local financing for local schools. Previously, pressure from above forced the production brigades within communes to allocate proportions of their collective earnings to finance their own schools. Now the collectives have greater freedom to decide for themselves how to allocate their incomes, which are in any case declining due to the transfer of collectively-run endeavours to individual peasants.

Primary as well as junior middle schools and classes at the village level are therefore being closed and/or merged, while most communes are closing their senior middle schools.

But this trend is actually being encouraged by higher-level education authorities. They have admitted privately to foreigners that peasant boys learn most of what they need to know about tilling the land from their fathers. And that being so, local education bureaus are no longer promoting the expansion of education in areas where the existing level of agricultural technology does not require it.

The main reason usually given for the retrenchment in secondary schooling, however, is that the quality of the schools in question was "too low". In the words of one county education bureau chief interviewed in 1980, the quality of the schools set up in the 1970s was so low that many "did not deserve to exist". He was trying to explain, without much apparent conviction, why half the commune senior secondary schools set up in his county had just been closed. Another local official present at the interview later confided that many of them there disagreed with the retrenchment. But since this was now the policy, they were obliged to implement it.

The second main reason offered is that since so small a proportion of senior secondary graduates can continue on to college — only 3.8 per cent did so in 1979 — there is little point in educating so many up to that level.

The desire to produce high quality talent for college is clearly a dominant motive for the present changes at the secondary level. Hence the re-creation of the elite keypoint system which concentrates the best students, teachers, and material resources in a few of the best schools in any given locality. The main task of a key secondary school is to prepare students for college and the majority of college students are once again originating in these schools.

Lest there be any doubt as to where the resources saved through the current cutbacks of ordinary schools might be going, the Party secretary at one key middle school provided some statistics. For the two years 1978 and 1979, just after the restoration of the keypoint system, his school was allocated respectively *rmb* 50,000 and *rmb* 30,000 for the purchase of new equipment and supplies. Ordinary schools in the same city were granted only about *rmb* 5,000 each annually for this same budgetary item.

Similarly, the province of Shandong broadcast plans in early 1981 to divert 30 to 50 per cent of the building construction funds for ordinary schools to the keypoints, as part of the effort to upgrade further the quality of the latter.

The plan, moreover, is to transform all remaining non-key general secondary schools so as to provide vocational training at the senior level. Much is now made of the ratios between general secondary schools on the one hand, and the technical and vocational schools on the other. This ratio was said to be 12:1 and 5:1 respectively in the two cities of Beijing and Tianjin, and as high as 40:1 in Jiangsu province by the late 1970s. The pre-1966 ratio of approximately 1:1 was initially hailed as representing the most rational use of scarce educational resources, since graduates of general schools are said to need two or three years' training to prepare them for any kind of employment.

The reality of the plan for technical-vocational education is now considerably in excess of the goals initially proclaimed. The actual conversion of ordinary schools into technical ones was apparently never considered on a large scale. The capital expenditures and personnel changes necessary would have made this option prohibitively expensive, according to an administrator interviewed at one such specialised machine-building school in Shanghai.

The alternative, therefore, has simply been to close large numbers of general non-key senior secondary schools and transform a few into vocational or, in the countryside, agricultural middle schools. The curriculum of all remaining ordinary senior secondary schools is to be changed to include vocational courses, as directed in the "Report on Restructuring Secondary Education" approved by the State Council is October 1980.

A conservative economist would doubtless applaud so rigorous an application of the value-for-money approach that these education investment decisions represent. Sociologists and educators, who like to add other dimensions to the concept of development, tend to view schooling as something more than an exercise in manpower planning. Among other things, it can be used to help equalise life's opportunities that may have been deprived by circumstance of birth.

From the latter perspective, the social costs of the present development strategy are heavy indeed. The net result will be to narrow and sharpen the educational pyramid: a few will receive much better schooling than before; but more young people will actually be receiving less — although what they receive will presumably be of better quality. And those who are receiving less are those who had less to begin with.

The main beneficiaries are the children of the intelligentsia, or those with a college education. In China, as in all societies, they tend to pass on that cultural inheritance to their offspring. Previously discriminated against as associate members of the bourgeoisie, all bans against them have now been

(Continued on page 34)

BOOK REVIEW

Bangladeshi Dichotomy

Bangladesh: by Subrata Banerjee, National Book Trust, New Delhi: 109 pp: Rs 8.75

At a time when many people in this country and abroad are interested to know the cultural and historical roots of the present malady of Bangladesh, the book under review is a welcome arrival. It would be wrong to expect in a single-volume study of this small size a penetrating analysis of the politico-historical forces that have shaped the country, but the wide canvas Banerjee has used does present a holistic perspective in which to gauge the undercurrents to some extent.

Traversing the historical past from very ancient times down to the days of Ziaur Rahman, Banerjee analyses step by step the origin and growth of Bengali language, the growth of cultural nationalism, the efflorescence of Bengali literature, the Hindu-Muslim dichotomy against the background of changing social configurations and economic structures, and so on. Through these discussions, presented in simple style and readable language, an effort has been made to rationalise the most complicated aspect of Bangladeshi character, its dichotomy — coexistence of diametrically opposite trends. In Bangladesh, forces of secularism thrive alongside those of Islamic fundamentalism. It is for the same reason that the political controversy between Bengali nationalism and Bangladeshi nationalism largely remained unresolved. And herein lies the relevance of Mujibur Rahman who championed the cause of secularism and hence Bengali nationalism. If the reported alliance between the present military rulers and the dominant faction of the Awami League emerges as a viable force, the author's analysis would be vindicated.

Given the fact that cultural values play a dominant role in Bangladeshi life, the author has rightly devoted good amount of space to them. The chapter on art and architecture deserves special mention. The author's attention to details such as the changing pictorial themes on the cycle-richshaws of Dacca (p 94) is commendable. His survey of the present state of Bengali literature, theatre and cinema is also useful.

The book, however, has a few weaknesses. Banerjee has not dealt with such aspects of Bangladeshi politics as the role of the military or of foreign aid. Whatever mention he has made of these issues, he has done so more as a formality than as variables seriously impinging upon whatever is happening now in the politics of Bangladesh. It must be recognised that the power and influence of the army is as real as Bangladesh itself. The origin of this phenomenon can be traced to the liberation war following which the people in Bangladesh were not quite certain who deserved their loyalty — the leader (Mujib) or the institution (military). The history of Bangladesh ever since has shown that the dichotomy persists; popular approval of the recent military takeover would not have been possible otherwise. Banerjee should have analysed this inherent contradiction in Bangladesh democracy.

The role of external aid which has practically become an institution in Bangladesh has also not received serious attention; this factor, according to the present reviewer, has a major bearing on Bangladesh politics. The author himself has written: "Today Bangladesh has the biggest aid consortium of any country. Foreign aid, which totalled only 198 million dollars in 1973-74, reached 6,469 million dollars in 1977-78, of which 56.7 per cent or 3,666.46 million dollars were grants. Current public debt amounts to $ 2,858.2 million." (p 82) I wish the author had analysed, however briefly, the impact of the aid syndrome on Bangladeshi life: External aid has on the one hand created an elite class who has no legitimacy to rule and on the other made the Bangladesh Government dependent on the donor countries.

Partha S. Ghosh

Technology, Management *(Contd. from p. 10)*

disrupts traditional knowledge, alienates workers, undermines the confidence of local innovators and brings in a culture that in effect implies 'what is rural is bad what is urban is good; and what is Foreign is best. 'Technology import should be only to complement and supplement indigenous competence. There must be a symbiotic relationship between importing, assimilating, improving and generating new knowledge.

Labour productivity could be a good proxy for capital productivity in most industries except in some industries like chemicals, coal. petroleum. Employment is fundamental for human dignity and for income distribution. Gainful employment of every person means increased purchasing power, greater demands for goods and services, greater production and productivity.

Technology must be relevant and appropriate — to what? Public good or private profit; the needs of the rich or the poor; rural or urban: large or small industry; public or private enterprise? When such competing claims come, and particularly when it is a choice between two rights, the real test comes for the management. Appropriateness is basically technology assessment coupled with social choice. The emphasis is really on the capacity to ask the right question. Asking the right question is the best protection against being given the wrong answer. The right question is: what does one want?

Self-reliance is not self-sufficiency: It only implies an in-built perference for developing indigenous technology competence; the wisdom to use knowledge; the ability to discern and autonomous decision-making by the management.

If technology is for development of people, people must be involved in the process. A culture in which people think spontaneously of technology as a way of solving problems is a necessary medium for the growth of entrepreneurial attitude. Imagine what happens if only we could increase each person's enterprising ability, resourcefulness and productivity. Management must have a closer look at this problem. Further, if technology is for people, people must control it. Technology assessment and technology impact on society must be publicity debated before investment decisions are made by the politicians and industrialists.

The APO study clearly shows that one of the positive factors contributing to higher productivity and technology use is the attitude of the people. The Chinese people are known for their belief in hard work, entrepreneurial spirit and savings propensity, apart from their skills and experience which contribute to their higher productivity. The Japanese people's ability to seek, accept, assimilate and adapt to changing needs and circumstances; the harmonious, collective team spirit towards work; discipline and desire for a higher level of living — all contribute to productivity improvement. Contrasted to the 'other world thinking' in India, the Chinese and Japanese have an 'earthly thinking' with a desire for better living. The traditional system and values do change with greater application of technology under right circumstances and under strong political leadership as seen in Singapore.

Technology cannot be force-fed. The demand for it should be created and nurtured by the management by raising the technology absorbing capacity of the people using technology brokers, technology banks and information centres and practically demonstrating how technology helps to improve quality of life. For people, 'seeing is believing'.

The needs, demands, resources, goals and technology absorbing capacity of the three levels of large, small and cottage scale industry differ widely. Traditional industry exists based on rich empirical knowledge, age-long experience and skills, sound observation and common sense. How to weave in modern technology and management methods into this traditional tapestry to increase its productivity, reduce drudgery and provide gainful employment requires close study.

Small-scale industry has a major role to play. Certain industries that are amenable to 'farming out', 'assembly', 'sub-contracting', 'anciliary' to large industry, centralised management and decentralised production or 'net-working' have proved to be successful in the small scale sector. But this sector badly needs good management and technology backing particularly in regard to quality control, feasibility reports, technology awareness services, engineering consultancy diagnosis and guidance. With such a backing reverse technology transfer from small-scale to large-scale industry is possible.

If technology affects every walk of life, technology policy must be integral part of every other national policy — economics, commerce, industry, defence, international affairs, education, etc. Technology plans should be integrated with national plans. Integrated planning and, more important, its effective implementation, could be achieved only if the Government, industry, labour, banking and research development groups are involved at the very inception of preparing plans. The strong relationship between Government and leaders of business, banking and research that form a well-knit unitary elite has been a notable feature in Japanese success. Productivity improvement plans and targets form an integral part of economic development plans in Japan and newly industrialising countries like South Korea.

It is the job of the management to help the decision-makers in defining the technology goals, needs, policies and setting up appropriate institutions, structures and linkages for technology generation, acquisition, adaptation, transfer and utilisation of technology. Further, the management should carefully examine to improve the productivities of management of each sub-system of the total technology system. We talk about productivity of labour or capital — how about the productivity of the management itself?

Technology involves risks. Research is risk and research is done by creative minds. Management is a red rag for many researchers. The manager must ensure that the researcher is given a creative innovative environment, the necessary degree of freedom and flexibility and yet work as a part of the team to achieve the desired goal. The bureaucratic and hierarchical administrative set-up based on the principle of safety, security, stability that stifles the risk-taking capacity and the benevolent, paternalistic management should give way to venture-oriented, flexible system of management, radical in attitude and resilient to change. An administrator administers rules and regulations. A manager manages and gets things done. Finance audit should be coupled with achievement audit. The important thing is not how much grass the cow eats, but how much milk she yields.

As stated earlier, management should have technical literacy to study each system of the total technology system from the generator to the user to increase its productivity at every stage. Productivity and effectiveness of technology is not to be measured in terms of monetary returns alone. The impact of technology on employment, distribution of income, degree of decentralisation, opportunities for skilled and unskilled workers and impact on social and cultural values, attitudes and productivity gains are to be studied. The impact statement, or technology assessment, is needed not only to check what is appropriate for the present but also to judge the consequences in such a way that societal best possible technology can be chosen and supported. Technology information and technology awareness intelligence are important ingredients for management's decision-making.

An integrated systems approach to functional management has been known to contribute high quality corporate performance. A systems approach takes into account the entire panorama of corporate activity and growth of which each activity becomes a sub-system like production, personnel, technology, marketing, etc.

The style of management (participative, authoritative, autocratic, exploitative, benevolent, etc) has a great effect on productivity. Participative management style as characterised by consultation and consent, working in harmony with a systems approach is seen in the traditional Japanese Ringi system. It is a continuous education for all concerned and gives improved performance and productivity. In such a system, the 'zero defect' movement becomes a success at less cost, bringing in vigorous quality control on the production floor to reduce costs and rejection ratios.

Managing business as a family in Japanese style is different from managing a business by a family. Family management should be a positive factor where family members have received professional training and where there is room at the top for outside professionals. The interaction between management and its educational level and ability to use new technology are shown to be interrelated. A close look at the Indian traditional management, particularly those that have proved to be successful in money lending, trading and enterprising abilities, is needed.

Productivity increases result from the application of technology and management to economic activities through effective utilisation of resources, leading to reduction in cost per unit, increasing the purchasing power, employment and investment opportunities and achieving national goals through distributive justice. Equity and employment are important. To achieve this, resource allocation, product mix, production processes and technologies should be skewed in favour of the demands of the majority of the people instead of the few elite, as is happening now. Systems have to be designed for sharing of net gains of production and distributive justice that should include per capita income, minimum standards of living and quality of life, skill development, equal opportunities, etc.

The ultimate objective of all development is to provide a decent standard of living to the majority of the people and continue improving the same. This should lead to greater comfort and convenience to the people and above all a quality of life endowed with sense of values of human dignity. This can be done only through relevant technology, efficient management and higher productivity.□

Chinese Education

(*Contd. from page 32*)

lifted. Hence their children are resuming their natural place as the dominant cohort in key secondary schools and at college level as well.

The losers are rural youth whose rising drop-out rates even at the primary level are now officially acknowledged if not condoned. It is acknowledged further that the future expansion of education in the countryside must come gradually following the overall economic development of the rural sector. The earlier emphasis on worker-peasant education is now ridiculed as part of the leftist adventure in "egalitarian poverty" that culminated in the "decade of disorder".

Both during that time and before, the traditional divisions of labour were attacked in the interest of something like *social* modernisation. Expressed in terms of the ideals of that time, the declared aim was to reduce distinctions between town and countryside and between mental and manual labour. Ironically, the traditional divisions are being reinforced today as the most efficient means of allocating scarce resources in the interest of *economic* modernisation.

But while it is no longer fashionable in China to speak in terms of socialist ideals, the problems remain. "It is unthinkable to rely on such a composition of the population to build a modern nation," wrote one Chinese scholar recently in a new theoretical journal, *Dialectics of Nature*. He had just provided statistics to show what would become of the 322 million young persons now ranging in age from six to 18 years, given the existing level of educational development. Some 20 million would be illiterate: at least 133 million would have no more than a primary school education; while only 10 million would receive any kind of professional secondary or tertiary level schooling.

Arguing that quantity and quality were two sides of the same coin, he criticised the present one-sided emphasis on the latter. "We should correct this right now," he concluded, "rather than wait until future generations sum up lessons when they write history." □

POLISH GOVERNMENT SCHOLARSHIP FOR PRACTICAL TRAINING, 1982-83

Applications on prescribed forms are invited from Indian nationals for the award of 5 (Five) scholarships offered by the Government of Poland in the following subject-fields :— (i) Fisheries; (ii) Coal-Mining; and (iii) Ship-Building.

VALUE: Adequate maintenance allowance, free accommodation and free medical care when necessary.

DURATION: 6 months.

QUALIFICATIONS: (For i): Uniformly good academic record, with Master's degree. Master's degree means M.A/M.Sc./M.Tech./M.E. but not M.Phil. or pre-Ph.D. (For ii & iii): Bachelor's degree in Coal Mining/Mining Engineering and in Naval Architecture respectively.

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE: At least two consecutive years' teaching/research/practical experience at the college or university level as on 1.5.1982 in the subject-field selected *after* passing the prescribed qualifications. Successful completion of M.Phil./Pre-Ph.D. course would be considered as equivalent to the required experience.

AGE: Must be less than 33 years as on 1.9.1982 (Relaxation in age upto two years will be given in the case of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe candidates). Upper age limit and experience can be relaxed by not more than three months at the discretion of the Selection Committee in the case of brilliant candidates.

PASSAGE COST: Travel expenses from India to Poland and back will be borne by the candidate or his/her sponsors/employers. Subject to availability of funds, the passage cost may be met by the Government of India, provided the candidate is eligible under the rules. The rules provide that only those candidates whose parents'/guardian's income is less than Rs. 1,000/- per month from all sources are eligible. If the applicant is employed, his salary also will be taken into account. If the applicant, however, has been in full time employment for at least two years before the last date prescribed for submission of application, the salary to be taken into account for the purpose of income limit would be the applicant's salary and not that of the parents or guardian.

In case of persons drawing income from salary, the Basic Pay, Deputation allowance and Honoraria for undertaking other work, special pay, and Bonus etc. shall be treated as income.

For determining the average monthly income, the relevant period would be the last 12 complete months at the time of signing the income certificate.

NOTE: (i) Only candidates with 60% marks and above at the level of Minimum qualifications prescribed above are eligible. Where Grades are mentioned, the candidate must indicate the conversion formula adopted by the University/Institution.

(ii) Candidates who have already been abroad for study/research/training either on a scholarship or on their own are eligible to apply, only if they have been in India for at least three consecutive years after return from abroad. Applications of candidates who are abroad will not be considered.

(iii) Equivalent foreign degrees will be considered.

(iv) The candidate should possess good knowledge about India and the donor country.

LAST DATE: For supply of application forms is **24-5-1982.**

For submission of completed forms: **29-5-1982.**

NOTE: APPLICATIONS WHICH DO NOT CONTAIN POSTAL ORDER (OR DO NOT MENTION THE NUMBER AND DATE OF POSTAL ORDER WHICH HAS BEEN SENT ALONG WITH THE ORIGINAL APPLICATION SENT THROUGH PROPER CHANNEL, WHERE NECESSARY) WILL BE CONSIDERED INCOMPLETE AND WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

For application form and other particulars apply enclosing unstamped, self-addressed envelope (23 cm × 10 cm) and superscribing on the envelope "POLISH GOVERNMENT SCHOLARSHIPS FOR PRACTICAL TRAINING, 1982-83" to :—

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(DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION)
ES. 1 SECTION
516 'B' WING, SHASTRI BHAWAN
NEW DELHI-110 001

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This is certainly a time of trial for each one of us. Everybody will have to work hard and produce more in order to strengthen the nation. We have to make every effort to increase our production in the farms, in the factories and in whatever fields we are working. Only then will we succeed in the great task that is before us....

We are an independent nation, and we stand firm and erect in our independence. Each one of us will have to pay the price for preserving this independence...

The first thing which we have to learn from this challenge is to put an end to all those tendencies which divide us. Internal dissensions or disputes, whether they are between one region and another or between one language and another, have no place whatsoever in the circumstances of today. The national crisis demands that we should leave such things aside and think about the bigger and more important issues which face us. Therefore, I lay the greatest emphasis on the essential unity of India. We should work for the nation's progress and preserve its unity. Once the feeling of strength and unity is there, our task is easy to accomplish.

—Jawaharlal Nehru (October 26, 1962)

PRESERVING NATIONAL UNITY IS OUR PRIME TASK:
LET US FIGHT ALL DIVISIVE FORCES

SAH BROTHERS

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Punjab's Guilty Men

Mainstream

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

President, Constitution and Democracy

AN exchange of electioneering polemics has brought to the forefront an issue of first-class significance which no party interested in the maintenance of the present democratic system, despite all its faults, can afford to sleep over.

On May 12 Indira Gandhi told the press at the Calcutta airport that the CPI-M was trying to knock together all the Opposition parties "to get a President elected who can oust me".

Two days later, Jyoti Basu, refuting Indira Gandhi's charge, said that it would be "a very bad day for India" if any President chose to dismiss the Prime Minister. Basu was reported to have added: "According to the Indian Constitution, the President was guided by the advice of the Council of Ministers as was the Governor in the sphere of the State. How can the President on his own remove a Prime Minister?"

The question posed by the West Bengal Chief Minister is legitimate; at the same time, the Constitution as it stands today has a loophole — obviously overlooked by its authors and subsequently by Parliament in the last thirty years — which can be made use of by a President on his own to dismiss and appoint Prime Ministers without offending the letter of the law. In fact, this is the subject which is being keenly discussed for the last two months and more among the Constitutional pundits attached to the Establishment and also those belonging to the Opposition. Had Jyoti Basu been posted by his party leadership or his aides in New Delhi, he would not have made that statement — unless of course it was meant to put the Prime Minister off the Opposition trail.

To understand the implications of this controversy, it is necessary to refer to the relevant sections of the Constitution:

Article 53(1) of the Constitution lays down: "The executive power of the Union shall be vested in the President and shall be exercised by him either directly or through

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officers subordinate to him in accordance with this Constitution".

Article 74(1) says: "There shall be a Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister at the head to aid and advise the President who shall, in the exercise of his functions, act in accordance with such advice".

Article 75 says: "(1) The Prime Minister shall be appointed by the President and the other Ministers shall be appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister".

"(2) The Ministers shall hold office during the pleasure of the President".

"(3) The Council of Ministers shall be collectively responsible to the House of the People" (Lok Sabha).

Finally, Article 85(1) lays down: "The President shall from time to time summon each House of Parliament to meet at such time and place as he thinks fit, but six months shall not intervene between its last sitting in one session and the date appointed for its first sitting in the next session".

In common parlance, shorn of judicial verbiage, all these provisions taken together mean that while all the Ministers would be appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister, the President is under no such obligation when appointing the Prime Minister. The only consideration he has to bear in mind while appointing the Prime Minister or other Ministers is that collectively the Council of Ministers shall be responsible to the Lok Sabha; that means they have to command a majority in the House. Since, however, the Council of Ministers can do without calling a session of Parliament for six months, there is no way Parliament can bind the President's hand in dismissing a Prime Minister and appointing somebody else instead in that intervening period.

A near-precedent was set by President Sanjiva Reddy in 1979 when, after the resignation of the Janata Government, he appointed Charan Singh as Prime Minister. The discretion was entirely the President's and he was not constitutionally obliged to explain how he came to the conclusion that Charan Singh would command a majority in the Lok Sabha. President Reddy only offered his advice to the newly-appointed Prime Minister — not a Constitutional mandate — to test out his strength by convening a session of the Lok Sabha at an early date. Charan Singh took some time to do so; once appointed Prime Minister, he was entitled not to call a session of the Lok Sabha earlier than a day short of six months. And when he called the Lok Sabha session, he tendered his resignation on the very morning before the session met — having realised that he did not have a majority — and advised the President to dissolve the Lok Sabha and call a general election. Since he was not technically defeated in the Lok Sabha, he was entitled to carry on as head of the caretaker Government until the Lok Sabha elections were announced in the second week of January. What the Charan Singh interlude proved was that the President could on his own appoint a new Prime Minister and he could carry on as Prime Minister for six months and before the expiry of the six-month period, he could get the Lok Sabha dissolved and carry on for another month and a half (for the election process to be completed). So, for seven and a half months the President can have his own nominee as Prime Minister without the latter having to face Parliament, and all this could be done perfectly legitimately under the Constitution.

Indira Gandhi's fears that a new President ready to help the Opposition might dismiss her do not seem as fantastic or as unconstitutional as Jyoti Basu's reactions seem to make out. This is a serious lacuna which all parties having a stake in democracy should agree to rectify. It is extraordinary that after the Charan Singh episode, nobody in the Lok Sabha — neither the Congress-I nor the Opposition — thought it necessary to bring in a Constitutional amendment to ensure that the President cannot resort to patently undemocratic removal of the Prime Minister.

The Opposition in its passion to oust Indira Gandhi from Prime Ministership must not let the President act as the dictator. As the Constitution stands today, her dismissal and the appointment of a new Prime Minister would be perfectly constitutional on the President's part. In a sense this will be virtually a constitutional coup, undermining the very essence of parliamentary democracy. Those who have been loud in their denunciation of Emergency as an authoritarian step — as it certainly was — would do well to remember that Emergency was perfectly valid under the Constitution. In upholding a step as being good under the Constitution, let not democracy be destroyed. A Presidential puppet as Prime Minister may be valid under the Constitution but will cut at the very roots of Indian democracy. Let this be kept in mind as political parties engage themselves in the next few weeks in choosing a new President of our Republic.

N.C.

May 17

COMMENTARY

Issues Go Underground

VIEWED against the background of persistent speculation on the possibility of postponement or cancellation, there will be much relief at the fact that elections in four States and several Lok Sabha and Assembly constituencies were held as scheduled. And viewed in the perspective of the involvement of nearly 65 million voters in the exercise, there was perhaps justification for describing the just-concluding poll as a "mini general election".

If it was indeed so, it may be both pertinent and relevant to examine whether the poll campaign reflected an awareness on the part of political parties to treat it as such and not as yet another opportunity for settling personal scores or scoring debating points. Conceptually speaking, a general election, mini or full-fledged, ought to be utilised in a democracy such as ours with a multi-party system in full swing, either to project and sell ideological platforms or to highlight performance achievements, if any. Voting is after all an exercise of choices, and choices ought to be predicated on a calculated assessment of relative merits — of parties and individuals alike. Choices need to be determined on the basis of issues, local, regional or national, which is perhaps why all political parties fulfil the formality of issuing manifestoes, which, whether read and assimilated by the electorate or not, identify their outlook and approach.

One dominant impression left behind by the campaign of the last fortnight is that issues were conveniently sent underground, and concentration instead was on competitive personality projections. To the extent that this phenomenon has by now become typical of elections in India, it may not cause much surprise, but nonetheless it needs to be taken note of if only because both the ruling party (euphemism for Indira Gandhi) and opposition parties have been equally guilty in perpetuating it poll after poll. One would have expected it to be a little different this time because two important States with a well-entrenched background of non-Congress rule, West Bengal and Kerala, were determining their political future, and because the opposition was making a bid for power in two other States. In the event, almost the same pattern of electioneering which had characterised the poll campaigns of 1971, 1977 and 1980 tended to re-assert itself.

More than this, the opposition in all the four States distinctly gave the impression of having been put on the defensive by Indira Gandhi, and instead of commending to the electorate their own good points, they became totally preoccupied with either projecting Indira Gandhi's bad points or refuting her charges against them. Indira Gandhi's was a blunderbuss of a campaign, sparing none in her way, shrieking allegations left and right, and literally storming her way through what the opposition had led the nation to believe were their citadels. But then, this has been her style for the last decade and more, and bearing as she does the heaviest cross for her party, the opposition should not have expected any less from her. Admittedly, by virtue of her being Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi has an inherent advantage over the opposition in that she can cover far more territory, but the point we are making is not that she was more aggressive but that the opposition appeared to have missed the focus of the poll, which was to establish that given the chance they would do better than her.

It was the same opposition which during the last two years of Indira Gandhi's rule at the Centre has had innumerable occasions to castigate her administration and herself, and if they had the opportunity to do so it was not for want of issues. Though they were helpless in influencing or altering Government policies, it needs to be said in their favour that they did record their protest on the floor of Parliament and outside over a number of national issues with which they were in total disagreement. Thus, issues like the promulgation of the National Security Ordinance (subsequently enacted into law), the Essential Services Maintenance Act, and more recently the IMF loan and the subtle pro-Rightist changes in industrial policy, gave them a good handle to attack and expose the Government. But if these issues figured at all in the opposition campaign strategies, they must have done so on such an extremely low profile that the national media did not think it worthy of notice.

If the Left Front Government of West Bengal has been mobilising public opinion in the last several months in favour of early elections, it was only because it was confident of bettering the Congress-I (euphemism for Indira Gandhi) at the polls on the strength of its performance in office, especially in fields like land reforms, maintenance of communal harmony and honest administration. Yet, either because of Indira Gandhi's barn-storming tactics or because of lack of imagination, the CPM was constantly placed in the ridiculous position of defending itself against charges of murderous assaults on Congress-I rank and file and sundry other matters unrelated to its record in office.

The situation appeared to be more or less the same in Kerala where too the focus of opposition electoral strategy got distorted in the face of Indira Gandhi's many-angled barbs against the CPM-led rule, and the Left Democratic Front was reduced to the position of safeguarding its ideological image rather than banking on its administrative performance.

The Lok Dal-BJP combine in Haryana and Himachal came into being on the realisation that no opposition party could humble Indira Gandhi at the hustings singly. So far so good, and perhaps there was a great deal of merit in such an assumption. The Lok Dal made no secret of its ambition to capture power in Haryana and the BJP in Himachal, and if both were serious about translating the aspiration into reality, the strategy ought to have been such as to commend themselves, their ideologies, their potential and their erstwhile performance rather than to prove that Bhajan Lal and Ram Lal were basically defectors, which after all is a fact of history with which the Haryanvi and the Himachali are fully acquainted and perhaps couldn't care less since it is part of the political psyche of the region!

No electoral alliance which makes a serious bid for power can afford to reveal the chinks in its armour, but in Haryana and Himachal we had the entertaining spectacle of the Lok Dal and BJP leadership skirmishing till the last over both seat allotments and choice of candidates. God knows there is enough in-fighting within the Congress-I ranks, and Indira Gandhi was even forced to sound a public warning against the rebels in her party all of whom she claimed to be able to identify individually and threaten expulsion.

But neither the Lok Dal nor the BJP fared any better; the schism in their leadership and ranks was of a matching quality. Nothing illustrated this better than the first election meeting in Haryana when Charan Singh and Atal Behari Vajpayee launched the alliance campaign and commissioned the services of Devaraj Urs in the bargain. Devaraj Urs was forced to defend himself in public against the charge of having brought Indira Gandhi from obscurity into limelight by helping her win at Chikmagalur, and in the process accused both Charan Singh and Vajpayee of having helped her in 1979. Vajpayee also had the mortification of listening to Urs attack the merchants and traders who constitute the backbone of the BJP!

In this context, it is also worth noting that the better part of Indira Gandhi's campaign was devoted not so much to commending her achievements in office as to establishing the point that the opposition was determined to oust her. What else are elections for? But the constant play on this theme proved so catchy that the opposition came to believe that the only issue that mattered in the elections was the refutation of her "Indira hatao" allegation. Largely because of this opposition preoccupation, the elections turned out to be a public referendum on Indira Gandhi, with every aspect of the poll turning on the personality of the Prime Minister rather than on the import of the policies pursued by her party governments.

In the long run, the heavy accent on personalities is not good tactics for Indira Gandhi or the opposition since it exposes the absence of grassroot strength for either of them.

Sanjaya

May 18

Fall-out of Freak Weather

THE weather gods have been playing ducks and drakes all through May, with the result that in the hottest season of the year, when scorching heat and Delhi's 'loo' should normally be pushing up the mercury to an intolerable level, the Capital has been having a spell of pleasantly cool — even cold — weather. There has been rain on successive days, giving the impression of onset of the monsoon. Many with knowledge say that a weather phenomenon such as this has not been known for a century.

It would have been all right if the townfolk could just sit back and enjoy the fine weather of the last fortnight. But other concerns get intermingled with the realisation that the unseasonal rain may well play havoc both with the economics and politics of this country. And the fall-out will have to be shared by all. As for the farmers in Haryana, it is literally true that they have been weeping in desperation, with the bountiful crop they have reared being destroyed by the rain.

That the weather phenomenon has a major political impact is because of the timing — on the eve of the mini general election whose upshot is interwoven with many complexities and marginal factors. This became clear when in the midst of the hectic campaigning, Haryana Chief Minister Bhajan Lal rushed to make an on-the-spot investigation of the loss to the crops in the State. Bhajan Lal's gesture to the farmers of Haryana, offering to accept rain-soaked wheat with larger moisture content from the mandis in the course of the procurement drive, served to underline the vital role that unseasonal rains could play in shaping the political destinies of this as well as other States.

The important point is that in the crucial last phase of the mini general election, when a multiplicity of factors are being closely watched for the slightest shift in the voting balance they could cause, the ruling party is afraid that the adverse weather in May might be yet another vote splitter, at a time when even a small loss could be damaging. While in several other matters like growth of dissidence and faction fighting, resulting in mushrooming of rebel candidates, the ultimate outcome is difficult to judge, the adverse results from the freakish weather on election-eve this year could only harm the ruling party, unless the authorities are quick to make common cause in adversity with the farmer. That is why Bhajan Lal has been so responsive to the farmers' needs. But will the same concern be there after the poll?

All said, the timing of the unseasonal rains and stormy weather in the northern States this year appears ominous because of its close resemblance to the climate in the political and economic fields in the country at large. If the May phenomenon adds to this situation even marginally, it could play havoc. No less than its political fall-out is the question as to the extent of damage that the freakish weather may have inflicted on the economy. The weighty question is the extent to which the expected bumper crop of wheat will be curtailed. The hopes reposed in a bumper wheat crop have been very big indeed — it was expected to help build a food reservoir, provide a big addition to the resources with the farmer, thereby enlarging the market for several inputs like fertiliser, and consumer items such as textiles which have been languishing under the impact of recessionary conditions, and of course provide the much-needed cushion to contain prices all round. If this chain of expectations gets upset, it could very well act as the catalytic agent for a reverse-gear chain reaction. That would be a great upset for the economy and the ongoing developmental plans.

The assessment being presently made is about the extent of damage that the unseasonal rain and storm may have caused to the wheat crop in the northern States that has just been harvested and is still lying in the fields. The first round of field surveys by official teams indicates that the damage is heavy: it could be as much as cutting the wheat output by a million tonnes. The market prices are already responding to this assessment by showing a marked rise in the last few days. However, there may be a silver lining even to this unfriendly cloud. In the first place, the initial assessments have not been shown to be the last word. The good weather conditions of the last three days are giving rise to the view that part of the expected damage to the wheat crop may be retrieved if the weather returns to normal. The second aspect is that along with the harm that the unseasonal rain has done, it has also through the sidelines brought some economic good. The standing sugar crop will benefit. Short-term crops like vegetables will also benefit, while the moisture in the field is good for the next round of sowing. Above all, the rain has augmented the available hydel reservoirs and will be good for power generation. This is a key input for the entire economy, both industrial and agricultural, and improvement in this sector benefits the economy in its totality.

That reminds one of the observations of the former Irrigation Minister, Dr. K.L. Rao — a great partisan of hydel power in the old-time controversy of hydel versus thermal power — that water, even surplus water, is always good for agriculture and the economy in Indian conditions. Even when it causes floods and misery to thousands, it has beneficial side-effects in the form of alluvial soil that is left behind yielding a bountiful crop next harvest.

May 18 *O.P. Sabherwal*

Punjab's Guilty Men

NARENDRA SHARMA

The latest phase of communal tension in Punjab has caused concern among right-thinking persons inside and outside the State. Desecration of temples and gurudwaras by a few mischief-makers from either community is astounding, for, as a team of the Sampradayikta Virodhi Committee which recently visited the various centres in the State for an on-the-spot study has rightly observed, religion, history, tradition and even rituals do not provide a clear line of demarcation between Hindus and Sikhs. The desecration of places of worship has obviously been resorted to in order to provoke communal tension by extremists of either variety, they having failed to achieve their objective otherwise in that border State with a neighbour across the border who is being armed to the teeth by imperialist forces known to be inimical to the unity and integrity of India.

"Punjab seems to have been taken over by communal insanity. People do not talk, they shout and shriek. Sanity and reason seem to have no takers," says the SVC team, adding that "unless something is done to reverse the trend towards sharp communal divisions it may reach the point of no return." Moreover, a section of Akalis are already talking, though in hushed tones, of the possibility of realising their dream of a Khalistan" in the event the Centre losing grip which they think is fast happening". And they are not alone in this game, for "curiously enough they are being provided enough food for such thinking by their Hindu counterparts, the extremist Arya Samajists and the RSS, who have been talking of creating an Assam-like situation in this border State."

In retrospect, the Hindu-Sikh cleavage does not have a long history. It goes back to the early twenties when the movement for democratisation of gurudwaras was given a communal turn, mainly with inspiration from the British rulers. The fundamentalist attitude of the Arya Samaj, on the other hand, provided a handle to communal Sikhs because the Arya Samajists ridiculed and attacked the practices and personalities of Sikh Gurus.

As for the Punjab Congress, it was then dominated by urban Hindu traders; it alienated itself from the peasantry when it made common cause with the Beopar Mandal, opposed the legislation brought by the Unionist Party to give relief to the peasantry groaning under heavy indebtedness as also the taxation measures which peasants thought were opposed because they put a burden on the trading class.

More recently, the Punjabi Hindu adopted a communal approach on the language question denying Panjabi as their mother-tongue. This naturally gave the Sikhs a feeling that the Hindus disowned the language only because of its association with the Sikh religion. It goes without saying that the communal Sikhs too tended to identify religion with language. The fifties and early sixties witnessed a lot of communal tension in the State on the issue of Punjabi Suba, which appeared to have subsided after the formation of the Suba, followed by general election in 1967 when the non-Congress SVD Ministry brought the Akalis and the Jana Sanghis together to share power and go in for electoral alliances subsequently. That phase seems to be coming to an end.

The recent trouble started with the anti-Nirankari attitude of the Akalis which culminated in the murder of the Nirankari chief, Baba Gurbachan Singh, and several of his followers in Punjab, creating a fear psychosis among non-Sikhs, particularly the Hindu traders and industrialists. As the SVC observes, the failure of the administration to bring the culprits to book accentuated the fears, which have been multiplied by the later murder of Lala Jagat Narain and others in Jullundur. Besides, there have been open threats to the lives of public men opposing Bhindranwale, Dal Khalsa and extremist Akalis generally. Hijacking of the Indian Airlines plane earlier and sacrilege at temples have produced the same result. "Perhaps they were intended to do so", according to the SVC team.

Another observation of the SVC is worth noting: The administration and police are known to be not only inactive but actively communal and factional. The reason: During the first SVD Government, the Jana Sangh (now BJP) and the Akali Dal formed cells of their favourites; later, when Zail Singh became Chief Minister, he developed his own factional network. Divided among the three, the administration stands paralysed. And this has naturally made the people lose faith in the impartiality of Government agencies.

It was observed, and this is no secret in today's Punjab, that the Zail Singh-Darbara Singh feud is a major factor behind the present difficult situation. Zail Singh, both as Chief Minister and later, has tried to pander to communal Sikh sentiments with a view to emerging as the unrivalled Sikh Congress leader; it is widely believed in the State that he has encouraged Bhindranwale and Dal Khalsa, first to break up the Akalis and then to embarrass Darbara Singh. As for Darbara Singh, "the impression is that he is ineffective though non-communal".

How are the others reacting to

the situation? Loss of faith in the capacity of Government to provide protection has led to both sections backing, and financing groups of militants capable of armed confrontation. The RSS and the Dal Khalsa are the gainers.

Among the political parties, the ruling party is a divided house for lack of a clear secular orientation. Responsible Congress (I) leaders admit that their youthful cadres are divided on communal lines. At places, it has also happened that Congress (I) leaders have asked their Sikh and Hindu workers and followers not to lag behind the extremists in aspousing the cause of their respective communities.

The SVC team noted that among the Akalis and the BJP men there were some elements unhappy with these developments but they do not have the courage to dissuade the hotheads from pursuring a collision course. The logic of communal approach has taken the State to a point where the separatists are strengthened. "The leaders who brought brinkmanship as only a tactic to achieve political aims may find it difficult to return from the brink," the SVC team has said. The BJP, for instance, has been in the forefront in organising militant Hindu protests like hartals and attacks on Sikh shops following desecration of temples. The SVC team says that in a way the BJP has played the same game which the Akalis are interested in, that is, communal polarisation. Evidently the BJP is trying to use this opportunity to reclaim its lost Hindu base.

The team found the CPI to be the only party which has played a positive role by organising peace marches and rallies in Amritsar, Jullundur and Patiala. "The common people have a feeling that they are the only force for peace. Only they are not considered strong enough." The CPI (M) joined hands with the CPI to organise joint trade union peace rallies, "but the recent collaboration of the CPM with the Akalis has stunted their potential to be effective."

The silver lining however is that much of the communal tension is still confined to urban centres. The rural areas are by and large peaceful. Moreover, the Punjab peasantry, predominantly Sikh, appear to have a vested interest in maintaining communal peace, for labour from UP and Bihar come to Punjab in large numbers to help the peasants during the sowing and harvesting seasons. The Punjab peasant, it appears, would not be interested in the slogan "Dhoti topie, Yamuna par" (meaning, throw out Hindus beyond river Yamuna) being raised by extremist Akalis.

Even in the urban areas, the workers and middle class employees can still play an important role to bring back sanity; for they know what havoc communal disharmony would cause to them and how it will jeopardise their survival. Besides, there are powerful social factors like close family ties between Hindus and Sikhs described as "roti beti di sanjh" which would provide support to any movement which seeks to stem the rot that has come to bedevil life in the State.

This is not to underrate the negative factors that today appear to be predominant in the State's political life. As an informed observer of the Punjab scene put it, the credibility of not only the Darbara Singh Government but even of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has touched a new low in today's Punjab. The observer, for instance, pointed out that after the arrest of Harsimran Singh, the chief culprit in the hijacking of the Indian Airlines plane to Pakistan, the Government was fully aware of not only the modus operandi of the Dal Khalsa but also its links all round right up to Home Minister Zail Singh. He underlined that the culprits remain at large and Zail Singh continues to head the Union Home Ministry. Moreover, as he put it, the differences between Darbara Singh and Zail Singh were common knowledge though the former would miss no opportunity to deny them.

In this context, the SVC's observations assume significance. As it has put it, it needs a lot of hard work first to defuse the situation and then develop harmony. There is a cross-section of political leaders, trade union workers, peasant and trade union leaders, middle class employers, lawyers who constitute a sizeable section and would be prepared to work for harmony. At stake is not only life in the border State but the unity and integrity of the whole country; and this should beckon all sections. Conscientious persons have to sit up and move to salvage the situation before it is too late. (*May* 18)

NOT U.K.-BORN

In multi-racial Britain today nearly six per cent of the population was born outside the United Kingdom and nearly half that percentage in the New Commonwealth and Pakistan.

About 3,200,000 were born outside the United Kingdom, of whom 1,470,000 came from the New Commwealth or Pakistan.

The figures issued are the first results of the 1981 Labour Force Survey issued by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys.

The estimate of 1,470,000 born in the New Commonwelth and Pakistan shows an increase of 350,000 on the corresponding figure from the 1971 Census.

The number of persons born in the Irish Republic was estimated at about 580,000 — a decrease of more than 100,000 since 1971.

The survey of 85,000 households classified 95 per cent of the people in households as white.

The other main categories were: Indian 720,000; West Indian or Guyanese 520,000 and Pakistani 280,000, with about 230,000 estimated to be mixed racial orgin, of whom more than three-quarters were born in the United Kingdom and most were under 16.

About 2,300,000 people were estimated to be living in households headed by someone born in the New Commonwealth or Pakistan.

Of UK-born persons of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and African origin nearly 90 per cent were under 16 and the remainder nearly all between 16 and 29.

—Courtesy: *Hindustan Times*
May 19, 1982

Sheer Folly in South Atlantic

C.P. RAMACHANDRAN

THE fighting over the Falkland Islands between the forces of Argentina and Britain is increasingly taking a Chaplinesque look. There is a lot of movement but no action. Hemingway once asked that the one should not be mistaken for the other. Be that as it may, both sides are claiming victories and admitting defeats. One Argentinian warship has been sunk which brought acclaim in jingoistic circles in Britain. But this was followed soon by the loss of a British destroyer, and that has converted jubilation into gloom. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher seems unsure of herself and Michael Foot is presently distancing himself from those martial postures he put on in the House of Commons.

Meanwhile, the United States has made an ass of its foreign policy by declaring that it supported the faithful Thatcher Government after an earlier declaration that it was taking an even-handed approach to the problem. Haig and his cohorts did not realise that Latin American feeling is very high on the subject. Little countries like Panama are crying against British intervention. The Organisation of American States is in a state of rumpled disarray. Tin-pot dictatorships which were always keen to show they were subservient to the USA are defiantly declaring their solidarity with Argentina.

So many people are trying to find a face-saving formula. The United States efforts, so far abortive, are matched by the activities of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Cuellar, himself a Peruvian. Nothing has happened. It is just like the Iraq-Iran war. Everybody, including the participants, is heartily sick of the entire affair. But nobody knows how to get out of the situation. Loss of face is a serious matter for nations that have very little to show for clout in the international arena.

The fight is comic. Some slight naval activity. Some bombardment of the coast. Very little air activity. A missile hits a ship. A soldier is captured and then released to welcoming crowds. The BBC is charged by the Thatcher Government with being less partisan than it should in its reportage. Even the media have lost interest in Groucho Marx fighting with brother Harpo. Even high comedy can go stale if it is too prolonged.

The new factor is the cry of Russian intervention. This is a very convenient slogan for the moment to disengage both the combatants. A Russian communication satellite is now said to have helped the Argentinians to guide a missile to a British warship and sink it. But this kind of propaganda will do no good in the end. The Russians are strictly keeping away from the imbroglio.

War, said Clausewitz, is merely another way of carrying out foreign policy. What is the present war an extension of? Argentina's claim is that the Falklands became a British possession by an act of imperialism. That is true. The British say that they will respect the wishes of the people of the islands who are of British stock and will remain loyal to Britain. That is true also. But what is the test of sovereignty? If Tibet was allowed a referendum, today the people there would reject the Chinese connection. What is the United States' justification for the naval base at Guantanamo in Cuba?

Western hypocrisy stands thoroughly exposed in the incident. Every word they have said in the past about Poland and Afghanistan is being eaten in the south Atlantic. Their professions of peace of peaceful negotiations for political settlements, their professed abhorrence of war, their opposition to conflict over non-issues, their so-called adherence to the rule of international law — all these either ignored or openly violated.

The United States has learnt one great secret. That seems to be that the use of big warships today is ineffective. The "Invincibles" are highly vincible. Britain has learnt one lesson. It is that the British lion has not only lost all its teeth but has no substitute dentures of any kind. Argentina has learnt the great truth that great generals with rows of medals (without any battles to show for them) can make asses of themselves by resorting to a political misadventure for internal reasons. The rest of the world, after a fit of laughing, is now hoping that the denouement will start before the show goes sour.

So after all, the great little war over some little islands is not without its uses after all. ☐

(May 18)

CUPID AT WORK IN CHINA

Many young people in China commit suicide because of love affairs that go wrong, reports Reuter, from Beijing, quoting an official newspaper.

An article in *The Workers' Daily* by a well-known university lecturer gave no figures but said one distraught official of a national corporation showed him a list of suicide cases in various factories, all brought about by unrequited love. The suicides were the result of "too much emphasis placed on love by young people," he added.

The lecturer said two factors were mainly responsible for this. First, the Maoist years' puritanical censorship, which resulted in films and literature completely ignoring matters of the heart. Secondly, today's films, in the relatively liberal post-Mao period, had become excessively permissive and showed far too much hugging and kissing on the screen.

Older people often complained these days of young people kissing openly in the streets — an act unthinkable during the Maoist period. The lovers explained that they had nowhere else to go.

Pretoria's New Racial Mischief

HARI SHARAN CHHABRA

THE White minority regime in South Africa, which denies all basic and human rights to the African majority, is now preparing for major political mischief. It plans to drive a permanent wedge between segments of the non-White population by winning over the 800,000 Indians and the 2.6 million Coloureds (people of mixed race) to its side and isolating the 19 million Africans, the indigenous population of South Africa.

A report by the Government-appointed Multi-Racial Council's Constitutional Committee has called for the Indians and the Coloureds to be granted equal political status with the 4.5 million Whites. It has recommended that the two groups be represented in Parliament and in the Cabinet on a proportional representation basis.

In its "wisdom" the committee has given the opinion that a single political system which would include Blacks, who form 70 per cent of the population, would not work. It however, said: "A single political system in South Africa which included the Coloureds and the Indians on an equal basis with the Whites could function successfully. In the committee's view, it is not only desirable but necessary that the Coloureds and the Indians should participate in decision-making at all levels and in all functions of the political system."

If this report is finally accepted by the racist regime, which is on the cards, it will be taking the odious policy of apartheid to its logical conclusion. This will mean ruling out for ever any place for the Africans in the Government and endorsing the current policy of separate self-governing tribal "homelands" or Bantustans. This will in reality mean that an African born in South Africa is not a national of his own country. He is a mere Bantu denied all national rights, who will either live in his tribal Bantustan or, if he has to live in White South Africa, he could merely be a domestic help or a factory worker on contract, and will have to live separated from his family.

In the ultimate analysis, the committee's report would want the White minority regime to follow a policy of divide and rule. For it lives in a world of misguided belief that by isolating the Africans it would have solved all its problems. We in India naturally feel bad that Indians in South Africa will now be sought to be utilised to strengthen the apartheid monster.

But how are the Indians and the Coloureds in South Africa going to react to these proposals? To answer this question, one has to note that there are three categories of Indians and Coloureds. Number one is a small group of people who totally support the cause of the African majority and who are either imprisoned or are fighting the forces of apartheid from self-exile. Number two is a fairly strong group, which lives inside South Africa, and is sympathetic to the idea of the one-man-one-vote rule. But the voice of this group is somewhat muffled. And in the last category come very large numbers of Indians and Coloureds who are prosperous and who are direct beneficiaries of the system of apartheid. These are the people, call them toadies if you like, who would welcome these proposals and would ask the Government to expedite their implementation. Some of them would already be dreaming of becoming MPs and Ministers.

It will be recalled that the last category of Indians and Coloureds had been clamouring for some kind of representation of their interests. The Pretoria Government then appointed an Indian Council and a Coloured Council. These were only advisory bodies with no legislative functions. Membership of these Councils was a matter of prestige for some individuals, yet the majority of the Indians and the Coloureds were none too happy with their meaningless existence. These Councils became non-starters in a way, especially the Coloured Council.

Now let us look at the position of the African majority in the so-called self-governing Bantustans. Facts will speak for themselves. Only 13 per cent of the total land area is being given to the 70 per cent indigenous majority. And most of this land is either desert or marshy or mountainous. It is devoid of all mineral wealth, of industries and of big cities. The 13 per cent land is not one contiguous piece but fragmented. As for their political status, can anyone call Transkei self-governing or independent? It is common knowledge that it is a "colony" of Pretoria. Such is the injustice that even the Black petty bourgeoisie feels humiliated living in Transkei.

No wonder, therefore, that the freedom-loving world has rejected the "homeland" policy and called apartheid a crime against humanity. There is hardly any doubt that the latest proposals for giving political rights to Indians and Coloureds and denying them to the Africans will be condemned and rejected by the international community.

To achieve their national rights Africans are now left with only one option — intensification of the armed struggle under the banner of the African National Congress of South Africa. The military wing of the ANC, *Umkhonto We Sizwe* (Spear of the Nation) has to step up its campaign of sabotage and guerilla warfare. It already has many a victory to its credit.

It is good to note that the ANC leadership has recently decided to make military struggle more effective. Thus military targets, refineries, oil dumps, transport and industrial sites have been singled out for the attention of the *Umkhonto We Sizwe*. This popular army will speak to the enemy in the language he understands.

Already, since the Soweto uprising of school children in 1976, South Africa is in the grip of agitation of all kinds. Students are in revolt and strikes have heralded a wave of workers' struggle.

Faced with all-round opposition, the Government in Pretoria is trying on confuse the situation by bringing about some reforms by way of dilution of apartheid. These reforms have met with ridicule because these are only of a cosmetic nature. The inferior status of the Africans continues and the economic system controlled by White exploiters remains unchanged.

Africans will, therefore, not rest till they have achieved the liberation of their society from the rigours of life under apartheid. Liberation for them means 'one man one vote' rule and equality of economic opportunities for the entire population of South Africa. The African National Congress is determined to win the battle.

Today, in the twenty fifth year of the Freedom Charter of the ANC, it is worth recalling that the Charter has declared that South Africa belongs to all those who live in it — Black and White — and that only the total abolition of apartheid and the redivision of wealth among all the people could lay the basis for a just and democratic South Africa. *(May 17)*

Reagan's 'START': Clever Arithmetic

S.K. SHARMA

THE announcement by President Reagan last week of US proposals for 'significant' reduction in US and Soviet strategic nuclear forces, does not really make any meaningful departure from the Reagan Administration's earlier hard-line stand. The 'Ground Zero' week of last month and the groundswell of US public opinion in favour of halting the arms race notwithstanding, the Reagan proposals (for Strategic Arms Reduction Talks) do not show any impact of popular feeling. In fact these proposals have come six months after the so-called 'zero option' was put forward by the US President in November last year. Reagan had then said, "We can make proposals for genuinely serious reduction but only if we can take the time to prepare carefully. The US has been preparing carefully for resumption of strategic arms negotiations because we do not want a repetition of past disappointments".

These six-month-long preparations, one imagines, should have included, among other things, the presentation of the 1983 military budget which has $ 23.1 billion for the major strategic nuclear programmes as against the figure of $ 8.7 billion in the previous year. There was also the proposal to meet the Soviet President in June in New York, to which the latter replied by suggesting a date in October in a neutral country. Asked how long it would take to negotiate a suitable reduction, President Reagan told a press conference, "The Soviets would feel induced to negotiate soon enough" because of his "increased military spending programme".

Broadly the proposals are: (i) In the first stage land and sea based ballistic missile warheads — 'the most serious threat we face' says Reagan — should be cut down by one-third, to equal ceiling; (ii) no more than half of the warheads should be land-based; (iii) in the second phase the US would seek equal ceilings on other elements of the strategic forces of the two countries — presumably this would include strategic bombers; (iv) the US would also seek to place limits on the throw weight or explosive power (megatonnage) of ballistic missiles in which, according to Reagan, the Soviet Union is superior; (v) in both phases there would be insistence by Washington on verification procedures to ensure compliance with the accords reached.

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Apart from these outlines, agency reports have also carried comments by US officials. Thus the US and the Soviets are each supposed to have almost 7500 land and sea based long-range warheads, with the Soviet Union having 2400 missiles and the US 1700. The US officials also remarked that in preparing their proposals for the talks, they did not intend to 'censor' themselves by deleting suggestions which the Soviet Union was not expected to like. At the same time, the officials also believed, on the basis of their contacts with Moscow, that the Soviets would not reject these proposals outright.

Apart from the reaction of the news agency Tass, no official word has so far come from Moscow about the Reagan offer. Tass said that "the proposal does not witness the search for mutually acceptable solutions, but is an effort by the US to obtain unilateral military advantages". Just a day before Reagan made his "offer", an article by Soviet Defence Minister Ustinov in the party daily had severely criticised the US for thwarting Soviet peace plans and for "cooking up the myth of Soviet military menace" in its (USA's) pursuance of military superiority. Ustinov had declared in his article that 'the Soviet Union will not allow the existing balance of forces to be disrupted'. President Brezhnev had, earlier this month, replying to an appeal by an international group of physicians, said the Soviet Union was ready to negotiate "radical agreements" on nuclear arms control.

Let us look at the Reagan offer more closely. The President has called for reduction by one-third in the sea and land-based weapons, with the additional condition that no more than half of the total should be land-based. According to Paul Warnke, former Chief US negotiator in SALT II, the Soviets have 80 per cent of their strategic forces in land-based

ICBMs while the US has less than 30 per cent. Simple arithmetic will then reveal that if the Soviet Union agrees to Reagan's proposal, it will have to reduce, not by one-third but effectively by about 60 per cent its existing land-based missiles. The reason is that one third cut will still not make Soviet land-based missiles less than half of the remaining total, so the Soviets will have to further reduce their land-based missiles by another 30 per-cent or so. To illustrate this point let us take Reagan's figures: of the 7,500 nuclear warheads a one-third cut would mean reduction by 2500, whereas the existing Soviet land-based missiles add up to, roughly, 6000. Thus, to conform to the one half limit on land-based missiles, the Soviet Union will ultimately have to remove, in all, 4000 missiles.

Now, this would be in conformity with what the Reagan Administration has been saying all along: that the Soviet Union had an edge over the United States in its strategic force. The MX missiles programme was taken up by President Reagan because of this so-called 'window of vulunerability', presumably arising out of the Soviet land-based SS-18s and SS-19s heavily out-numbering US Minutemen. In fact the inordinate concern within the US about a Soviet first strike has been there because of this fact, and the Reagan proposals presumably seek to remove this lead. It is a different matter that not only the 'Ground Zero' enthusiasts but even former defence chiefs in the US do not accept the assertion that the Soviet Union has superiority. Both James Schlesinger and Harold Brown have recently mentioned this in their testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The Reagan Administration does seem to grant itself, through this proposal, a "handicap" which the Soviets may not accept.

The third aspect of the Reagan offer is the proposal to seek reduction in the throw-weight (megatonnage) of the ICBMs. Here again the Soviet Union may find it difficult to accept the criterion of determining the lethal capacity of a weapon by its throw-weight only. It is true also that the ultimate destructive power (kill probability) of a weapon depends on the accuracy as well as throw-weight of the warhead. In the case of the USA the introduction of the MX and Trident D-5 systems would greatly enhance the accuracy of its missiles. For instance, although the throw weight of the MX is about half that of the SS-18, the MX incorporates the most modern technology and is expected to be more accurate than the SS-18. Clearly the same gross yardstick of limiting the throw-weight or yield cannot be applied to the strategic arsenals of both countries as a summary reduction in throw-weight would mean inequitably large effective reduction for the Soviets.

The US proposals do not give an indication about cruise missiles. According to the 1979 treaty (now discarded by both) there were limits on the average number of air-launched cruise missiles carried by long-range bombers. The Soviet Union has not so far made any comments on this aspect of cruise missiles, but the US defence plan includes the cruise missile in a big way, there being plans to place between 6,000 and 10,000 cruise missiles on long-range bombers and an equally high number to be deployed with the US Navy. A cruise missile with a nuclear warhead can be used for retaliation because of its high survivability in a first strike. According to reports, the US Administration considers cruise missiles to be stabilising weapons and therefore does not consider limiting them. The Soviet Union however may not agree to reduction in long-range ballistic missiles and bombers without commensurate limits on cruise missiles.

The question of verification remains a vexed issue. Going by the earlier experience of SALT I, each side has been suspicious of the other circumventing Treaty stipulations (SALT I, for instance) in spite of the provisions for verification of compliance by 'National Technical Means', that is, satellite and ground sensors and the Standing Consultative Commission for resolving issues. The Soviet Union, however, has shown greater faith in the efficacy of the inspection procedures, insisting that the 'national means' must have priority over any other means that can be worked out. During an interview with *Der Spiegel* last year, President Brezhnev deplored the fact that 'it is in the US that all sorts of plans are being discussed in earnest as to how inter-continental missiles could be hidden more reliably and could be placed beyond inspection by national technical means'. But US suspicions too cannot be easily removed because of the overall opacity of the Soviet system.

The difficulties in the SALT II treaty were due to the fact that the Treaty specifies equal limits, category by category and on the aggregate number of launches, whereas the number of warheads deployed is constrained only in indirect terms by putting a large maximum on the allowed warheads (that is, 14 re-entry vehicles per submarine-launched Ballistic Missile and 10 per ICBM along with a freeze on current force loadings per type of ICBM). In other words, such stipulations may serve as an incentive for developing large, highly MIRVed (Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry Vehicle) missiles. This trend is seen in the Soviet modern missiles, namely the SS-18 with 10 re-entry vehicles and SS-19 with six, which have created concern within the US about the validity of SALT II itself and constitute one main reason why the US has not ratified the treaty. While the large size of the Soviet ICBMs make it inequitable to place such maximum limits, there seems to be a problem of verification if any more detailed specifications are incorporated.

If the Reagan offer is a preliminary negotiating stance, then perhaps after the talks begin, there may be some progress. But on the other hand, some newspaper reports suggest, the Reagan offer was made after elaborate discussion between the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency supported by the civilians in the Pentagon and the State Department; the final position may tend to be more rigid — especially since President Reagan has talked again of negotiating from a position of strength. It appears from these reports that

(*Continued on page 27*)

The Second Special Session on Disarmament of the UN General Assembly, due to begin in the first week of June 1982, will be held in an atmosphere vastly different from that at the time of the First Special Session in 1978. There is pervasive fear now among the populations of the industrialised countries of possible use of nuclear weapons, with obvious consequences. Apart from the massive anti-nuclear demonstrations all over Western Europe, even in the USA the people are becoming increasingly concerned, as symbolised, for example, by the new Ground Zero movement, described as a response to fear among US citizens of "the threat to their security presented by the possibility that the Soviet Union and the United States might launch nuclear weapons against each other as part of a nuclear war." The poorer nations containing the vast majority of mankind watch with dismay the escalating wastage of valuable resources that, diverted, could totally transform the lives of their peoples. Even those non-nuclear-weapon nations that signed the one-sided Non-proliferation Treaty have begun to realise the folly of believing in the theory of nuclear deterrence The disarmament talks at Geneva have got bogged down through the years, thanks to super-power rivalry. It is in this situation that the Second Special Session of the UN will discuss a whole range of crucial issues relating to disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament.

The Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, has just released a special number of its monthly journal, *Strategic Analysis*, presenting "a perspective from the developing world" influenced also by the impact of non-alignment. We reproduce here one of the instructive articles from the special number (April-May 1982).— Editor

UN Special Session

Disarmament: Tortous Course

Mankind today is confronted with an unprecedented threat of self-extinction arising from the massive and competitive accumulation of the most destructive weapons ever produced. Existing arsenals of nuclear weapons alone are more than sufficient to destroy all life on earth. Failure of efforts to halt and reverse the arms race, in particular the nuclear arms race, increases the danger of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Yet the arms race continues. Military budgets are constantly growing with enormous consumption of human and material resources. The increase in weapons, especially nuclear weapons, far from helping to strengthen international security, on the contrary weakens it. The vast stockpiles and tremendous build-up of arms and armed forces and the competition for qualitative refinement of weapons of all kinds to which scientific resources and technological advances are diverted, pose incalculable threats to peace. This situation both reflects and aggravates international tensions, sharpens conflicts in various regions of the world, hinders the process of detente, exacerbates the differences between opposing military alliances, jeopardises the security of all states, heightens the sense of insecurity among all states, including the non-nuclear-weapon states and increases the threat of nuclear war.

So proclaimed the Final Document adopted by the UN General Assembly Special Session on Disarmament on June 30, 1978. The Second Special Session, being held this June-July, takes place in more alarming circumstances than four years ago. The arms race has intensified. New weapons have joined the arsenals, military budgets have skyrocketed, and confrontation has replaced the spirit of detente. The world has become a far more dangerous place.

Currently, the arms race swallows up more than 600 billion dollars. Armaments expenditure in 1980, around 500 billion dollars, was the equivalent of the total investment in all developing countries, and nearly 19 times greater than the official development assistance provided by the Western developed countries to developing countries. It equals, to put it differently, the gross output of 340 million people of Latin America or 1.3 billion people living in Africa and South Asia.

Of this stupefying figure, the industrialised world spends around 84 per cent and the developing world only 16 per cent. And here comes a paradox. Of the 120 wars fought all over the world between 1945 and 1976, only six occurred in the industrialised world, all the rest had been fought in the developing world. The number of wars in the developing world might even be higher if the figures are computed up to 1982. Thus, most of the arms build-up and arms spending takes place among countries that have had very few wars in the last 37 years. The argument has ensued, that armed preparedness, especially nuclear, has effected deterrence among the industrialised nations, leading them to shun war. Those who speak for the arms race argue that sustained defence expenditure has ensured their security and has therefore been worthwhile. In the popular notion, King Atom has preserved peace in Europe and the rest of the industrialised world. Faced with such a perception, reversal of the arms race becomes extremely difficult.

The period 1945-1970 was also one of continuous growth and prosperity in the industrialised world; the average growth rate was 4-6 per cent and there was near full employment during most of this period. Such prosperity, which was unprecedented, went hand in hand with high defence expenditure and preservation of peace in the industrialised world for an unbroken 25 years — which again was unheard of before. The upshot of this was a general complacency that the arms race did not hurt, economically or socially, and that it could be kept in check. In such circumstances the arms race has developed a momentum, born of the stress placed on qualitative improvements in weaponry.

The emphasis on qualitative aspects of weaponry has also profoundly affected the character of the arms race. To quote the UN Report on the Relationship Between Disarmament and development.

> As the complexity of weapons increased so did the time required for development, testing and deployment. The lead time or gestation period of a modern weapon system is now of the order of seven to ten years. Each side must therefore focus its attention not so much on the capabilities of the weapons the opponent already has, but on the capabilities of those he might be able to deploy five or ten years in the future. This anticipatory process, strongly fuelled by secrecy and prudently conservative assumptions on the opponent's scientific and technological prowess, both accelerated the pace of change and intensified the commitment to military research and development. When both sides are doing the same thing there is a high probability, given even roughly comparable technological opportunities and constraints, that each will eventually produce the developments anticipated by the other. Indeed it would seem that it took only a few experiences of this kind in the early post-war years to generate the presumption in both the United States and the Soviet Union that what was technically feasible should be viewed as militarily and politically necessary.

Every category of major weapons has a life span of about 10-15 years. A completely new model comes along, incorporating new advances in technology. In combat, the marginal effectiveness of weaponry is crucial, and this is the compulsion to replace one generation of weapon or equipment with a more sophisticated successor.

New generations of strategic, theatre and tactical weaponry are replacing the earlier generations. In the US arsenal, the Mx missile is to replace the Titan missile; the Trident-C4 and D-5 missiles are to replace the Poseidon and Polaris submarine-borne missiles; air-launched cruise missiles are to improve the utility of the B-52 bombers, which themselves are in due course to be replaced by a new bomber. The Soviet Union has developed and deployed SS-20 missiles; SS-21, SS-22 and SS-23 missiles are reported to be under development to replace the vintage SS-4s and SS-5s. The United States is developing Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missiles as theatre weapons. Britain and France as well have undertaken similar modernisation programmes. The United States also has a major modernisation programme of command, control and communication at an estimated cost of 18 billion dollars. Neutron weapons and nuclear shells for use of artillery are also being added to the arsenals. The US is to produce in the next few years some 10,000-14,000 additional nuclear warheads of various explosive yields. The USSR also must be implementing similar measures.

Americans justify their new armaments programme with the argument that during 1970-1975 the Soviets added SS-16, SS-17, SS-18 and SS-19 to their arsenal while they themselves did not deploy any new missile after Minuteman III; that with the heavier throw weight, multiple warheads and better accuracy of the Soviet missiles and with a larger number of them landbased, the US landbased missile force was becoming vulnerable to a first strike; that a 'window of vulnerability' was opening and that it had to be rectified by development of the more accurate and more sophisticated Mx missile which could also carry more warheads and air-launched cruise missiles which would enable strategic bombers to deliver the warheads from a distance without having to penetrate very deeply the adversary's air defence systems.

Western Europe had lived with the Soviet SS-4 and SS-5 missiles for well over 20 years, but the new SS 20 missile was deemed to pose a threat to it. The new missile would seriously affect the strategic balance in Europe and subject it to a process of 'Finlandisation', it was said. And so NATO has decided to have 572 theatre missiles — 464 ground-launched cruise missiles and 108 Pershing II ballistic missiles — installed in Western Europe. But this brings Moscow under an asymmetric threat — of a theatre missile with flight time of only five minutes — which President Brezhnev has already warned the Soviet Union will not accept and will counter by bringing the US under an analogous threat.

Another favourite argument of the Western strategic community is that the Soviet Union, after achieving nuclear parity, has displayed an increasing lack of restraint in intervening in the developing world. And so we have the 'linkage thesis', which argues for the US re-establishing strategic superiority. In the process, the historical fact that even when the US had overwhelming nuclear superiority the Soviet Union as a major global power exercised its influence in various parts of the developing world, Congo, the Indo-Chinese peninsula, West Asia and Cuba, is forgotten. At one time Dr. Kissinger himself exclaimed, "What in God's name is this strategic superiority?" and argued that at the levels of stockpiles in the two super-powers' possession numbers no longer mattered; but others have pointed out that deterrence is a matter of perception, therefore numbers do count and are politically meaningful. This view makes nuclear arsenals the currency of power. To buttress this view the Non-proliferation Treaty was promoted, treating nuclear-weapon powers as a class apart, and exempt from safeguards. This thesis appears to have won acceptance, and the US has launched on a programme of adding thousands of nuclear warheads to its stockpile of 25,000-35,000.

The Soviet Union stands by the concept of equal security. It will not allow the US to regain strategic superiority and will strive to maintain the parity established in SALT I and SALT II. The Soviet Union, besides, has three other nuclear adversaries — Britain, France and China. The first two are modernising their nuclear forces, which will give them a capability to pose a significant and independent threat to the Soviet Union; hence their arsenal can no longer be left out of count. The Chinese have attained inter-continental missile capability and are steadily adding to their nuclear arsenal.

New generations of weaponry are coming in at the conventional level also. Even nuclear-weapon powers devote more than 80-85 per cent of their military budgets to conventional arms. New F-14, F-15, F-16 and F-18 aircraft are replacing the earlier-generation F-4s, A-4s, A6s in the West; the Tornado and Mirage-2000 are being introduced by Western Europe. On the Soviet side MiG-27s, 29s and new Sukhoi aircraft are replacing the MiG-21s and earlier Sukhois. The British Challenger, the German Leopard II, the US XM-I and the Soviet T-72 and T-80 are the new-generation tanks. New anti-tank, air-to-air and air defence missiles are also being introduced. Both the super-powers' naval build-up also is growing spectacularly. The Soviet Union is reported to be building nuclear-powered aircraft-carriers and the US Defence Secretary has declared the United States' intention to re-establish its naval supremacy. This equivalence of the super-powers, with matching nuclear and conventional capability and powerful global navies, is historically unprecedented. In other times, this would have led to a war to settle who was superior. But now, the super-powers are, in Robert Oppenheimer's words, like two scorpions in a bottle and, to quote Dr Kissinger, are doomed to coexist.

This central arms race has a universal impact, even among non-aligned nations that profess to keep out of the bipolar rivalry. It is only a matter of time before any sophisticated conventional weaponry introduced in the industrialised nations finds its way to developing countries. Some of them who have surplus resources from oil buy them; for the major arms producers this is a godsend for recycling petrodollars. Arms supplies are also made to developing countries because of significant strategic locations, supply of vital raw materials or the need to attract and retain political support. Neighbours of such countries are then compelled to acquire matching weaponry from the same or alternative sources. Not all these secondary arms races can be explained in relation to the central super-power rivalry, but by and large they are sustained by supplies of arms by five or six industrialised nations, mainly the super-powers. Thus the central arms race has in a sense an induction effect on all arms races.

Some reasons for the rise in the developing countries' arms expenditure are very legitimate and understandable. Dozens of new nations have been decolonised in the last two decades. Most of them had to raise and equip modest forces for their legitimate security needs. The developing countries in fact cannot be accused of excessive defence expenditure, leaving aside some of the oil-rich countries and a few other special cases. Between 1955 and 1980 the Latin American share of global defence expenditure went up from 1 per cent to 1.8 per cent. Africa's share went up from 0.1 per cent to 1.7 per cent, but then, nearly 40 new countries became free in this period. In South Asia it rose from 0.6 to 1.1 per cent. The main increases were in the Middle East from 0.6 to 7.8 per cent and in the Far East from 1 per cent to 3.6 per cent. In other words, totalling up we find that while the global share of developing countries in defence expenditure between 1955 and 1980 as a whole rose by 12.8 per cent, the figure for the Middle East and Far East was 9.8 per cent. And most of the increases here can be imputed to super-power rivalry and influence.

In the period 1945-1976, out of the 115 wars that took place in the developing world, the industrialised countries intervened in 70 — the developed market economy countries in 64 and the socialist countries in six. Third World countries intervened on 17 occasions. In this period, a Brookings study says, the US attempted to project a posture of force 215 times and the Soviet Union 195 times. For the Third World, the probability of interventions by the industrialised world in the developing world is a major cause of concern.

The above account sets out in brief detail the nature and structure of the arms race in the world of today and its dynamics. A number of new technological developments are adding extra dimensions to the race. More important among these are (i) neutron weapons, (ii) the development of new chemical war agents and their deployment, (iii) new technologies for isotopic separation of plutonium, (iv) laser weapons for ABM system, (v) killer satellites, and (vi) development in anti-submarine warfare capabilities.

The US Administration has taken a decision to manufacture and stockpile neutron weapons. The ostensible justification is that this weapon will be able to destroy armour effectively with minimum collateral damage. But is opponents fear that this very advantage may lead to lowering of the nuclear threshold and lead to readier resort to the weapon. Troops subjected to neutron radiation do not all die instantly. Many of them face agonising and certain death in the next few hours, and they will be raging men not subject to discipline. If some of them have nuclear weapons with them — not necessarily neutron weapons — they may quite possibly use them with or without authorisation. Consequently, the advantage of minimum collateral damage may not last very long.

Of late chemical warfare agents have attracted significant attention. The US Administration has allocated 100 million dollars for 1981 and 500 million dollars for the next five years for manufacture of these weapons. The new chemical warfare weapons will be binary gases. Two gases, both harmless, are packed in two separate compartments in a shell or a bomb; they get mixed while in flight, forming a deadly gas. The US already has 42,000 tons of poison gas in stock. US estimates of Soviet stockpiles range from a tonnage smaller than the US stock to one many times greater. Negotiations for finalising a treaty to prohibit the use of chemical warfare agents have been going on in Geneva for several years, but are yet to produce tangible results.

Recent reports indicate that laser separation of the plutonium isotope-240 from isotope-239 has been achieved. The possibility of using this technology to produce weapon-grade plutonium consisting mostly of Pu-239, from reactor-grade plutonium which is a mixture of two isotopes, was considered in the US, in order to manufacture additional warheads. Finally it was decided to put up a new facility to produce weapon-grade plutonium. This development of laser separation has grave implications for the proposed comprehensive test ban treaty. The treaty is being advocated in the hope and belief that it would prevent testing of weapons underground to check how much the fissile material has deteriorated over periods of time, how such deterioration affects its explosive yield and generate other data required to maintain the nuclear arsenal at optimum efficiency. If laser isotopic separation is widely adopted, then it would make possible refining of plutonium from time to time and keeping up weapon-grade purity all the time. The treaty will not come in the way of weapon deployment and efficient maintenance of nuclear arsenals by the advanced nuclear-weapon powers who have already collected enough data with hundreds of weapon explosions but only hamper new nations from having efficient nuclear arsenals.

Yet another disturbing factor is the likely development of a laser-based anti ballistic missile system. In 1972 the two super-powers agreed to limit the deployment of ABM systems to two each and subsequently this was reduced to one. The USSR has deployed a system around its capital, the US has chosen not to deploy any. The main consideration for this restraint was technological. With the state of technology at that time nuclear explosions were used to vaporise incoming nuclear warheads, but this produced radar black-outs allowing further warheads to come in undetected. The new laser-based technology under development will destroy the incoming warhead with a high-energy laser beam. Since this does not produce any ionisation there will be no radar black-outs. Were this system to be successful, the 1972 ABM Treaty which comes up for renewal this year may not be extended or may be extended for a short period only and then given up. The abandonment of extensive deployment of ABM systems ensured that the mutual assured destruction doctrine prevailed. If the new ABM were to come in it would reinforce the war fighting doctrinal protagonists and lower the nuclear threshold.

As regards surveillance systems, satellites which give real time warning of any missile lift-off in the adversary's territory are integral to them. The super-powers have an agreement that neither will interfere in the national technical means of verification of the other. Both, however, appear to have tested satellite-killing systems. This might mean that one of the very first steps in any hostilities between the super-powers will be destruction of the surveillance System. With the loss of such surveillance capability either super-power is likely to act on a worst-assumption basis and compulsively escalate to uncontrolled massive nuclear exchange.

Nuclear-missile submarines constitute an invulnerable second-strike capability. Their existence ensures that the adversary is not tempted to launch a disarming first strike of landbased systems. But to be invulnerable they have to be undetectable. The opacity of ocean waters and their vast expanse make this possible. Under-water sonar arrays have been installed on the ocean floor in the Atlantic and the Pacific by the United States to keep track of submarines passing over them. Anti-submarine warfare technology, continuously refining detection techniques, is under development. With any breakthrough making location of the adversary's submarines possible with a high degree of confidence, the doctrine of a disarming first strike will spread from land to the oceans. There is also the counter-effort to complicate surveillance by having large long-endurance submarines which, having crossed the listening barriers, may get lost in the vast expanses of the Southern Atlantic, the Southern Pacific and the Indian Ocean. This may explain the trend to build very large and deep diving submarines like the reported Typhoon class by the Soviet Union, with a displacement of over 24,000-27,000 tons.

All these disturbing technological developments do not necessarily mean that a stage has been reached completely eroding mutual deterrence and enabling one side to launch a disarming attack on the other. There is today increasing realisation that command, control and communication infrastructure is very vulnerable and may not be able to cope with the exigencies of nuclear war after the first few nuclear shots are fired. Secondly, for a massive disarming first strike thousands of nuclear warheads will have to be exploded quickly and over large expanses of the northern hemisphere. The impact of this on ecology will be mind-boggling, with the enormous radioactive fall-out, depletion of protective ozone layer, etc. For these reasons, a calculated outbreak of nuclear war between the super-powers belongs in the realm of madness. But an uncalculated outbreak is becoming increasingly possible, in view of difficulties in keeping centralised control over ever-increasing and widely dispersed nuclear arsenals. This in fact is the real problem of horizontal proliferation.

A dangerous trend has been in evidence since 1986 of increasing legitimisation of use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. The misnamed Non-proliferation Treaty in fact aims at legitimising the nuclear weapons in the arsenals of nuclear-weapon powers and compelling non-nuclear-weapon nations to acknowledge their legitimacy. It also vested the possession of nuclear weapons with prestige and exempted nuclear-weapon powers from all safeguards. Most industrialised nations profess to be non-nuclear, but they all rely on nuclear war doctrines for their security, permit nuclear weapons

(*Continued on page 32*)

Bench, Bar and Society

Failures and Opportunities

O. CHINNAPPA REDDY

CHANDIGARH is second home to me. When I went back to Hyderabad from Chandigarh, the *Tribune* was kind enough to refer to me as Punjab's unofficial ambassador to the South. I must hasten to say that whenever I refer to Punjab, I mean both Punjab and Haryana. Punjab showered its affection on me and my wife when we were here and we had grown to love the Punjabis for their rusticity, their simplicity, their candour, their vigour, their tenacity, their hospitality, and their warm friendship. Now, in Punjab as elsewhere, all sorts of fissiparous tendencies are showing up and are being exploited by various vested interests. Punjab is India's strength and Punjabis are, if I may say so, the true spirit of the unity of India. You will find them in all parts of the country, and wherever they are, you will find them going about their business as sons of that soil, with no sense of strangeness or aloofness and without ever drawing themselves into any shell of their own, as people from the South like me are apt to do. The warriors of Punjab have always defended India's frontiers and fought against foreign aggression, invasion and occupation. I am sure they will do equally to preserve India's unity and integrity.

On occasions like this, where lawyers are gathered, it is customary to exalt the so-called nobility of the legal profession and pay tributes to it for its alleged services to society, its independence and so on. I will refrain from doing so and I request you to pardon my impudence. In fact, if we but walk across the road, stop a few of the passers-by and ask them what they think of us lawyers, we may learn quite a few home truths. We will learn that they view us as expert craftsman, proficient in the mysteries of the mystic language of the law, generally available for sale to the highest bidder to do the bidding of other men. If the person is gifted with a sour tongue he may even describe us as parasites. If we protest our selflessness and dedication, he may silently laugh at us in derision. However much we may posture and preen and claim vast importance, we may not convince him of our disinterestedness and devotion. Let us not, therefore, be under any delusion and let us rid ourselves of all exaggerated sense of self-importance. The plain truth of the matter is that ours is an occupation which involves our espousing other people's causes but always for a nice, round, fat fee.

In the past, the legal profession, which naturally includes the judiciary, has generally kept aloof from the influences of the creative forces in society and from the interaction of new ideas. It has generally been a symbol of conservatism and a pillar of the old oder. *Status quo* has been the motto of the legal system, and the traditional role of the legal profession has been no more than the service of its clients, the maintenance of the social, political and economic order of the day, in the creation of which it played no part, and, in the words of an erstwhile president of the Canadian Bar Association, "the performance of the house-keeping function of the society without any responsibility for the form and content that it takes."

This contribution is the address delivered by Justice Chinnappa Reddy, Judge of the Supreme Court, while inaugurating the Chandigarh unit of the Indian Association of Lawyers on May 8, 1982.

In the process of making the legal profession an exclusive craft, lawyers have succeeded in mystifying the law and becoming its priests. And, often enough, the legal profession has been identified, not as the champion of justice, social, economic and political, but as the able mouthpiece and the loyal lieutenant of powerful economic, social and political, special interests. Like astrologers, palmists, magicians and other prophets of false sciences, lawyers and judges have developed a jargon of their own which forms a bond of union among them, setting them apart from the rest of society and reinforcing in them complacence and resistance to reform. The language of the law has become an instrument of exploitation, progressively so as the complexity of the law increases enormously. The fantastic prolixity and obscurity of the statutes, the complexity and the expense of the court procedure, the artificiality and irrationality of the modes of proof, all add to the mystery and the atmosphere of awe created around lawyers, judges and courts. Judges are made to appear as the high priests in temples of justice presided over by an awesome, blind deity.

All this must go. The winds of change are blowing, indeed they are blowing fast and furious. Elsewhere momentous and even convulsive changes are taking place. Social, economic and political systems are undergoing rapid and radical transformation. Unsolved old problems are taking new shape. Multiple new problems are cropping up. Old or new, the problems have acquired a sense of urgency, of expectency and of imminence. The time is appropriate to review the working and to evaluate the achievements and the failures of the legal system under which courts have been functioning. The time is ripe to think in terms of adapting, changing and revolutionising the about-to-wither system to meet the demands of the newly-awakened socio-economic and political consciousness of our people. We have to ask ourselves, how has the existing legal system served the people in the past? What are its defects? What are the needs of the people today?

Is the existing system designed to meet the new challenging demands and to advance the aspirations of the people? Is it not a fact that there are inherent limitations in the existing legal system which make it rigid and averse to basic social, economic and political changes?

Is it not a fact that these inherent limitations of the legal system to bring about changes have, not infrequently, afforded the politicians an alibi to cover their own failings? What are the changes that should be brought about to rebut the politicians' alibi and to make the legal system respond affirmatively to the demands for change and play a positive role in the establishment of a socialist, secular democracy? What does socialism mean in the context of the existing legal system? Does it mean equal distribution of wealth among the wealthy and denial to the needy? What does socialism mean to judges and lawyers? Does it merely imply religious freedom and not eradication of ignorance, myth and superstition? These are questions which require an immediate answer if the rule of law is to flourish and if the legal system, courts and lawyers are to be relevant to society.

The first step, therefore, is to build a legal philosophy upon secular and socialist ideals. To do that we must take stock of history and the processes of history, since there can be no social, economic or political philosophy which is not founded on a historical base. The future cannot be shaped without peeping into the past and looking at the present.

Let us therefore take a hurried glance at recent legal history. Half a century ago the country was under the rule of imperialist overlords and feudal lords. The imperialist overlords found themselves involved in a life and death struggle with the fascist forces of Germany, Japan and Italy. The imperialists claimed that they were fighting for the ideals of liberty, equality and justice. The forces of revolutionary change in India spearheaded by the emerging Indian bourgeoisie, inspired by the same ideals of liberty, equality and justice which the colonial lords claimed had inspired them in their fight for survival against fascism, put an end to colonial and feudal rule. The colonial rule of the British came to an end with the passing of the Indian Independence Act. The feudal authority of the princes similarly ended with the signing of the instruments of accession by them. The triumphant revolutionary bourgeoisie gave us the Constitution. The battles with colonial and feudal forces were still fresh in their memory when the Constitution was made and so certain freedoms and rights, such as freedom of speech and expression, freedom of assembly and association, freedom of movement, right to life and liberty, right to equality before the law, right to equal opportunity and so on, were recognised as basic and incorporated in the Constitution as fundamental Rights.

The Constitution-makers, essentially bourgeois in character, were careful enough to forge an armour for their own protection (i) by subjecting several of the freedoms to reasonable restrictions, (ii) by including the right to property among fundamental rights, (iii) by providing for preventive detention, and (iv) by relegating primary rights, such as the right to work, the right to an adequate means of livelihood, the right to a living wage, the right to equal pay, the right to share the material resources of the community, the right to easy access to justice and so on, to the category of Directive Principles which could not be enforced in a court of law. Courts and in particular the Supreme Court were specially entrusted with the task of protecting Fundamental Rights. It was apparently thought that the judiciary, belonging to the same class as the rulers and steeped in the British tradition and always ready to borrow from American experience, could always be relied upon to assert and expound all the maxims of interpretation perfected by the bourgeois ruling classes in Britain and America.

Soon after its emergence as the ruling force, the bourgeoisie put an end to the last vestiges of feudalism by the enactment of legislations abolishing zamindaris in the various States. To prevent any challenge to the legislations by the zamindars, Parliament was quick to pass the First and Seventeenth Amendments of the Constitution. The zamindars fought losing battles in courts. The validity of the First and Seventeenth Amendments was upheld by the Supreme Court in Sankari Prasad and Sajjan Singh. The Supreme Court sustained the power of parliament to amend the Constitution, including the right to abridge or take away any of the Fundamental Rights.

But the non-bourgeois revolutionary forces were not content with the abolition of the princely order and the zamindaris. They wanted more. They wanted drastic land reforms. The pressure of these forces resulted in some half-hearted legislative measures imposing ceilings on holdings of land. They were soon questioned in courts. A class-dominated court, unable to grow out of 19th century bourgeois liberal, legal ideology, responded with Golaknath, to deny to Parliament the very right which it had earlier conceded in Sankari Prasad and Sajjan Singh, that is, the right to amend the Constitution so as to abridge or annul any of the Fundamental Rights. But the forces of change continued their pressure and succeeded in getting Golaknath reversed in Keshavananda Bharati. But they lost even as they appeared to win. The Court built another citadel around the Constitution and said Parliament did not have the power to amend the Constitution so as to alter its basic structure. The Court reserved to itself the right to say what the basic structure was and thus to adjudicate about every future amendment of the Constitution. The forces of change as well as the forces of *status quo* are seeking to use the basic structure theory to contend that whatever amendment is disadvantageous to them alters the basic structure of the Constitution.

The ambivalent response of the Court in the past to the challenges by forces of change and forces of *status quo* is well illustrated by the two cases of Gopalan *vs* State of Madras and R.C. Cooper *vs* Union of India. In the first case, Gopalan, a Communist, detained without trial under the provisions of the Preventive Detention Act, claimed that the fundamental rights guaranteed by the various clauses of Article 19 had been denied to him as the law providing for preventive detention did not provide a fair procedure. He claimed that the provisions of Article 19 should be read with the provisions of Articles 21 and 22 of the Constitution. The Supreme Court held that Article 22 was uncontrolled by Article 19 and, in effect, denied procedural fairness and freedom to the detenu. The response of the Court was different when it was the right to property they had to deal with. In Cooper's case, it was held that a law providing for acquisition of property had to satisfy the requirements, not only of Article 31, but also of Article 19. The observations in Gopalan's case were announced to be incorrect. Via the right to property, the right to procedural fairness was secured to the citizen. The forces of change have now seized upon Cooper's case to demand fairness in every other matter.

In Shivkant Shukla's case, a terrible blow was dealt to all progressive forces by the Court shutting its very doors to everyone seeking a writ of habeas corpus during the internal Emergency. Article 21 was rendered practically lifeless. But the forces of change recovered from the shock. A good deal was not only repaired but a judicial road-sign was erected in Maneka Gandhi's case pointing the path to new legal pastures. It was laid down that any law encroaching upon the right to life and liberty guaranteed by Article 21 had to satisfy the requirements of Articles 14 and 19 and, therefore, could not be arbitrary, unfair or unreasonable.

Again, in Minerva Mills the Court pulled down the Directive Principles of State Policy from the position of primacy accorded to them in recent years, while in Waman Rao the Court appeared to swear by the same Directive Principles.

These inconsistencies are not accidental. They are not variables dependent on the idiosyncrasies of individual judges. They are, as I had occasion to mention elsewhere, conflicts between the class and conscience of judges. A judge belongs to a class. He possesses a conscience by which I mean, and this I want to make clear, not any inner voice but a consciousness of the process of history. When the interests of class dominate the judge's thinking, unconsciously though it be, we have Golaknath, Shivkant Shukla and Minerva Mills. When conscience sways over the judge's mind, we have Shankari Prasad, Maneka Gandhi and Waman Rao.

What I am at pains to point out is that the legal system is tainted by its class structure and character, inevitably so. If the legal profession desires to be relevant to the society of the future, it is necessary for it to rise above its class character, to participate in the evolution of a new socialist legal philosophy tuned to our Constitution and to actively involve itself in the struggle of the exploited and underprivileged people to press their claims for justice and equal access to national wealth, forgetting petty loyalties of blood and soil, that is, of community, religion, language and region. Already, there are favourable signs of ferment and change of judicial attitudes. Lawyers and judges are engaged in a search for new frontiers, new strategies and, necessarily, a new philosophy. Witness the great jurisprudence of Habeas Corpus, Natural Justice and Ultra Vires which has grown in the last four or five years. Witness the Court's pronouncements in Maneka Gandhi, Ranganatha Reddy, the Bihar Blindings, Randhir Singh, etc. Nowhere in the world will you find much jurisprudential movement.

But that is not enough. We have a long way to go. The way from ignorance to secularism and from poverty to socialism is long and thorny. Let us breathe life into the concepts of secularism and socialism so valiantly proclaimed in the Constitution. Let us forget all communal, regional, tribal loyalties and march forward, hand in hand, heart with heart, towards a better world with loyalty and commitment to the human race and human life. ☐

Sri Lanka's Code of Conduct

On March 31, 1982, Sri Lanka's Cabinet adopted a code of conduct for Ministers laying clear guidelines to ensure that no holder of ministerial office would be faced with the situations of conflict between duty and private interest. The Code of Conduct for Ministers was adopted along with the Code of Conduct for those holding public office. Both codes were prepared by the Law Commission and were submitted for consideration to the Cabinet at the request of President J.R. Jayewardene.

FOR MINISTERS

The Code of Conduct for Ministers states:

1. At meetings of the Cabinet and its committees, a Minister should disclose to his colleagues when he has an interest which does or might reasonably be thought to conflict with his public duty as a Minister. His declaration should be noted in the Cabinet records. The Minister should then either indicate that he will not take part in the discussion or else secure the explicit authorisation of his colleagues for taking part.

2. When directing the business of his Ministry or any department, a Minister, whether of Cabinet or non-Cabinet rank, should inform the President of any apparent or real conflict of interest that may arise. The President, unless he asks a Minister to divest himself of the interest, should either arrange for another Minister to deal with the matter or else give explicit authorisation to the original Minister to proceed with it.

3. Apart from the declaration of assets and liabilities made under section 3 of the Declaration

of Assets and Liabilities Law No. 1 of 1975 by Ministers and Deputy Ministers such Ministers should disclose to the President the following information:

(*a*) beneficial interest of the Minister or a member of his immediate family under any trust and in nominee company with a statement of the nature of operations of the trust or company;

(*b*) any trust of which the Minister is a trustee with the statement of beneficiaries and the nature of the operations of the trust;

(*c*) partnerships and joint venture interests with the statement of the nature of operations;

(*d*) shareholdings under procedure which will disclose the ultimate interests in circumstances where private companies are used as a screen to mask holdings directly or indirectly in other companies.

4. A Minister should divest his shares and similar interests in any company or business involved with his ministry or any department thereof.

5. A Minister should resign all directorships in public and private companies which engage in significant trading operations but may retain directorships in private companies which operate farms or agricultural holdings or investments but not otherwise.

6. A Minister should cease to engage in professional practice.

7. A Minister should cease to be involved in the daily routine work of any business.

FOR PUBLIC SERVANTS

The Code for Public Servants states:

1. An office holder should be frank and honest in official dealing with his colleagues.

2. An office holder should not subordinate his duties to his private interests: he should avoid situations in which his private interest, whether pecuniary or otherwise, conflicts or is likely to conflict or might reasonably be thought to conflict with his public duty.

3. When an office holder possesses directly or indirectly an interest which conflicts or is likely to conflict with his public duty, or improperly influence his conduct in the discharge of his responsibilities in respect of some matter with which he is concerned he should disclose that interest according to the prescribed procedures.

4. When the interests of members of his immediate family are involved the office holder should disclose those interests to the extent that they are known to him. Members of the immediate family will ordinarily comprise only the office holder's spouse and dependent children, but may include other members of his household or family when their interests are closely connected with his.

5. When an office holder possesses an interest which conflicts or is likely to conflict or might reasonably be thought to conflict with the duties of his office and such interest is not prescribed or required as a qualification for that office, he should forthwith divest himself of that interest or secure his removal from the duties in question or obtain authorisation of his superiors or colleagues to continue to discharge the duties; transfer to a trust or to a member of the office holders' family is not a sufficient divestment for the purpose. If immediate divestment would work significant hardship, possession of the interest should be dislosed to colleagues or superiors and authorisation obtained for temporary retention pending divestment.

6. An office holder should not use information obtained in the course of official duties to gain, directly or directly the pecuniary advantage or other benefit for himself or for any other person in particular. He should scrupulously avoid investment or other transactions about which he is or might reasnably be thought to have early or confidential information which might confer on him an unfair or improper advantage over other persons.

7. An office holder should avoid giving the impression that any person can improperly influence him or unduly enjoy his favour.

8. An office holder should not use or permit any other person to use facilities and services such as transport, stationery and secretarial or other services — provided by the State for use only in his official duties, for any purpose other than for and in the performance of those duties.

9. Public officers holding any of the posts or positions mentioned in the schedule to this rule should obtain official assent if they wish to take up employment within two years of resignation or retirement from public employment in the following business or other bodies:—

(*a*) those in or anticipating contractual relationship with the Government;

(*b*) those in which the government is a shareholder;

(*c*) those in receipt of government loans guarantees or other forms of capital assistance;

(*d*) those with which the officer's department is otherwise in a special relationship; and

(*e*) those associations whose primary purpose is to lobby Ministers, Members of Parliament and Government departments and authorities.

(*Courtesy; Tribune, April 24, 1982*)☐

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DISCUSSION

Scientific Temper

A Statement on Scientific Temper signed by outstanding intellectuals, released by P.N. Haksar at the Nehru Centre in Bombay (*Mainstream*, July 25, 1981), has touched off rethinking in a broad spectrum of our national life. Eleven comments on the Statement have so far been published in *Mainstream* (August 29, October 10, November 14 and December 19, 1981, January 2 and 16, February 6, and April 17, 1982). We publish here a contribution by T.G. Vaidyanathan, Professor of English, Bangalore University. —*Editor*

Tackling the Real Enemy

T.G. VAIDYANATHAN

READING "A Statement on Scientific Temper" (*Mainstream* July 25, 1981) with its imposing list of signatories was a painful ordeal in more senses than one. Thirty occurrences of the phrase "Scientific Temper" (out of a grand total of 32) without the benefit of the definite article have persuaded me that the written English of our leading spokesmen for science needs a great deal of improvement. I was almost tempted to write a companion piece to Nandy's entitled "The Case of the Missing Article" but desisted, urgently as this is required in the interests of the science of English grammar. I shall, instead, turn to the arguments advanced by our distinguished friends. They take the form of a series of broadsides against the traditional enemies of science ('superstitions' like astrology etc., and, by implication, religion) before outlining what the authors take to be the *sine qua non* of the 'scientific temper' (which I refuse to capitalise because this does not further either the cause of English or of science).

I shall begin with the case of Christianity since the signatories clearly regard it as having been the chief obstacle in the path of scientific progress in the 17th century. Consider their observation that "the obscurantism enforced by the Church led Italy to losing the benefit of the Renaissance." In the opinion of the signatories this is singularly deplorable since Galileo "the harbinger of modern science" was an Italian! Let us deplore instead the implicit chauvinism of this approach and, in passing, remind the venerable authors of their own favourite maxim: "Science is universal." Now what about their more substantial charge against the Roman Catholic Church? The same story goes from Condillac and Condorcet down to the 20th century heirs of the Enlightenment like Lecty, Dewey and Betrand Russell that, since Galileo was persecuted by the Spanish Inquisition, this is the norm for all religions everywhere in the world. But, we must remind ourselves that very often the Church authorities and institutions were on very good terms with the scientists. Copernicus dedicated his book *De Revolutionibus Orbium* to Pope Paul III! Galileo, himself, up to 1632 at least, was a good friend of the Pope and other leading Churchmen. Descartes, "that Robespierre of the scientific revolution" (as Koestler calls him), owed his career to Cardinal Berulle. Then to top it all, the Royal Society in England was started and led by a group of Anglican bishops. It almost looks as if science would not have got off the ground but for the fostering care of certain Churchmen and some religious institutions!

The truth is that a good deal of the burning, torture and incarceration that took place during the 16th and 17th centuries — which sorely troubles the modern conscience — was not due to the alleged battle between religion and science but due to internecine technological warfare. The great Servetus (1511-1533), whose scientific contribution was enormous, was burned — so the story goes — because of a misplaced theological adjective! Calvin had him killed because Servetus prayed to the son of the Eternal Father and *not* to the Eternal Son of the Father. Similarly heresy hunters of the Inquisition were more intent on catching secret Jews, secret Muslims and Lutherans than scientists *per se*. Most scientists probably died — like the rest of us — of old age or that notorious killer — medical malpractice. Unless, of course, like Bruno they combined their scientific work with religious interpretations. But theological heretics like Archbishop Carranza, the primate of Spain, had a very rough time indeed. They were forced to spend a lifetime in prison before being forced to recant (without being told what their crime was!), *then* being tortured to see if they really recanted, *then* being forced to name all the other heretics they knew, and *then* the Inquisition authorities would decide the proper punishment. On the other hand, scientific 'heretics' like Galileo had a comparatively cushy time. Against all precedent he was not even confined to the dungeons of the Inquisition. He didn't, contrary to legend, spend a single day of his life in a prison cell (Bercht follows legend rather than historical fact in confining Galileo in prison in his play). He was actually allowed, *during his trial*, to stay first at the Tuscan Ambassador's Villa Medici and then he was assigned at 5-room flat in the Holy Office itself with a view of the Vatican gardens. He was even allowed a personal valet and the Ambassador's major domo looked after his food and wine. His 'imprisonment' was a mere formality spent first at the Grand Duke's villa at Triniti del Monte and then at the palace of the Archbishop Piccolomini of Siena. Even the weekly recitation on the 7 penitential psalms was delegated, with ecclesiastical consent, to his sister, Sister Maria Celesta, a Carmelite nun. Some martyrdom indeed!

In such a world dominated by theological strife, the 16th or 17th century scientist generally steered clear of the Church. If anything he sought to harmonise the new findings with the teachings of religion. Copernicus, himself, was not only a Catholic but a priest and a canon as well who was so esteemed by the Church that he was even called to Rome to participate in a Lateran Council under Leo X for the reform of the Gregorian calendar. He knew that a better understanding of Nature could only help in appreciating God's achievement and His message. He also knew how to interpret scriptural statements that were apparently in conflict with the data as allegorical, symbolical, metaphorical and so on. Kepler, in his mystical Kabbalastic frenzy, could see his monumental vision of the mathematisation of Nature as bringing him closer to knowing God and his Message. Galileo, himself, was a good Catholic who saw no real conflict between religion and science. In his oft-quoted "Letter to the Grand Duchess Christiana" he cited with approval the maxim of Cardinal Baronius that "the intention of the Holy Ghost is to teach us how one goes to heaven, not how heaven goes." His champion was himself a staunch Catholic, Father Tomasso Campenella, who in his famous *The Defence of Galileo, Mathematician of Florence* showed how all the apparent counter-evidence in the Bible and in the Church Fathers could be handled by traditionally acceptable exegetical techniques. In fact the new mechanistic worldview was accepted and propagated enthusiastically by Father Mersenne, Father Gassendi and Descartes. In fact the Jansenists of Port Royal became the leading advocates of Cartesian physics in France. They went on to reconcile religion and science by a sceptical *tour-de-force*. Since certain and necessary knowledge of the real world is impossible they argued that we developed an empirical science which, while hypothetically describing the phenomenal world, provides us with a pragmatic guide to living. Science does not and cannot give us a true picture of reality but merely provides predictions which can be verified. Religious knowledge, gained by faith and revelation, is not open to scientific, questions and sceptical doubting. This position found its most celebrated expression in the Pensies of Pascal.

The Catholic indictment of Galileo for propagating Copernican hypothesis does indeed mark the beginning of the parting of ways between religion and science. But the rupture was not inevitable and it was much more due to Galileo's intransigence, bad faith and personal vanity than due to the Church's intolerance. Even his way of stating the facts was "in itself ... not more true than the formulation of the Inquisition" as Whitehead has pointed out in his *Science and the Modern World* (1925). All this, of course, finds no place in the rationalist's mythography of our times where he is presented "as the Maid of Orleans of Science, the St. George who slew the dragon of the Inquisition" (Koestler, *The Sleepwalkers* 1959, p 358). But as we have already noted the Inquisition treated him rather well and, in fact, let him off the hook very lightly. As Koestler remarks: "From a purely legal point of view the sentence was entirely a miscarrage of justice ... the judgement hushes up the incriminating contents of the book by stating that Galileo had represented the Copernican system as merely 'probable' — which is a whale of an understatement. It also hushes up the fact that Galileo had been lying and perjuring himself before his judges by pretending that he had written the book in refutation of Copernicus ..." (*ibid.* p 501). No, Galileo was not the stuff of which martyrs are made. In any case the claim of our distinguished signatories that "adherence to obscurantism enforced by the Church led Italy to losing the benefit of the Renaissance" ignores the very course of Italian history. As Joseph Ben-David has pointed out: "There is indeed no sign of cessation of scientific activity following the condemnation of Galileo. It is true that the activities of the Lincei were curtailed after the first attempt of the Curia to suppress Galileo. But some of the members and disciples of Galileo continued to be active throughout the first half of the century, and they participated in the foundation of the other famous Italian academy of the 17th century the Cimento (1657 — 1667)" (*The Scientist's Role in Society*, 1971, p 64). Actually the next generation saw the rise of Toricelli, Cavallieri and Borelli whose contribution to science was more substantial than those of any generation before or during Galileo's lifetime (it is to Toricelli, Galileo's disciple, that we owe the invention of the barometer). The shift of the centre of scientific activity to England and France and the gradual decline of Italian science — as indeed of Italian painting — was due to different historical causes.

The conflict of religion and science was more in the nature of a lovers' quarrel in the beginning. The real divorce came, not with Galileo. but with Hobbes in his *Leviathan* (1651). However it was spinoza who systematically applied scientific concepts to Judeo-Christianity in his *Tractatus — Theologico — Politicus* (1670), drafted as an answer to his expulsion. In his *Ethics* he set forth a completely rationalistic conception of the world in which everything could be understood in terms of a deterministic mechanistic science. In this conception, Judeo-Christianity was only one major example in the history of human stupidity which was to be understood as a kind of superstition due to fear (In this he was the forerunner of Freud, another Jew. who explained religion in similar terms). There was certitude in science and mathematics and historical religion was an impediment to a true and adequate understanding of the world.

Thus it was Spinoza and not any 16th or 17th century scientist who provided an ontological base for science's oncoming battles with religion.

It was in the 18th century that the rationalists of the Enlightenment opened the full-scale war of science against religion for, by then, the harmonisers of science and religion were in full retreat. In the 17th and 18th centuries the scientists annexed the physical and chemical worlds, in the 19th century the biological world and in the 20th century just about everything. Even religious gurus today ape the vocabulary of science for such is its prestige. So I suppose you can't really blame the scientists for feeling pretty ominscient. Thus our own signatories can claim that since "the method of science encompasses *all* aspects of communicable human knowledge", *therefore* "the fullest use of the method of science in everyday life and in *every aspect of human endeavour* from ethics to politics and economics is essential for ensuring human survival and progress" (emphasis mine). This seems a very tall claim to make indeed especially when taken in the light of the ultra-rigid characterisation of "the method of science". "The method of science" is seen altogether too romantically in exclusively anti-authoritarian terms. It is, we are informed, "incompatible with the acceptance of authorities of all kinds or of 'high priests' who may not be questioned". This ignores the fact that many great men of science have been great respectors of authority. Copernicus, one of the founders of modern science, relied entirely on Aristotle and Ptolemy. So far from criticising Ptolemy, he clung obstinately to him, observing that "if anyone on the contrary thinks that the ancients are untrustworthy in this regard, surely the gates of this art are closed to him". (*Three Copernican Treatises* 1959 p 57). No wonder even Kepler remarked later that "Copernicus tried to interpret Ptolemy rather than nature".

Again, to assert, that "there is, in fact, essential incompatibility of all dogmas with science" does not simply square with the facts. While Polanyi (1958) has stressed the way in which *esoteric beliefs and standards are tacitly* involved in all scientific judgements, the very title of one of Thomas Kuhn's most famous papers, "The Function of Dogma in Scientific Research" (reprinted in Barry Barnes (ed) *Sociology of Science* 1972), draws attention to this. The "pursuit of truth" (scientific or otherwise) is, in fact, impossible "without prejudgement" as the signatories fondly believe. So although there may be "several major differences between the scientific and the theological and metaphysical attitude" still to rule the latter out of court because of "the essential incompatibility of all dogmas with science" is to fly in the face of all the available evidence. Why Copernicus's own teaching was, as Butterfield has pointed out, "entangled ... with concepts of value, teleological explanations and forms of what we would call animism" (*The Origins of Modern Science* 1957), E.A. Burtt in his *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science* (1925) has shown that in the time of Copernicus there were no known facts which compelled the adoption of the system and several which militated against it. "Contemporary empiricists" he goes on to observe, "had they lived in the 16th century, would have been the first to scoff out of court the new philosophy of science". No wonder if Einstein himself has drawn attention to "a fateful fear of metaphysics" as the very "malady of contemporary empiricist philosophising" (Einstein, "Remarks on Bertrand Russell's Theory of knowledge" in *The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell* (ed) P.A. Schipp, 1944). That arch empiricist Russell himself virtually conceeds the point in his *History of Western Philosophy* (1948) and sagely, observes that it is not "*what* the man of science believes that distinguishes him, but *how* and *why* he believes it" (p 549: emphasis Russell's). This leaves, the door open to *all* beliefs — theological, metaphysical or whatever — and simply leaves us with the question of their validation. Popper's great merit is to have shifted the emphasis from the Humean problem of "reasonable belief" (that is, with *what* dogmas or myths — the scientist believes) to the problem of the 'reasons' for accepting or rejecting scientific theories (that is, with *how* and *why* the scientist holds it).

Another serious misconception that mars "A Statement on Scientific Temper" is the belief that "knowledge often progresses by disproving earlier ideas, beliefs, theories and laws". Despite the cautionary "often", the operative word here is "disproving" taking us, as it does, to the worlds of logic and mathematics. But in science there is simply no QED; all theories can be salvaged with *ad hoc* hypothesis and all experiments challenged, either as to their relevance or their accuracy. A classic example is the famous Michelson-Morley experiment which many people regard as a "crucial experiment' which 'disproved' the ether theory and paved the way for the theory of relativity (see Sir James Jeans, *Physics and Philosophy* 1942). But what are the 'facts'? Michelson first devised an experiment in order to test Fresnel's and Stokes's contradictory theories about the influence of the motion of the earth on the ether during his visit to Helmholtz's Berlin Institute in 1881. He concluded from the experiment that the hypothesis of a stationary ether was erroneous and hence that Fresnel was wrong. But soon the experimental physicist was taught a lesson by the theoretical physicist, Lorentz, who showed that Michelson had 'misinterpreted' the facts and that Fresnel's theory stood unrefuted. This situation led to Michelson and Morley's famous 1887 experiment the results of which were more cautiously worded. There was no more talk of having refuted Fresnel's theory. But still Lorentz was unconvinced. Meanwhile in 1897 Michelson carried out his long planned experiment to measure the velocity of ether wind on mountain tops. He found none! This was such an 'improbable result' that he decided that in 1887 he had drawn the wrong conclusion. It was Stokes's theory that had to be rejected and Fresnels's which had to be accepted. He was willing to accept any auxiliary hypothesis to have Fresnel's theory saved including Lorentz's 1892 theory. So much for what J.D. Bernel confidently describes as "the greatest negative experiment in the history of science". Actually *after* 1905, the Michelson — Morley experiment was not regarded as 'disproving' the existence of the ether and actually there is no mention of it in Einstein's 1905 paper. Which is probably why Michelson was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1907 not for 'refuting the ether theory' but for his "optical precision instruments and the spectroscopic and methodological investigations carried out with their aid". In fact, the 'famous' Michelson-Morley experiment was not even mentioned in the presentation speech and even Michelson himself did not allude to it in his Nobel Lecture. The history of modern science is replete with such examples. Chadwick's observation of beta-decay in 1914 seemed to imperil the conservation laws. But Pauli first playfully suggested a new particle, the neutrino (later developed by Fermi) and the conservation laws were 'saved'. As N.R. Hanson has pointed out, in science "conceptual matters are not finally settled immediately 'the' new observation or idea is suggested". (*Patterns of Discovery*, 1958).

Again the signatories are much too confident in distinguishing between 'myths' and 'superstitions' on the one hand and 'scientific' beliefs on the other without bothering to ask themselves whether the former may not often have been the source of the latter. Many of our scientific theories originated in 'myths'. The Copernican system, for example, was inspired by a Neo-Platonic worship of the light of the Sun who had to occupy the centre because of his 'nobility'. For the Pythagorean Kepler the Sun must be in the centre of the world because he is the symbol of God the Father, the source of light and heat. Thus Sir Karl Popper observes "...... science must begin with myths, and with the criticism of myths, neither with the collection of observations, nor with the invention of experiments, but with the critical discussion of myths and of magical techniques and practices because ...... *the critical attitude is not so much opposed to the dogmatic attitude as superimposed upon it:* criticism must be directed against existing and influential beliefs in need of critical revision — in other words, dogmatic beliefs" (emphasis mine).

Astrology is a classic case. Our signatories point out that in an age when "man has travelled to the moon *and returned safely* (a characteristic Indian touch, this, betraying, as usual, our national timidity despite all the brave talk!) astrological predictions based on the movements of the planets or the lines of one's palm or the number of alphabets in one's name is widely believed". This fails to distinguish the first case — which can be defended on sound scientific grounds — from the second and the third whose scientific status is certainly more dubious. In fact, man may not have gone to the moon at all had not certain astronomers — many of whom believed in astrology — speculated fearlessly. Newton's theory of gravity, especially the lunar theory of tides, was, historically speaking, an offspring of astrological lore as Popper himself concedes. Kepler's particular brand of astrology — he defended sidereal astrology and only opposed tropical astrology — is part and parcel of his unique Pythagorean vision of the Harmony of the Spheres. He wrote a number of treatises on astrology and in one of them, *De Fundamentis Astrologiae Certioribus*, he put forward 75 propositions, of varying intensity, whose soundness he was prepared to defend. Such another carried as a motto "a warning to certain Theologians, Physicians and Philosophers ... that while justly rejecting the stargazers' superstitions, they should not throw the baby out with the bathwater" (cited in *The Sleepwalkers*). Our very own 20th century mathematician of genius, Srinivasa Ramanujan, showed a serious interest in astrology, numerology, occult phenomena and prescience as Ashis Nandy has shown in his excellent monograph (*Alternative Science*, 1980). Recent studies at the Stanford Biometeorological Research Centre in Leiden and at the Stanford Research Centre in Menlo Park, California have revealed correlations between organic and inorganic processes and lunar, solar and planetary parameters. Yet as Paul Feyerabend has pointed out 186 scientists (including 18 Nobel, Laureates) signed a 'Statement against Astrology in 1975. And yet when a representative of the BBC wanted to interview some of the Nobel Prize winners they declined with the remark that they had not studied the subject! So let us not throw the baby out with the bathwater ...

What I am pleading for is a persistently, critical attitude towards all knowledge — scientific, religious, astrological, mythical or whatever — within the broad framework of a "rationalist imagination" guided by an "empiricist conscience." That is why I find Ashis Nandy's rejoinder "A Counter-Statement on Humanistic Temper" (*Mainstream*, October 10, 1981) calling for a virtual moratorium on science in India unhelpful and even, in places, positively dangerous. His plea for "equal rights to interpretation" looks like a plea for epistemological tolerance but when he goes on to celebrate the common man — "he has his own philosophy of science," we are informed — one begins to feel that the epistemological tolerance has degenerated into downright populism. The Feyerabendian philosophy of 'anything goes' (advocated in *Science in a Free Society* — clearly the source of Nandy's inspiration) comes from an affluent society. Hence it must be taken with more than the proverbial pinch of salt when it is sought to be applied to Third World countries where 'anything goes' in an altogether different sense of the term. Western societies are trying to liberalise options from a disciplined hard-core of order and implicit norms. We on the other hand, suffer from normlessness bordering on anomie and our immediate task is the building up of a civil society based on consensual norms. In this context 'anything goes' is a luxury we can ill afford in the present juncture. Criticism of science, if it is to be meaningful, should be attempted from within the system of science as conceptualised in the foregoing paragraphs and not, as Nandy recommends, "outside all systems" — defying "*all* concepts of rationality, normality, order and maturity" (emphasis mine). This is a counsel of despair which borders on outright irrationality and fully deserves Rajendra Prasad's censure that this is "the worst kind of opportunism (*Mainstream* April 17, *1982*). But Prasad himself proceeds to exhibit another brand of opportunism in a subsequent paragraph when he almost wilfully misreads the import of his own Santillana quote. Santillana is contrasting the "openness" of the Church *not* with Galileo but with the Committee investigating anti-American activities! Reagan may be a blundering fool but that does not make Reaganites of those of us here who have not absolutely made up their minds on the subject of incantations.

Prasad is right, however, incastigating the signatories for claiming that the national movement was "the outcome of a critique of traditional society." The national bourgeoisie made several "compromises" to mobilise popular support and this has certainly affected the drift of policy since Independence. But why is Prasad strangely silent on the origins of the Indian Renaissance which carried the seeds of the later contradiction? As Barun De, Sumit Sarkar and others have shown, many of the leaders of the Indian Renaissance never forswore Hindusism but only sought to reform it with the ideas of Western scientific rationalism. Sumit Sarkar has shown that "Rammohun in his published writings and public life paraded his outward conformity to most caste rules (even to the extent of taking a Brahmin cook with him to England!), wore the sacred thread to the end of his days, limited his direct attack on caste to a single *Vajra-suchi* translation and, concentrating all his social reform energies on the single *sati* issue, possibly even added to a slight extent to Vidyasagar's difficulties by hunting up all the texts glorifying ascetic widowhood" (Rammohum Roy and the Break with the Past" in *Rammohun Roy and the Process of Modernisation in India* (ed) V.C. Joshi 1975). In the light of this it can hardly be urged that "the best minds in pre-Independence times insistently propagated the need for the people to think independently and fearlessly and to question traditional beliefs." The Renaissance, then, far from witnessing the birth pangs of "the spirit of enquiry" witnessed instead "the growth of dependent vested interests, the elaboration of hegemonic infrastructure producing voluntary consent" which the "scientific temper" of the signatories is quite powerless to undo even today.

But Prasad himself presents science far too mechanistically as an expression of social forces to be capable of serving as their dynamic ally in revolutionising society. He himself gets unwittingly impaled on one of the horns of the very same dilemma bedevilling the signatories: the inculcation of the scientific temper will make people rational *but* (not "consequently" as the signatories argue for this will lead to the logical absurdity of a proposition entailing its own contradiction) the scientific temper cannot flourish in a non-egalitarian society. But Prasad's own brand of Marxism forbids any idealistic conception of science which is causally prior to the prevalent social forces. But Althuser himself has declared that science is outside the base-superstructure complex and hence exempt from Marx's dictum of the determination of the superstructure by the base in the last instance. (see *Reading Capital*, p 133). In view of this we cannot assume, as Prasad does, that "the scientific temperament is a component of the ideology of the class which will revolutionise society" because Marxism is not simply proletarian science but is something imported from "outside the proletariat and. ... "imported" into the working class movement" (*Reading Capital*, p 141). Further, Prasad's conception of science is far too positivistic and rationalistic, too undialectical in its antithesis of truth and error (electrons vs witches, astrology vs astronomy, incantations vs vaccines and antiseptics) to be fundamentally different from that of the signatories. I have already dealt with the question of astrology and as for incantations I will confine myself to just one observation. Claude Levi-Strauss has drawn attention to the similarities between the *shaman* and the modern psychoanalyst. The former's "incantation" is merely the reverse side of the latter's role as "listener." In both cases cure is effected through the phenomenon of transference" (*Structural Anthropology* Vol 1, 1963) (By the way I don't find any mention, let alone defence, of incantations in Nandy's "Counter-Statement" and I take it that Prasad has probably Nandy's *Seminar* (May, 1981) essay in mind).

Prasad's entire conception of science rests on the opposition between electrons and witches which poor Nandy is said to be unable to distinguish. Let me state categorically that electrons are witches in that both are postulated entities and serve in their own respective worlds merely as explanatory devices Paraphrasing the Harvard philosopher. W.V. Quine, we might say that in point of epistemological footing electrons and witches differ only in degree not in kind: certainly both are theoretical entities inferrable only from their effects. The myth of electrons is epistemologically superior in that it has proved predictively more efficacious than the myth of witches but both are cultural posts of different worlds and cultures and are "incommensurable" in the Kuhnian sense. This is *not* irrationalism but a statement of "scientific" rationality which is altogether different from both the bloodless and arid rationality of Prasad and the signatories on the one hand and Nandy's irrationalism on the other.

What is to be done and where do we go from here? Where but, yet again, a little wearily perhaps, to the West for enlightenment about the "scientific" temper, to *that West*, that is, which has *humanised* its social sciences with the teachings of that other Galilean. For, as Needham has reminded us, it is only the holiness of 'mercy, pity, peace and love' which will be able to save science from the dark side of its own terrible self.

If our new Galileans act promptly, then their theoretical ineptness can be overlooked. However, if they don't address themselves to such issues then we must conclude, with Prasad, that this class is in secret collusion with those reactionary socio-political forces which want to manufacture the Western cake in India on a large scale and sell it to the ignorant masses under the brand name of "Scientific Temper".☐

Genesis of Punjab Problem

The Language Question

P.K. NIJHAWAN

A curse of sorts has been operating in Punjab. Or else, how could two blood brothers quarrel over matters which are, to all intents and purposes, non-issues to those outside Punjab? And yet these seeming non-issues are today assuming more real proportions than most so called real issues, threatening the very foundations of an otherwise prosperous, virile, intelligent, hard-working and outgoing society and along with that perhaps all that we have held dear in Punjab as well as the whole of India. What is the genesis of this problem?

It is a situation created by colossal ignorance of reality, vile historical distortions, deliberate untruths, and gratuitous provocations. And today, the forces of reaction ranged on either side are not prepared to listen to reason, holding to ransom all that is beautiful, all that is worth loving, all that is sane and sincere. Love and hate both have their own arguments. And so much time has been allowed to lapse that pure fallacies have become larger-than-life facts or at least appear to be so. Let us try to unravel layer by layer this Himalayan mischief. Maybe then we can arm with sanity substantial numbers on both sides who instinctively feel that something wrong has been happening but do not know how to counter it.

For understanding the real nature of this knotty problem, one must at least have an idea of its five aspects, namely: first, the language aspect, which means the position of Hindi vis-a-vis Punjabi; second, the intellectual vacuum among the Hindu intelligentsia, which means a lack of the right kind of cultural and intellectual leadership; third, the religious aspect, which means the commonness and separateness of the Hindu and the Sikh religions, with special reference to the developments since partition; fourth, the compulsions of Sikh politics, developed because of the internationalisation of the problem of Sikh ambitions and frustrations born out of it; and fifth, the political power structure from the base to the top and the creation of vested interests in the operation of communalism in elective bodies all along the line.

Let us first discuss the language aspect of the problem. While the rest of India soon recognised the genius of their languages, the Punjabi Hindus remained passionately wedded to Hindi. Among the totality of Hindudom, the Punjabi Hindu was alone the one who spoke a deliberate untruth to disown his own language. He may have some imaginary or real reasons of his own for doing so, which history may not accept, for it is a colossal untruth. All that he can produce is some alibis. For example: Could a Bengali Hindu have disowned his language and stayed on in Bengal? Never. Then let us see what specially happened in Punjab.

The Punjabi Hindu, like most of the North Indian Hindus, had a worshipful attitude towards Hindi. Perhaps the people of the traditional Madhya Desh (the Jamuna-Ganga basin), as the late National Professor Dr Suniti Kumar Chatterjee has called it, who always give the lingua franca to India, and particularly the Hindus of that area, had taken Hindi to be the daughter of Sanskrit, which they had to approach with reverence and study through the indirect method of first going to its grammar. At least, the same happened in Punjab. Armed with Hindi just as Sanskrit in the days of old, both of which he did not know much, he started considering himself to be a superior cultural being. The Sikhs did not subscribe to this position of Hindi.

Still, during the days of the Independence movement, the Sikhs stayed with the Hindus as an offshoot of the Hindus. In fact, not a few called themselves superior Hindus. But after partition, there was a new type of communalism which had to be fed and kept alive. This communalism divided the Hindus and the Sikhs in the name of Hindi and Punjabi. Those who have witnessed the 'Hindi Satyagraha' movement in Hoshiarpur in the fifties would testify how this communalism snowballed. What a colossal misdirection of passion by the Hindus! Culturally thoroughly rootless and fed on Muslim phobia, the Hindu who was educated in Urdu and Persian as vernacular and Oriental languages which had now been substituted by Hindi and Sanskrit, refused to see reason. He could not for a moment believe that Panjabi could be so rich and grand a language as to be his mother-tongue and that it was in a way sister to Sanskrit. He had all time spoken Panjabi. But when it came to writing, he felt far more at home in English or Urdu. Not only that, to read and write Punjabi was *infra dig* for his superior cultural sensibility! Hindu women of the '30s and '40s had learnt Hindi as their only cultural language. Therefore, when the Sikhs said their language was Panjabi, the Hindus sometimes accused them of motives beneath one's dignity to accept. Not only had the Sikh to defend is language but with that his honour as a patriot as well, though it was the Sikh vote in the Constitutent Assembly which had made Hindi the 'Rashtra Bhasha' of India.

From this passionate but uncalled-for controversy was born the Punjabi Regional Committee and the Hindi Regional Committee. Why? The Punjabi Hindu had decided to record in the Census his language as Hindi and the Sikh the other way. I remember that in Simla in 1951 a Hindu enumerator recorded my language as Hindi even without asking me. And when I protested, he looked at me as If I were out of my mind.

Why am I so far accusing only the Hindus? I am quite conscious of the role being played by a handful of Sikh extremists. But that must be discussed at its proper place. Here it must be said that the real onus for what has been happening in Punjab must squarely lie on the Hindus for two very good reasons. Hindus are not only in brute majority in India, but were also in a majority in East Punjab after Independence and in all fairness it is the duty of the Hindus to let the minorities feel that their interests are safe with them and they need not worry about it. However, I wonder if at all the Sikhs are a minority. Secondly, in this case particularly the Hindus saw to it that the Sikhs were driven to desperation. It was a situation of reaction begetting reaction.

There was no justification for making Punjab an exception when the whole of India was going to be reorganised on the basis of "one language, one State" as a result of the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission. One can say that Gujarat-Maharashtra was another case where an exception was made. But then, soon the Government of India realised the futility of keeping Gujarat and Maharashtra together. Even so, nobody saw the writing on the wall. Punjab was left as it was just because of the intransigence of the Hindus.

The working of the Hindu mind in Punjab was not in tune with reality. No one could counsel sanity to them. Let me give a few instances.

When the then RSS Chief, the late Golwalkar, came to Chandigarh in the early sixties, he was quite explicit in stating that not Hindi but Panjabi was the mother-tongue of Punjabi Hindus. But as soon as he reached Jullundur, he was made to eat the humble pie. Then, there is the classic example in the late Goswami Ganesh Dutta, leader of Sanatanist opinion among the Hindus in Punjab. Even

The author is a noted journalist and author. This contribution is reproduced (in two parts) with due acknowledgement from Man & Development quarterly, Vol. IV, No. 1, 1982.

though a strong protagonist of Hindi and one-time President of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, he paid dearly for saying that Panjabi was the mother-tongue of the Punjabi Hindu. Before such stalwarts what could small fry like me do? In fact, most of my friends thought that I had gone berserk when I said that Panjabi was our mother-tongue and any pleading for Hindi was like speaking a deliberate lie for falsifying reality. And I know to my cost that it was the easiest way to become a butt for ridicule. In the circle of my friends, I had to rename myself Parshotam 'Singh'.

Professor Om Parkash Kohol of the G.M.N. College, Ambala, was, however, the only honourable exception. He counselled reason time and again through his articles in *The Tribune*. But unfortunately his was only a voice in the wilderness. No one was prepared to listen to his counsel of reason and even the Cassandra prophecies. Besides, he died very young.

Men of goodwill on both sides did try to reason it out, but to no avail. In the Senate of the Punjab University, Bhai Jodh Singh was ready to give a very vital concession to the Hindus. He said that if the Hindus were prepared to accept two scripts Panjabi could also be written in Devnagari. But the Hindu majority contemptuously rejected it. Then Bhai Jodh Singh was reported to have said: "You will rue this day". Isn't it happening?

Now let me argue from another angle. I have a firm conviction that if, hypothetically speaking, the Hindus alone had inhabited Punjab, or in other words there were no Sikhs in Punjab, then the Hindus would themselves have been second to none in demanding that a State based on Panjabi as its language be created. Why then this change of perception? The Urdu dailies of Jullundur must share the blame for this. For them it was as much a hangover of what had been done in Lahore before partition as it was plain commerce. They continued to write in the same vein, feeding people on half-truths. Curiously enough, the English press decided to play neutral, considering it a virtue not to speak the truth.

How big was the Hindu lie will be known if we look at the historical position. The Punjabi Hindu never knew Hindi up to the Independence of the country. Their women read it for two reasons: (a) to be able to read and write letters, and (b) to be able to read the religiou books of the Hindus because cheap and mass-published editions were becoming available. In point of time, the study of Hindi by the girls in Punjab hardly goes beyond the early decades of this century.

What was the position before? Most of the commonly-read religious books of the Hindus were available in the Gurmukhi script itself. In our own home, my great-grandmother, who daily read from a nicely calligraphed Kashmiri edition of Guru Granth Sahib to all the Hindu ladies of my town, had in her possession such religious works as *Yoga Vashistha, Bhagvat Purana, Bhartri Hari, Paras Bhag, Bhakta Mal, Bhagwad Gita* and a score of other books printed in Gurmukhi script only. All these books were printed by various Indian and German printers in the latter half of the 19th century. In fact, it was by reading these books in Gurmukhi script alone that the Hindu ladies had kept the torch of their religion burning in the far-off and inhospitable NWFP and Sind.

This testimony should in fact set at rest the controversy about the cultural nature of Devnagari script which is repeatedly made much of by protagonists of Hindi in Punjab. That is because when the Hindus finally were reconciled to the inescapable fact that Panjabi was to be their mother-tongue, they trotted out the lame excuse that Gurmukhi was not a proper script for Panjabi.

This, then, is the major cause of the conflict between the Hindu and the Sikh, though as already said there are four more facets to it. The situation has been worsening from stage to stage until the present time when a critical flash-point has been reached and no Punjabi, whether a Hindu or a Sikh, can afford to rest in peace until the storm blows over.

AFTER the loss of Lahore to Pakistan, there was a serious vacuum in the cultural life of Punjab (India). How did it come about? All that was best in Punjabi life was best expressed in Lahore only. The cultural movement was also most active in Lahore. After Calcutta, it was the biggest educational centre in North India. Most of the educational institutions, Hindu or Muslim, were created by the voluntary efforts of the people themselves — the same spirit of enterprise which distinguishes the Punjabi character even today. The Hindus, though divided into two sects, were evidently the most vigorous cultural group, for they were vying with each other in a spirit of healthy rivalry. The Sikhs, though emerging as a strong separate entity, were yet quite a part of the larger Hindudom in matters educational and cultural.

Let us now attempt a profile of the creative and literary life of Lahore. Urdu was by far the most dominant medium of self-expression. How dominant? I learnt my 3 R's at home in Hindi before I started on my formal education directly in the fifth standard of a staunch revivalist Hindu high school. My father had mentioned Hindi as my medium of instruction in the admission form. The headmaster, who was a friend of my father and one of the senior Hindu educationists of the day, asked me if I knew Urdu. When I said no, he himself changed the entry 'Hindi' into 'Urdu' on the admission form. When he saw me perplexed, he said: "When you grow up, you'll thank me for what I have done for you today". In short, in the middle-class Hindu milieu, it was difficult to think of a career without Urdu. Hindi was merely given lip-service for, though in our younger days Hindi was known as a language, a generation or two earlier nobody knew it as such. They called it 'Shastri', a local coinage to mean it was the language of only the priestly classes. This label was still very much there in my days. I remember when, in my childhood, I and my two brothers studied Hindi and Sanskrit, people around thought father was crazy to make us do so. They lamented that he was equipping his sons with education that could make them no better than priests, somehow the lowest in social esteem.

So, while English was studied for a career and success, it was Urdu which was the hall-mark of culture. It was the language of Allama Iqbal. Judges, officers of the Indian Civil Service, senior professors and intellectuals not only tried their hand at Urdu prose or verse as the case might be, but also had deep respect for anyone who excelled them in Urdu writing. How strong this tradition was can be known from the fact that when the late Pandit Harichand 'Akhtar' visited Karachi to participate in an Indo-Pak mushaira, Mir Ghulam Mohammed, the then Governor-General of Pakistan, not only invited him to tea, but himself came out to receive him, breaking all protocol. Similarly, when in 1950 I joined the Public Relations Department of Punjab (India) as article writer, an older and lovable Kashmiri pandit, who was my senior colleague, told me: "Don't be flattered or astonished if I tell you that even Faiz Ahmed 'Faiz' had once adorned this chair".

Next in order of importance were the Panjabi writers and poets. This was expressed at two levels: one was the common lay level and the other represented the Sikh renaissance. At the common literary level, all the three groups, namely the Hindu, the Muslim and the Sikh, wrote, mainly ballads and folk type of lyrical poetry. The renaissance Sikh movement was already definite though small. Bhai Vir Singh, Puran Singh, Gurbaksh Singh 'Preet Lari', Nanak Singh, Bhai Jodh Singh, Master Tara Singh and Principal Teja Singh had already made a name for themselves. Mohan Singh Mahir, Sant Singh Sekhon, Kartar Singh Duggal, Balwant Gargi were in the second line. Amrita Pritam, Kulwant Singh Virk were among emerging names. I have mentioned these writers because soon after partition, they were to become the intellectual leaders of Punjab's expression.

The last group in the field was the Hindi writers. It was a mostly group in the sense that the important ones in it were non-Punjabis. For most of the Punjabis Hindi was yet no more than a platform where, far from expression, it was identification that was more important. The non-Punjabi Hindi writers who had come to Lahore in search of greener pastures joined hands with one another. These groups were interested in editing course books for Hindi examinations of the Punjab University for these were sold in large numbers. Among the writers of these text-books, there was hardly any important Punjabi. The handful of Punjabis who were there wrote one-act plays, short stories, etc, not many of them with a touch of life and experience. Upendra Nath Ashk was among the exceptions and he, too, had strayed into Hindi from Urdu. Dinesh, Madhu and Rakesh had not yet fully emerged. The field was firmly held by Bhatts and Premis and some semi-literate Hindi teachers from outside Punjab who thrived on 'madeeasies' for the Hindi Ratna, Bhushan and Prabhakar examinations.

The picture, howsoever crudely drawn, will give us an insight into what happened after partition.

Once Lahore, the nerve-centre of Punjabi culture, went to Pakistan. language became truly the basis of communal polarisation between the Sikhs and the Hindus. Strangely enough, Urdu was still the most dominant cultural vehicle. The Urdu press of Lahore re-established itself in Jullundur. The old issues of Muslim League versus Congress or Pakistan versus India were replaced by the one of Sikhs versus Hindus. Not only that, whatever idealism was associated with the Independence movement now gave place to hard-headed commercialism. What I am trying to drive at is that in the new scheme of things, the Urdu press dished out venom in the name of Panjabi or Hindi for reasons other than serving a public cause. Curiously, the only Hindi daily to come out from Jullundur for long years was read, not because of its newspaper-value, but because it was the only vehicle carrying the pseudo-scholarly examination-oriented writings of the proliferating Hindi teachers.

Here comes the question of lack of intellectual leadership among Punjabi Hindus. There was no dearth of politicians, lawyers, preachers, academics, financial wizards and even philanthropists. But a man who could perceive the growing cultural vacuum among the Punjabi Hindus and provide the right kind of leadership was not there. There are some historical reasons for this. Always interested in the more mundane pursuits of life, the Punjabi Hindu had long been alienated from his cultural roots. The career-oriented Hindu had already taken to English in a big way. By serving the master well, which has been his forte all along, he had made it big. He had taken up the modern professions of medicine, engineering, pure and applied sciences, administration, etc, much before others. And though he was intellectually equipped, it was infra dig for him to even think of the uncouth Panjabi that the sub-stratum of 'vulgar' masses used, much less to own it as his mother-tongue. A few of them also wrote in English and did well, but it was individual effort. Isolated from the mainstream, the only cultural expression for most of them was an acquired supercilious English mannerism and high affectation in speech. In short, they were incapable of providing cultural leadership.

After partition, the Hindus who were mainly townspeople and had excelled in trade, commerce and banking, started imitating the elite. Success-oriented as the Hindu has all through been, he started learning English on an unprecedented scale, opting for the modern professions. This brought in its wake a cultural change of momentous proportions. In one family, while the elders still read Urdu newspapers, the younger generation was fed mainly on European literature. For a time Hindi and Urdu examinations also came handy to them. With their help one could appear directly for Matric (pass) and BA (only English) examinations and then go on to take even a post-graduate degree. This class was well-versed in Hindi or Urdu. But then learning was not an end in itself but a means to an end, which was to be able to support the family somehow.

This 'Earn and Learn' situation had a deleterious effect on the Hindu society of Punjab as it almost completely dried up its cultural springs. In this rat race of life, there was no time to pause, think and express oneself in any worth while manner. If anyone did express himself, it was more in the nature of ego projection than to belong to any definite cultural movement. Urdu, the language over which they had some mastery, made them only second-rate poets and writers. In Hindi, most of them did not possess the necessary tools and training to be writers. Hindi did not have the *Ustad-Shagird* institution. So, even if they did start well, they could not go far. Then, as before, the leadership of Hindi writing remained in the hands of non-Punjabis or text-book writers, placing creative writers in a secondary position which made them suffer from a severe inferiority complex.

Let me give an example from my own experience. In the fifties, and early sixties, I did write some Hindi poetry. Once I was presiding over a small 'Hindi evening'. A non-Punjabi University teacher of Hindi, who had no poetic sensibility whatsoever but lots of pretensions as he excelled in the clever use of Sanskrit words, recited a poem. The construction of the word which was the title of the poem was itself grammatically so wrong that I had to point out that glaring mistake to him, throwing discretion to the winds. The result? I immediately became *persona non grata* with the University group of Hindi writers!

Lest I am misunderstood by this example, let me make the point in a different way. I began with a statement that as the situation emerged after partition, the Punjabi Hindu became increasingly muted. Perhaps it was due to the curse of their own mother-tongue, the *Vac Devi* as we call it and which in this case means the Panjabi language, they had disowned.

In the last 35 years or so, while Punjabi has become a whole modern literature, with scores of writers in every genre, publishers, magazines, a bustling readership and a sense of commitment and direction, what has Hindi created? A barren intellectual scene! In fact, every attempt at comparing the cultural contribution made by Panjabi and Hindi languages respectively, brings out a very instructive contrast.

Now there are two questions arising from this situation. First, is the Punjabi Hindu culturally less virile than the Punjabi Sikh? Second, is the medium which is Hindi not responsive to his cultural needs? The first does not appear to be the case, for urban Hindus and Sikhs are the same stock and until yesterday, there was no difference in their cultural virility. The second question may therefore, by deduction, be answered in the affirmative. The new generation of Punjabi Hindus has grown under two influences — English and Hindi. Both of them basically underline the point that he is getting more and more alienated from the roots. He cries out his heart, whether in love and hatred, in Panjabi only. But when he comes to express himself, he does so in English or Hindi. Thus his expression becomes elitist and loses the touch of that lusty and limpid earthiness which courses through his veins. Yes, there are exceptions like Chandra Dhar Sharma Guleri, Mulk Raj Anand or Mohan Rakesh. But are they not too few? This goes only to prove that they do not make the rule. The rest are too much overawed by the cultural imperialism of Hindi. Hindus as a class have known Jayasi, Mira, Surdas and Bihari better than Nanak, Farid, Waris and Bullah Shah. In modern times, this chasm has widened almost to unbridgeable proportions. Even 40 years ago, the Hindu sensibility seemed to reject the Panjabi masters. For example, one day in 1946, I was roundly taken to task by my maternal grandfather for singing aloud some poignant "Heer" verses in our house. What he meant was that such pieces are worth singing only in *Deras, Dairas* or *Takias*.

Why is there this high-brow attitude to culture? Historically speaking, the highly puritanical religious movements of the nineteenth century had much to do with it. The Muslims felt that their fall from the throne of Delhi was due to the laxity of morals and discipline that surrounded them. Iqbal, the poet of Islamic regeneration, has shed tears of blood on this point. The Hindus felt that when they were the upholders of *Dharma*, they ruled the entire world. The Sikhs too had their own tale of lamentation. The empire of Ranjit Singh had vanished just because the Sikhs were no longer following the path shown by the Guru. So, all the three revivalist movements placed high emphasis on the values of austerity and puritanism. For a time, Aurangzeb seemed to be ruling everywhere. But while Muslims and Sikhs found their tongue due to acceptance of cultural expressions as a new value, the Punjabi Hindu stood aloof, high and dry.

Why was it the Hindu alone? Purely for the reason of lack of cultural leadership. Where was an Allama Iqbal, Faiz Ahmed 'Faiz' or even Hafiz Jullunduri? Where was Bhai Vir Singh, Nanak Singh, Kartar Singh Duggal? The Hindus had no cultural leadership of this kind. The result? Nobody could know what the Punjabi Hindu was sacrificing by disclaiming Panjabi as his language.

I am not saying that the Punjabi Hindu has made no worthwhile contribution to the culture of Punjab. Who can beat Pandit Sudarshan, Krishan Chander, Mulk Raj Anand, GD Khosla, Prakash Tandon, Chaman Nahal, Mohan Rakesh, Krishan Baldev Vaid, Krishan Sondhi and a host of others? But almost all of them worked outside Punjab. And such is the alienation implicit in the situation that their works in Panjabi translations are not available to the Punjabi reader. The only representative of Hindu sensibility they had known in recent years is Shiv Batalavi.

Not that the Panjabi-reading public has not lost anything. With a limited readership available in Panjabi, the better-known Panjabi writers are seeking the wider Hindi audience through translation. This also makes the cultural expressions lopsided and anaemic. "*Khabbal*", one of the best Panjabi short stories by any Punjabi, would require a genius to translate it if it were to convey the real atmosphere. So what they are writing in the drawing rooms is just the type of problem-oriented short stories which have no flavour of the land.

The worst example of this unrepresentative character is the Panjabi film. Even when 75 per cent of the Bombay film industry is in the hands of Punjabis, most Panjabi films provide only bad caricatures of Punjabi life in the form of all that is not at all there in Punjab. Maybe, it is for lack of audience. But, if true art is a mirror of the life behind it, then even the Punjabi intellectuals should help create a wider base for Punjabi culture. But the first and the most important need evidently is to throw up the right kind of intellectual leadership among the Punjabi Hindus.

THE ONENESS and separateness of Hindu and Sikhs is a very complex subject in which tradition, philosophy, history, geography, language, mythology, religion, politics, or in other words, almost the whole gamut of issues are too intricately interwoven. At one end of the scale emerges a picture of extreme humilation of a subject race devoid of all manliness, not allowed to keep arms or even ride a horse, and at the other an audacious general of the same race fortifying Jamrud, the Indian side of the Khyber, and the intrepid Dost Mohammed, the Amir of Kabul, trembling in his shoes or the ferocious Pathan silencing his crying child by merely utterning his name. Is it not the story of a complete metamorphosis? But how did it come about? The quintessence of the oneness and separateness of the Hindus and the Sikhs can be understood by studying this remarkable phenomenon.

There are many simplistic answers to this question. Some say that Sikhism was only another *Bhakti* cult, born out of the clash and then the synthesis between Hinduism and Islam. Some even suggest that it represents a kind of separate Punjabi nationalism. In between there is a whole range of theories. But no one tries to analyse the problem dispassionately though it has to be done so that everything falls into place, strand by strand. It is no use avoiding the issue.

Guru Nanak's metaphysics is as profound as his *Bani* (poetic composition) is simple. In fact, a real work on his highly evolved mind is yet to be written. His grasp of reality is beyond space and time. He creates a whole hierarchy of Gurus which is without parallel. His message to his Sikhs (disciples) makes every man a *Videha*, (a man in body without the constraints of a body) and yet they are committed to the individual and social well-being of both body and soul. He decries all types of exploitation—political, social and economic, in word and deed. He is a true combination of *Gyan Yoga, Raj Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, and Karma Yoga*. And then, he is the first ever philosopher to restore woman to her pristine status and thus end the tyranny built into man-woman relationship. Even Krishna had not done it. Guru Nanak's egalitarian message and practice precede those of Marx. His emphasis on the purity of means is of a much higher order than that of even Gandhi. And when the challenge comes, he manfully faces Babur and his hordes. The globe-trotter that he was, he became the first conscious *Satyagrahi* of India by being jailed at Eminabad. And over and above all this, he is a bard par excellence — a good combination of poet, composer and singer.

Have I gone astray? No, for it must be understood at the very outset that Sikhism is no ordinary theology, no ordinary church, no ordinary religion and even no ordinary way of life. But shorn of platitudes, let us see what it is.

While the Hindus considered Nanak as their Guru, the Muslims exalted him to the status of their *Pir*. Why? While the terminology of his message belonged to the Hindu tradition, his religious concepts brought him very close to Islam. Let us try to understand the latter. The five cardinal points which distinguish Islam from Hinduism are: (1) one Supreme God; (2) one book or message; (3) one prophet or messenger; (4) belief in His Grace; and (5) proselytisation. Sikhism, as it is, has all the five. There is one *Omkar*, one Guru Granth and one body of the Guru. Then day in and day out, the Sikh prays for His Grace. Besides, anyone who decides to become a Sikh is accepted as a Sikh.

The other basic difference from the Hindus is that Guru Nanak chose Panjabi as the vehicle of his message. One can say that here he emulated the Buddha. Now this is a very basic difference. To date, all forms of Hinduism use Sanskrit as their medium. In fact, one definition is that the Hindu is [illegible] dhism and Jainism in retrospect differ from Hinduism only to the extent that their religious texts are in Pali. Supposing they were in Sanskrit, then whatever be the quality of their differences, they would have stayed as Hindus only. In fact, one reason why Buddhism vanished from the land of its origin is that their later scholars and *Bhikshus* had started accepting Sanskrit as the language of that religion. Perhaps another reason was that it had kept the four-fold society intact. So, when the distinction of Pali and Sanskrit ended, the Hindus found no difficulty in accepting the limbs of their own society back into their fold. There is some parallelism in the Buddhist-Hindu society of the olden days and the Sikh-Hindu society of present-day Punjab. I have heard many Sikh friends telling me that their main fear is of losing their identity once they identify themselves with the oceanic Hinduism!

Yes, it can happen. For, in spite of these differences, Guru Nanak continued to accept the cyclical time-frame which is a unique feature of Hinduism. In fact, all church religions go by a linear time-frame which moves between creation and doomsday. This cyclical time-frame has certain very clear implications. For example, soul travels through an endless locus of life from birth to birth to finally merge with the Timeless of which it is an integral part, while all that is happening is no more than an illusion. It is as much divine in origin as the great reality itself and therefore one must ceaselessly play his part well. Now, once the operation of transmigration of soul is accepted, the relationship of *Dharma* and *Karma* becomes almost Hindu in concept. Sikhism maintains this relationship.

Moreover, though Guru Nanak attacked superstition and dogma, he nowhere gave a new concept or orientation of society. Socially, he remained a Hindu. Probably he had thought that the basic structure of Hindu society was good enough to serve the divine purpose of the Timeless and all that was required to rise above ignorance, ritual and superstition was to follow the path of enlightenment. In fact, even the basic ritual of Hinduism did not undergo any major change after Sikhism was established, until in very recent times. The reason could be that ritual itself is as rational as belief in the life process. This is mainly the reason why for all practical purposes, a Sikh and a Hindu stood inseparable, at least in the eyes of others.

All the other Sikh Gurus only elaborated upon the religion of Guru Nanak until the coming on the scene of the Tenth Guru who emerges as one of the greatest heroes born in the entire Hindudom. As Sikhism was gaining strength daybyday, it was bound to come into clash with the state. Guru Arjun's martyrdom is one of the best examples of the powerlessness of death before the immortal nature of the spirit of Man. Thereafter, it had become imperative that the Sikh Guru assume both *Miri* and *Piri*, the headship in matters both lay and spiritual. **(To be Continued)**

Reagan's Arithmetic (*from page 10*)

the Joint Chiefs of Staff showed reluctance to make any deep cuts in the US arsenal whereas the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and the Pentagon civilians called for radically new approaches and the toughest demands on the Soviets. The State Department is supposed to have fitted in somewhere in between. As for the Soviet stance, the tenor of Ustinov's article and the latest speech by Brezhnev on the Armed Forces Day seem to indicate that hard-liners within the Soviet Union may be gaining the upper hand, in which case the Reagan proposals will have little chance of making any headway. But then, even Reagan has said that the "monumental task of reducing strategic forces to enhance stability will take many years of concentrated effort". Perhaps his Administration would also like to start afresh, despite the 12-year history of SALT, for just as he had likened his 'zero option' proposals last year to man's landing on the moon, the latest offer is supposed to "mark the commencement of a new era — in both senses of the word — a new start towards a more peaceful, more secure world"! Profound words indeed! (*May 17*)

Plight of Bonded Labour

N. LINGA MURTHY and GURAJALA SUDERSHAN

THE bondage of labourers in a country results from their inability to earn independent living caused by the mismanagement of manpower resources. Bondage never had any positive legal basis but was purely a matter of custom or social agreement. It is known by various names in different parts of the country affecting different sections of people in varying degrees.

Nearly 85 per cent of the bonded labourers in our country belong to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Before Independence, the Slavery Abolition Act was passed in 1843. Despite this, the system flourished all through the British regime. After Independence, it took many years for the Government to be convinced about the existence of this evil practice. *Begar* and similar other forms of forced labour were prohibited under Article 23 of the Constitution. Notwithstanding this and several legislations adopted by the State and Union Territory administrations, the institution of bondage continues to exist in one form or another. This is because the authorities have not been very earnest about effective implementation.

It was only after passing of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Ordinance, 1975, which became an Act in 1976, that the question of eradication of this social evil was seriously taken up. The main provisions of the Act are to declare bonded labour free from any obligation to render any free service, manual or menial, and all such customs, traditions, contracts and agreements as applied to them were declared void. Under the Act, the State Governments may vest the District Magistrates with powers to take cognizance and prosecute offenders. There is a provision to set up vigilance committees at district and sub-divisional levels to help identify bonded labourers, advise the implementing authorities on all matters relating to the enforcement of legal provisions and for the economic and social rehabilitation of the freed bonded labourers.

Even after the promulgation of the Ordinance, the process of identification, release and rehabilitation has been tardy. Different estimates put the total figure at different levels. While the 32nd round of the NSS put it at 3.40 lakhs, the Gandhi Peace Foundation in collaboration with the National Labour Institute put it at 26,17,000. Almost all surveys on bonded labour in our country were confined to the agricultural sector although the practice is also rampant in non-agricultural sectors like mining, weaving, quarrying, brick kilns, hotels, etc. The fact is that even now the country does not know the full extent of the prevalence of this evil. This shows that the approach to the problem has been casual and half-hearted. A document, "Evaluation of the Impact of Bonded Labour Abolition ordinance of 1975 in Uttar Pradesh," a case study of four districts by the State Planning Institute of Uttar Pradesh, said that district-level authorities had no clear-cut concept of the Ordinance and of the extent of the problem. The powerful landlords have taken shelter under the loopholes in the law and have been preventing bonded labourers by threats and other means from declaring themselves as such.

One of the dimensions of the problem which is overlooked in most of the studies is the inter-State character of bondage. Bonded labourers from Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar, Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh will be found working at construction sites in Delhi, where Parliament members pass laws.

According to the Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes 1975-76 and 1976-77, out of 31 States/Union Territories, 20 States/Union Territories have denied the existence of bonded labour system in their jurisdiction. However, in some of the above-mentioned States, preliminary enquiries and surveys have indicated that bonded labour system is still prevalent. The Government of Maharashtra has all along been disputing the fact of bonded labour being prevalent in that State. A quick survey in 10 villages in Nandurbar and Shahada taluks of Dhulia district conducted by the organisation of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes revealed that it is prevalent on a large scale in the form of *Saldars*. The Himachal Pradesh Government was also of the view that bonded labour did not exist in that State. But a survey in that State brought out that the system is very common among Scheduled Castes and that bondage in some cases has been "inter-generational". Another State that experienced the so-called Green Revolution, Haryana, also denied the existence of this evil in its territory, but various reports indicate that it is very much present, at least in the brick kilns.

The problem of bonded labour is both economic and social, and the rehabilitation of released bonded labourers is a very important aspect. The objective of rehabilitation is to enable the freed labourer to become economically self-sufficient so that he will not get back into bondage. Under the Centrally-sponsored scheme for the rehabilitation of bonded labour, a freed bonded labourer is given agricultural land or milch animals or implements for skill-based occupations. The Central Government provides funds to the State Governments on a matching grant basis for this purpose. This scheme has been in operation from April 1979 in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. According to the Report of the Commissioner for Sche-

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duled Castes and Scheduled Tribes 1975-76 and 1976-77 (Part I), about 98,051 bonded labourers have been identified, of whom 97,114 have been freed but only 23,270 have been rehabilitated. The State-wise position is given below.

State-wise Position of Bonded Labour

Name of State/ UT	*Identified*	*Freed*	*Rehabilitated*	*Percentage of Rehabilitated to freed*
Andhra Pradesh	826	826	698	84.50
Bihar	2,562	2,038	613	30.07
Gujarat	37	37	36	97.29
Karnataka	64,040	64,040	4,668	7.28
Kerala	702	702	186	26.49
Madhya Pradesh	1,612	1,500	33	2.2
Orissa	612	311	302	97.10
Rajasthan	5,533	5,533	2,381	43.03
Tamil Nadu	2,282	2,282	1,998	69.32
Uttar Pradesh	19,242	19,242	12,805	66.54
Mizoram	3	3	Nil	Nil
Total	98,051	97,114	23,720	24.42

The table indicates that the process of rehabilitation is very slow. Rehabilitation in States like Bihar, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan has been very unsatisfactory. In Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka, a very low percentage of 2.2 and 7.28 were rehabilitated. On the whole, the percentage of rehabilitated to the freed worked out to only 24.42 per cent. This proves that the State Governments are not ready to wipe out this evil practice. It is also doubtful if the rehabilitated bonded labourers have really got out of the tentacles of bondage — the word rehabilitation is used in a very loose sense in terms merely of distribution of money, land, milch animals, etc. Real rehabilitation is a long-term process which must be judged by the income generated over a period of five to six years out of the productive assets given. Some of the studies revealed that the amounts spent were very meagre and the land allotted was not suitable for cultivation.

A study in Ranga Reddy district of Andhra Pradesh showed that the scale of resources given to each released bonded labourer amounted at best to partial rehabilitation. About 70 per cent of the sample beneficiaries had earnings of less than Rs. 80 per month from the rehabilitation assistance received, while nearly 50 per cent had either no return or very small earnings, say Rs 10 a month. A study in Bihar showed that though agricultural land was granted to bonded labourers roughly at the rate of 1.5 acre per family, in many cases physical possession of the land had not been given. It was also observed that most of the land was of inferior quality, and in one case the so-called agricultural land measuring 0.27 acre allotted was a 4 — 5 ft deep perennial natural pond which could not be reclaimed under any circumstances. This shows that rehabilitation projects are not properly formulated and executed.

Bonded labour is a problem calling for urgent social action. It took many years for us to recognise the existence of bondage. After recognising it and identifying bonded labourers, if rehabilitation is not done, in time and properly, the problems of these labourers will only get worse when they relapse into bondage. The powers-that-be must realise this truth and act on it. ☐

COMMUNICATION

Government Employees aad TU Struggles

THE article titled "Government Employees' Constraints" by O.P. Gupta, General Secretary of the National Federation of P & T Employees (*Mainstream*, May 1, 1982), does no justice to the Central Government employees' cause and their movement. Besides undue eulogy of Gupta's own organisation (NFPTE), the article as a whole does not reflect the true aspirations of the Central Government employees and does not present a true picture of their condition and their trade union movement.

Admitting that the Central Government employees are today the worst paid section of salaried workers, Gupta has nothing to say against the Government which has thrown its employees into such a position. The way it has been mentioned in the last but one paragraph of the article that the Government has agreed to settle by March 31, 1983, the CGE's demand for parity in wages with public sector undertakings, goes to show Gupta's illusions about the Government, and, therefore, his assertion in the last para about the NFPTE having no illusion that the Government will accept the demand out of goodwill does not carry conviction.

It may be pointed out here that according to the recommendations of the Third Pay Commission, wage revision of Central Government employees had become due in 1974, when the twelve-monthly average of the cost of living index had reached the figure of 272 on September 30, 1974. And, therefore, having agreed to defer the major demands of the Central Government employees (including wage revision) up to March 31, 1983, the NFPTE and its General Secretary have no moral authority to talk about creating sufficient pressure by organising an effective struggle. Gupta lets the cat out of the bag when he says at the end that he intends to organise such a struggle "thereafter if the Government tries to back out" — that is, the question of struggle arises only after March 31, 1983, if the Government backs out. But when the Government has not agreed to accept this demand by March 31, 1983, the question of backing out will also not arise. This is yet another trick to mislead Central Government employees by those organisations which have surrendered before the Government and agreed to defer the major demands of the employees up to March 1983, along with depositing DA arrears from August 1981 as well as increased HRA and CCA that have become payable from February 1982 following merger of DA in pay up to the average index level of 320 points.

At the very outset, Gupta has said, "Trade Unions amongst Government employees and their struggles for economic improvement are going to play a significant role in the trade union movement in the country. They will be required to bear the main brunt in the struggle against the Government's economic policies...." But in a country like ours, where more than 48 per cent of the population are below the poverty line and there is a sizeable labour fource which is not in the organised sector, any struggle against the Government's wrong economic policies has to take the shape of a united struggle of all organised and unorganised workers, the rural poor, industrial workers and Central and State Government employees. The Bombay Convention of Trade Unions held on June 4, 1981, has given a lead in this direction as the demands formulated there cover workers of all sectors and the unorganised and the poor. The Convention was organised by eight central trade unions of different political persuasions and about 40 national industrial federations, including Central Government employees' organisations. The largest mobilisation of working and poor people was done under the leadership of the National Campaign Committee set up by the Bombay TU Convention, and on its call lakhs of workers, poor people and of course Central Government employees participated in the historic march to Parliament on November 23, 1981, and there was the one-day united industrial general strike of January 19 this year.

Central Government employees could not participate in the January 19 strike due to the weakness of their own organisations. But Gupta has to blame the central trade unions and say they are not able to provide an effective lead to Central Government employees partly because of split on a political basis and partly because of the limitations imposed on the trade unions of Government employees. When trade unions of different political persuasions have come on one platform to fight the wrong economic policies of the Government and all-out attacks on trade union and democratic rights, Gupta is still talking of a split in the central trade unions on a political basis; he only wants to underline the political disunity of the central TUs and undermine the unity achieved by them despite their different political outlooks. One fails to understand why the united movement launched by the Bombay TU Convention (of which various Central Government employees' organisations are also a part) could not enthuse the Central Government employees' organisations to join the January 19 strike, when other workers, including the white-collar Bank and LIC workers, were greatly enthused by the united call and joined the strike. For this the Central Government employees' organisations have to blame themselves and not the central TUs.

Non-participation of Central Government employees in the January 19 strike could perhaps be attributed to the organisational weakness and mental unpreparedness of the Central Government employees and their organisations, but what followed soon thereafter, namely, *acceptance by some organisations of the Government's proposal to deposit the DA arrears of the instalments of August, October, November 1981 and January 1982 in the PF accounts of the employees, as also the deposit of increased HRA and CCA up to March 1983 and defer consideration of all the major demands of Central Government employees also up to March 1983, has not only gone against the interests of the Central Government employees but has done great harm to the united movement of the National Campaign Committee launched against the anti-labour policies of the Government.* And, therefore, when the leadership of the Government employees' unions is said to have been subjected to severe criticism by the leaders of the NCC representing various national trade union centres, Gupta's assertion that this has been done without realising their limitations is not correct. As a matter of fact, such criticism, if any, should be taken in the spirit of fraternity in which it has been made and honest and serious efforts should be made to pull out the Central Government employees from the situation in which they have been placed by accepting the Government's offer in the JCM by some of their organisations.

As in every other capitalist country, in India also there are several central trade union organisations and there is a multiplicity of trade unions in every industry and department. Of course, such division in the trade unions has a political basis also. But Gupta's assertion that "the bar on Government employees' organisations to affiliate themselves with national TU centres has proved a blessing in disguise as it has helped the workers in civil services to avoid split on a political basis", is not correct because there are more than one organisation in many Central Government departments, and the P & T Department is no exception. It is also not correct to say that only after the 1968 strike and later under the Janata Party some political bias was injected. Political bias started soon after the country gained Independence. This is a reformist understanding that the various central TUs have been formed on a political basis only and, therefore, workers should not associate themselves with the central TUs. This slogan is often given by the Government and perhaps encouraged by such views of some of the leaders of the Central Government employees in the JCM. Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee dared to say in Parliament that the deposit of DA arrears and the increased HRA and CCA was a matter between the Central Government and its employees only and he would not allow "interference" by the central trade unions. The NCC has rightly condemned this slander against genuine representatives of the workers whom Mukherjee characterised as trade union wings of political parties. The NCC further made it clear that the Central Government employees are part of the Committee and they are against this unilateral decision to impose a partial wage freeze on them. The NCC has considered this attack as a precursor to similar attacks and has called upon trade unions of all affiliations to resolutely oppose this dangerous move.

It is not my aim to rebut each and every point made in Gupta's article to eulogise his own organisation, but it is too much to claim that "even in 1981, soon after the Ordinance was promulgated and before the NCC could take up cudgels, P & T workers prepared themselves to organise a non-cooperation movement. The workers' unity and determination to act was so great that Minister C.M. Stephen declared that the Ordinance was not sufficient to handle the situation." The less said the better about the so-called non-cooperation movement which was unceremoniously withdrawn by the leadership of NFPTE.

Gupta has stated that "the non-participation of Government employees in the January 19 strike and soon thereafter the acceptance of the Government's DA offer, has not only created controversy about the credibility of the movement but exposed the weakness of the whole movement." As far as the controversy over the acceptance of the Government's DA offer is concerned this could very well have been avoided by rejecting it. In that case, only organisations affiliated to the INTUC or have political leanings towards the Congress-I would have been isolated from others, which is not a new thing in the trade union movement of Central Government employees. In every struggle of the Central Government employees, whether in 1960, 1968 or 1974, such unions have always sided with the Government. Rejection of the DA offer would have also paved the ground for a united struggle of Central Government employees, whether in the JCM or outside. But acceptance of this offer by organisations like the NFPTE and AIRF has created a situation where the traditional opponents of the Government's wrong economic policies and fighters for the case of the Central Government employees find themselves divided, and in this division it is most regrettable that NFPTE and AIRF are in the same camp in which there are organisations like NFIR and other INTUC-affiliated or pro-Government organisations.

This situation has arisen because of the false notion of establishing the unity of the Central Government employees' organisations represented in the JCM only, though this too could not be achieved. The fact that there are a large number of Central Government employees' organisations with considerable following outside the JCM forum, should not be ignored. Such organisations have condemned with one voice the attempts of the Government to impound DA arrears and increased HRA and CCA and to defer the major demands of the employees till March 1983, along with some of the organisations represented in the JCM.

There is a broad consensus amongst Central Government employees' organisations, whether in JCM or outside, on some basic demands. These can well be made the basis of a united struggle of Central Government employees, against the wrong economic and anti-labour policies of the Government.

Such a fighting unity can only be established if the false notion of unity of those organisations only which are in the JCM is given up and all organisations of Central Government employees, big or small, recognised or unrecognised, whether in or outside JCM, whether affiliated to any central TU organisation or not, and regardless of their ideological approach, are brought on one platform. Such efforts have already been started by some organisations, and it is the demand of the times that all organisations of Central Government employees should be there on one platform who want to wage a united struggle to achieve the basic demands of the Central Government employees and oppose the Government's anti-labour policies.

Shrikrishna
Joint General Secretary,
Indian Railway Workers' Federation.

New Delhi
May 3, 1982

Nuclear War and USA

The *Ground Zero* organisation has published a book (*Nuclear War: What's In It for You?* Pocket Books, New York, 1982, $2.95) dealing with the dangers of nuclear war from the US citizen's point of view. In an appendix the book contains "Twenty Questions about Nuclear War You've Been Afraid to Ask". We reproduce with due acknowledgement two of these questions with the answers provided in the volume whose purpose is to promote discussion and understanding. —Editor

Have there ever been any false alarms where our warning systems indicated a missile attack which never materialised?

Answer: Yes, several.

The best-known occurred in the mid-1960s shortly after the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System (BMEWS) was completed. One day, one of the sites indicated that a massive missile raid on the United States was taking place. Because the system was fairly new, the commander of the installation cautioned that it might be a false alarm — which of course it was. Later it was determined that what the radar had seen was the rising of the moon. The radar signals had gone all the way to the moon and bounced back. Apparently the computer programme in the BMEWS computer had never taken into account this possibility and the moon had for the first time come into the field of view of the radar. Imagine — World War III almost starting because of the moon rising.

In a 1979 incident at the Colorado Springs headquarters of the North American Air Defence Command (NORAD), a computer processing data from the satellite missile warning system failed—as frequently happens with computers. The incoming satellite data were re-routed to a backup computer, which also failed. In-coming data were then re-routed to a second backup computer, which after a short period of operation indicated a massive missile raid on the United States. Apparently a practice tape which had been used for testing air force personnel had been inadvertently left on one of the backup computer tape drives.

Within a few minutes, this error was discovered, but not before the false information had been transmitted to US military installations around the country.

In June of 1980, the computer display system at U.S. Air Force Strategic Air Command (SAC) headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska, indicated a large number of SLBM launches against the United States. (This is one of the military installations which receive warning system data directly from NORAD). A check with the NORAD command post in Colorado found no indication of any SLBM launches on its equipment. Eventually the computer display at SAC cleared and the situation returned to normal. However, in the initial confusion, the SAC duty officer directed all alert B-52 crews (over a hundred airplanes) to go to their aircraft and start their engines should a quick take-off be necessary in order to survive. None of the B-52s actually took off.

On June 6, as SAC sought to determine the source of the malfunction, the incident was repeated —this time with the indication of a number of ICBM launches Later it was determined that a "faulty integrated circuit in a communications multiplexer", that is, a faulty computer chip the size of a fingernail, was responsible for the incidents.

While there have been a few other minor incidents, those described above have been the most serious. How does it make you feel about the idea of launching US ICBMs when our warning systems indicate an attack? Does it make you wonder about the Soviet warning systems?

If there were a nuclear war with the Soviet Union, would the President of the United States survive?

Answer: Probably not.

It is almost certain that any large-scale Soviet attack on the United States would include an attack on Washington in order to disrupt the structure for commanding US military forces. If the attack were "a bolt from the blue" or if it occurred in the early stages of a crisis, the President would probably be in Washington and would be killed along with his cabinet, the Congress, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

While in principle the President might, upon satellite warning of an attack, run from his office, get on a helicopter, and escape the Washington area, in practice it seems highly unlikely that this would work. The time it takes for a helicopter to get to the White House (three to five minutes) and to escape the area (five to ten minutes) does not compare favourably to the time (about seven to ten minutes) between satellite warning and arrival of a ballistic missile from a submarine. If the attack were from a Soviet submarine-launched cruise missile (unlikely now but possible in the future), there would be no warning at all.

In an escalating crisis, the President would essentially have three choices: (1) remain in Washington, (2) get on board a specially equipped airplane and randomly fly around the country, or (3) go to a secret underground command post. The argument for his remaining in Washington (as Kennedy did in the Cuban missile crisis) is that his departure could panic the nation or lead to an escalation in the crisis. The special airplane, the National Emergency Airborne Command Post (NEACP — often referred to as Kneecap), is a 747 which can, in principle, stay aloft for as long as three or four days as long as refueling is available (oil supply problems necessitate landing after this period). During a large-

(*Continued on page 34*)

Disarmament *(from page 14)*

or nuclear war command and control infrastructure on their soil, train their troops in the use of nuclear weapons and take part in the nuclear-weapon targeting plans. In other words, they are to all intents and purposes nuclear-weapon powers excepting they do not have the legal title to the weapons. It is like a person having a borrowed revolver and maintaining he is unarmed because he did not buy the revolver and the licence is not in his name. This also explains why Governments of so-called non-nuclear nations are enthusiastic about having theatre missiles on their soil or allowing home-port facilities for nuclear-weapon carriers. In the light of their vested interest to legitimise nuclear weapons it is not surprising that the industrialised countries belonging to NATO and ANZUS and Japan have opposed the resolution of the non-aligned nations to declare the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons as a violation of the UN Charter and a crime against humanity.

Like the NPT, the nuclear-weapon-free zone proposals and full-scope safeguards are steps to legitimise the nuclear weapons in the hands of the nuclear-weapon powers and privileged position and technological hegemony in the international community. Nuclear weapon-free zone proposals amount to establishment of a protectorate by the nuclear-weapon powers over the non-nuclear-weapon powers who accept guarantees. Pax Britannica and Pax Americana are to be succeeded by Pax Atomica. This again implies acknowledgement of the legitimacy of nuclear weapons in the arsenals of the nuclear-weapon powers. Similarly full-scope safeguards impose the hegemony of the nuclear-weapon powers and the allied crypto-nuclear-weapon powers. If in order to obtain nuclear energy technology non-nuclear-weapon powers are to accept safeguards on the non-diversion of the technology to military purposes, by the same logic industrialised powers importing energy source material should be subjected to safeguards that the energy generated is not diverted to military purposes, especially for manufacture of weapons of mass destruction.

Slowly and steadily through these and other measures the world is being conditioned to accept the legitimacy of the use of nuclear weapons and chemical weapons. Repeatedly it has been highlighted that doctrines of use of nuclear weapons in conflicts involving nuclear-weapon powers on both sides do not make sense as they would result in mutual annihilation. Similarly the use of chemical weapons will invite retaliation in kind and will confer no particular advantage to the side initiating its use. However, in conflicts where only one side has such weapons and the other side has not, such weapons can be used with devastaing advantage. Neutron weapons and nerve gases will be ideal to clear oilfields. The world has been witness to nuseize blackmail when one side had overwhelming superiority or near-monopolistic possession of nuclear weapons.

It is in this context of possible nuclear blackmail that the kind of guarantees offered by nuclear-weapon powers to non-nuclear-weapon powers are a matter of serious concern. Of the five nuclear-weapon powers the US states that it will not use.

> nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon state party to the Nonproliferation Treaty or any comparable internationally binding commitment not to acquire nuclear explosive devices, except in the case of an attack on the United States, its territories or armed forces or its allies by such a state allied to a nuclear-weapon state or associated with a nuclear-weapon state in carrying out or sustaining the attack.

It is not clear that attack on US armed forces when they are aggressors will not invite nuclear retaliation. The phrase "associated with" is vague and any nation can always be charged with being associated with a nuclear-weapon state. In other words, the guarantee is not meaningful, and allows the US complete freedom to use nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear-weapon state at the moment and in circumstances of its choice. The same is true of the United Kingdom. Nuclear threats may not be credible as between two nuclear-weapon powers and nuclear war doctrines may not make much sense in the confrontation of the super-powers but they do make sense in the context of threats or use by nuclear-weapon powers against non-nuclear-weapon powers.

The continued attempts at legitimising nuclear weapons is a matter of grave concern for the developing nations—especially those which supply vital raw materials and energy source materials to industrialised countries. Of late a concept of non-military threats to national interests and the well-being of industrialised countries has been developed. Threats were held out that attempts at strangulation of industrial economies by withholding oil supplies will be met with force. One observer, Prof. Guy Pauker of the Rand Corporation has pointed out:

> The North-South conflict should not be perceived as a temporary clash of interests produced by the fourfold increase in the price of oil since 1973, but as the expression of a much deeper conflict...An increasingly determined campaign is being waged by the Third World through a variety of overlapping groupings for the establishment of a New International Economic Order. Although its articulated demands are economic, the general thrust of the movement is political, aiming at a major modification of the power relations between the former colonial powers who are at present the most advanced industrial societies and the former colonies who are still in the early stages of modernisation and industrialisation. What the North-South conflict actually involves is a struggle for the world product, which is not likely to be resolved by a few brief summit meetings. The struggle will probably continue for a long time with periods of negotiations interspersed with crises and confrontations... Nations, like individuals, do not divest themselves voluntarily of their accumulated wealth and their sources of income merely in response to moral appeals. If they have the power to resist demands on their assets the American people will probably expect their Government to negotiate from a position of strength, and if they lack the power needed for the protection of their interests, they will hold their Government accountable for having failed to maintain its preparedness.
>
> This does not imply that the American people will necessarily engage in decades of conflict with the Third World over the division of the global product. Eventually, through the evolution of public opinion, a gradual

> process of accommodation may well occur, but the time for reconciliation is not yet ripe and a period of economic confrontation between North and South is likely to be an important dimension of the transitional crisis that the world may be facing in the 1980s...
> Even the most imaginative humanitarian scholars concerned with the peaceful transformation of the prevailing world order do not expect that a new international system can be created before the end of this century. It seems therefore prudent to assume that, regardless of what the more distant future has in store for mankind the impending transitional crisis could generate considerable international turbulence. *(Military Implications of a World Order Crisis in the Eighties*, 1977).

On the basis of systematic research, which identified 215 incidents since the end of World War II in which US forces were used as a political instrument, the Brookings Institution concluded recently that the armed forces should not be used for political objectives abroad except under very special circumstances. The study established nevertheless that

> demonstrative use of the armed forces can sometimes be an effective way — at least in the short term — of securing US objectives and preventing foreign situations inimical to US interests from worsening...Under contingencies more harmful to its way of life than the 215 incidents between 1946 and 1975, the United States may not have the choice of using force only under very special circumstances. In a harsh international environment, a credible capability to use coercive diplomacy may become a major national security requirement.

The motives behind the Rapid Deployment Force and the presence of extra-regional powers in the Indian Ocean littoral can be derived from the above approach to international relations of some of the most powerful nations of the world.

The above account would explain the differences in approach to disarmament till recently between the industrialised countries and developing countries. Among the industrialised countries there was a sense of complacency that King Atom had preserved peace in that part of the world and they were able to combine a high defence expenditure with a high growth rate. The wars occurred in the developing world, interventions by industrialised countries happened there, threats of asymmetric use of nuclear, chemical and other sophisticated weapons were held out to those nations, and lastly, nations struggling with problems of development found the defence expenditure burdensome. Therefore, the developing world had a meaningful stake in disarmament. This dichotomy in approach was reflected in the deliberations of the First Special Session on Disarmament of the UN General Assembly and also in the proceedings of the conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva.

Of late however, a radical change in attitudes has come about in the West at the grassroots level, and there is a popular upsurge against continuing the arms race. The demand is now for a freeze of nuclear armaments as a first step towards negotiating arms control and arms reduction measures. Two major factors explain this change.

First, the industrialised world today is in a major crisis. The unemployed in the OECD countries exceed 24 million and almost all those countries are in a recession threatening to turn into a depression. The era of cheap energy is over. Growth rates had significantly come down in the seventies and it no longer appears feasible to combine high defence expenditure with high growth rate. There are now pressures in various European countries to reduce defence expenditure. As the UN Study on the Relationship Between Disarmament and Development Observes,

> the world can either continue to pursue the arms race with characteristic vigour or move consciously and with deliberate speed towards a more stable and balanced social and economic development within a more sustainable international economic and political order. It cannot do both. It must be acknowledged that the arms race and development are in a competitive relationship, particularly in terms of resources but also in the vital dimension of attitudes and perceptions.

The Report emphasises,

> Altogether, sustainable global development is heavily dependent on what we have termed the cooperative management of inter-dependence in its political, economic and physical dimensions. It only remains to ask whether such a perspective will emerge and endure if the arms race continues unabated. And the answer, surely, is no. Indeed, the political climate accompanying the arms race would appear to be the very antithesis of a genuine and enduring sprit of cooperation and mutual accommodation. The cooperative management of inter-dependence may be eminently sensible, perhaps even necessary, for the realisation of global economic and social aspirations but such a prospect must be regarded as rather unrealistic as long as the arms race continues. In this fundamental respect, therefore, disarmament and development are strongly related.

This approach is diametrically opposed to the conflictual one underlying the Rapid Deployment Force, the stepping up of armaments expenditure at the cost of national and global development, trade embargoes, technology denial and reduction of financial flows among countries of different social, economic and political systems. Such an approach will only lead to second-best results even for those who see some benefits in it.

Secondly, awareness is growing among the public of the industrialised nations that King Atom may not be able to preserve peace for all time to come and the new nuclear doctrines — envisaging war fighting — may result in the concept of limited nuclear war being tried out in Europe. The question whether effective command, control and communication can survive the first few nuclear shots has been raised in a substantive manner only now, 37 years after the nuclear era began. The assiduously projected impression that nuclear weapons are under effective control of the Heads of State and Heads of Government of nuclear weapon powers has been challenged by very knowledgeable persons. In West Germany, the Nordic countries, Holland and Britain, grassroots movements are mobilising public opinion against the conventional wisdom that nuclear weapons have been able to preserve peace. In the US too, the nuclear-weapon freeze campaign is gaining fast. Senators Edward Kennedy and Mark Hatfield are leading 139 members of Congress in demanding that President Reagan should negotiate an atomic freeze with the Soviets. In the Labour Party of Britain and the SDP (Social Democratic Party) of West Germany significant sections have taken a stand in favour of negotiating a freeze. The World Council of Churches held an international public hearing on nuclear weapons and the Church both in Western Europe and the United States — especially the Protestant — has become the torchbearer of public opinion. In the US alone the medical and scientific communities have held symposiums in more than 40 states on the medical consequences of nuclear war and the Union of Concerned Scientists has conducted teach-ins in more than 150 campuses. Never before in the nuclear era has public opinion in the Western industrialised world been so aroused and sensitised to the dangers of nuclear war and the arms race.

This is a major gain in the struggle for disarmament. The arms race is mostly a phenomenon of the industrialised world and to the extent that it take place in the developing world it has to be sustained by transfer of arms from the developed world. The struggle for disarmament is therefore to be fought in the hearts and minds of the peoples of the industrialised nations. As earlier pointed out, for both their security and development, developing nations have a stake in a world less heavily armed. This is also reflected in the UN resolution to declare the threat of use and use of nuclear weapons as a crime against humanity. One hundred and twentyone nations including two nuclear-weapon powers, China and the Soviet Union, voted in favour. Only the 15 NATO nations, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Ireland voted against. This reveals where the arena of the struggle for disarmament lies.

Unlike in 1978 when the first UN Special Session on Disarmament was held, the developing world today has a powerful ally in the growing public opinion in the developed world against nuclear weapons.□

CHILD LABOUR IN INDIA

According to the 1971 census, there were over 230 million children in India in the age group 0-14, constituting 42 per cent of the total population of the country. Of this child population, more than 10.7 million were recorded as workers.

The states where child workers constituted 5 per cent or more of total workers in 1971 are the following: Andhra Pradesh (9.03), Assam (5.64), Bihar (6.06), Gujarat (6.17), Haryana (5.20), Himachal Pradesh (5.55), Jammu & Kashmir (5.09), Karnataka (7.94), Madhya Pradesh (7.27), Maharashtra (5.37), Meghalaya (6.71), Nagaland (5.34), Orissa (7.18), Punjab (5.95), Rajasthan (7.29).

In 1978 there were 257 million children in India (age group 0-14) out of a total population of 634 million. According to estimates made in 1978-79, the total number of child workers has risen to 1.65 million in 7 years, and if anything, this is a gross underestimate because of the reluctance of people concerned to admit that they have working children in the family or in the work place.

For the same reason that total figure of 52 million working children in the world, particularly in countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, may be shocking in itself, but has been admitted to be an underestimate by the ILO.

Despite this underestimate, there is little doubt that India, with all her development efforts in the last three decades, has not only the doubtful distinction of holding a larger children labour force than any other country in the world, the country can also boast of a share of more than one-third of the total child labour force in the world today. Needless to say, the number of children in the work force must have considerably increased even in 1979, the International Year of the Child.

The majority of the working children are in agriculture, farm related work or in the unorganised sector. Out of the known figure of 10.7 million in the 1971 census, an overwhelming majority (78.7 per cent) worked as cultivators/agricultural labourers, 8.2 per cent were engaged in livestock raising, forestry, fishing, hunting, plantation and orchard work.

The number of children working in the unorganised sector is not covered by census data—another reason why the census data can be treated as a gross underestimation. This sector accounts for children working as domestic servants, helpers in hostels, canteens, wayside shops and similar establishments; hawkers, newspaper vendors, porters, shoeshine boys, sweepers and scavengers; children employed in small workshops and repair shops and helpers at construction sites engaged in breaking stones, loading and unloading goods. Their hours of work are long, their wages low and uncertain, their working and living conditions are bad. Apart from the general harmful effect of work upon the physical condition of the children, they are lured into many occupations which would be considered hazardous for the health of even adult workers.

— *Maitreya Ghatak and T. Vijayendra in* Towards Continuing Education (*monthly, April 1982*)

Nuclear War and USA (*Contd. from page 31*)

scale attack on the United States, tankers for repeated refuelling might well not be available. In such a situation the President could, in principle, fly to Central or South America to take refuge. The final alternative of a secret command post is attractive, but only if there is assurance that the Soviets do not know of its existence. There are a number of such underground shelters for government officials in the mountains west of Washington, but the Soviets almost certainly have them targeted. While a nuclear weapon targeted on such shelters might not immediately kill the occupants inside, it would almost certainly seal up the entrance and create an eventual underground tomb.□

NEHRU MEMORIAL MUSEUM AND LIBRARY : NEW DELHI

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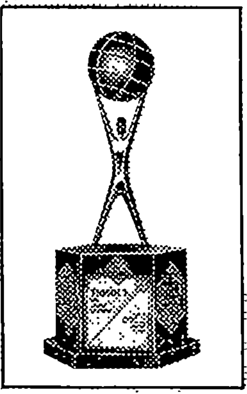

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POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

Whore-house Politics

DEFECTION is not a dirty word any more. The mini general election and its aftermath have established that not only is defection an accepted part of the political scenario but it has been twice blessed, by the ruling party leadership and by the constitutional figureheads in States. The developments in Haryana, unprecedented not in character but only in dimensions and accompanying brazenness, are a pointer to the shape of the newly evolving political culture in the country, the sole motto being: All is fair in the battle for power, never mind the electorate's verdict.

It is rather amusing — or shocking, depending on how one looks at it — to recall certain pronouncements made by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi during her hectic election campaigning. On May 16, just three days before the Assembly elections in four States, Indira Gandhi in a campaign speech declared that those who had "repented" and rejoined the fold could not be treated as untouchables. The specific context was the hostile treatment defector Bhajan Lal received at the hands of crowds. After all, Bhajan Lal showed extraordinary nimbleness in 1980 when he walked over to the Indira Congress with his power-hungry band, converting at one stroke a Janata Ministry into a Congress-I Ministry, both led by himself. Both Indira Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi welcomed him with open arms, giving the defector phenomenon a massive boost. What reward can be too high for the prince among the defectors and prodigals?

The very next day (May 17) Indira Gandhi, to quote a newspaper report, "lashed out at those persons who frequently changed their party for the sake of power". These persons had been identified in the earlier day's speech. The "real enemies in this time of crisis" were not the returning prodigals but the "loyalists" who on being denied the party ticket were either contesting as independents or were working against "the interests of the party". Defection is disagreeable only when it is *from* one's party, not *to* it. Logical, for when Bhajan Lal hijacked his Ministry and a sizeable group of legislators in early 1980, it made all the difference to the Indira Congress. In 1977 the Cong-

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ress-I had secured three seats in a House of 90; when the Assembly was dissolved this year to prepare for the elections, Bhajan Lal's Ministry commanded the support of 51. In such a situation who wants to go into intangibles like morality, propriety and so on?

After all, defections started in a big way in Haryana from 1967 or thereabouts, so much so that the State earned the dubious reputation of being the land of Aya Rams and Gaya Rams. Of course in this game there was no question of angels versus devils. The ruling party and the Opposition were both at it. If Bhajan Lal proved a consummate defection engineer it is because of experience on both sides.

Thus it is not surprising that after the election, when the Congress-I fell a dozen short of majority, it was so arranged that Bhajan Lal would remain Chief Minister and get adequate time to manage defections on an adequate scale to get the required vote in the Assembly. The office of Governor obviously has its uses in such situations. Governor Tapase had asked Devi Lal who had staked his claim to "parade" his supporters, but the day before the famous "parade" was to take place Bhajan Lal was quietly sworn in as Chief Minister. Did Tapase move fast as a result of Union Home Minister Zail Singh moving fast? The answer is worth finding out. The Governor, who seemed so concerned about verifying physically Devi Lal's claim, did not find it necessary to satisfy himself that the ace defector he was swearing in commanded a majority; that test is presumably only for the Opposition, and in any event only when the ruling party at the Centre is unable to move fast enough to deliver a pre-emptive strike. Even the ugly scenes enacted by Devi Lal and his followers in the Haryana Raj Bhavan cannot retrospectively make a Daniel out of a Tapase.

Constitutional pundits can hold forth on the constitutionality or otherwise of the way the Haryana Governor acted, but in terms of political morality and democratic propriety the debate is without meaning. One welcome development is that the Opposition has protested strongly enough to lead to the Congress-I leadership directing Bhajan Lal to test his strength in the Assembly much earlier than the time-limit generously set by the State Governor. The atmosphere of violence that the latest developments have generated should cause concern all round, even if defectors, actual and potential, go on with their game.

Of course they will go on with it. It is not as if there have been no precedents for floor-crossing even in the early years of freedom when politics was a far less murky business than it is today. From Rajagopalachari's deft exercise way back in 1952 in Madras, which neatly converted the Congress minority into a Congress majority, through Charan Singh's brisk if unsubtle switch in the second half of the sixties to topple C.B. Gupta and get installed as UP's Chief Minister by a motley crowd, to more recent events like the installation of Karunakaran as Kerala Chief Minister late last year in the hope that he would muster enough strength to keep his Ministry stable, there is quite an impressive tally of precedents. Not surprisingly, the more we have of it, the cruder and more brazen it gets. The same is true of Governors — at least of many of them — who have tended to become more and more obliging to the powers-that-be at the Centre. One has only to see the record of Assemblies kept in animated suspension to permit uninhibited horse-trading. And horse-trading is another term that has ceased to be offensive.

An independent MLA of Himachal Pradesh must be thanked for putting the present kind of politics in perspective. The expelled Congress-I rebel — one of the tribe Indira Gandhi had roundly condemned almost on the eve of polling day — was sweetly taken back into the fold. And before this bizarre drama took place, the man concerned, one Manse Ram, told newsmen with commendable candour: "I want to see which party gives me a better offer." With bated breath we wait to know the "offer" from the Congress-I which made him get back into the fold, the "lashing out" notwithstanding. Which shows that every defector has his price and is bound to get it in certain situations. The "loyalist", even of the returning prodigal variety, has no such assurance after the initial glow; all are not Bhajan Lals. And that is a good enough incentive to keep the defection game going strong. Some of the loyalists may turn rebels at some future date, or dissidents at a less distant date, but that bridge is to be crossed when it is reached. Our politicians no doubt have their own interpretation of Gandhiji's dictum: "One step enough for me."

Bahuguna, who is back in the Lok Sabha after overcoming the heaviest odds, is being either naive or somewhat hypocritical when he repeats the old demand for an anti-defection law. The Janata interlude, as well as the kind of politics in which many of the parties concerned have been engaged all the time, shows that no one is serious about stopping defection excepting when it affects them adversely. Those who talk glibly of ending defections by law would do well to take a close look at the two Left-dominated States of West Bengal and Kerala. In States where the Left is strong, polarisation is sharp along policy lines, and Haryana-type defections are almost non-existent. Isn't there a lesson in this?

While we seem doomed to live with defection and defectors as part of the national political scene, it is well to remember that the ugly phenomenon has become a part of electoral politics where the Left is either weak or virtually non-existent. In other words, defection is born of power politics in which principles, policies, ideologies and the like have no place.

Can whore-house politics of the sort we have been witnessing be wiped out by merely putting a law on the statute book — even if such a miracle enactment does take place? What is involved is political morality and integrity — and that is not something to be ensured by law. A more effective Left forcing polarisation on policies and a more conscious electorate can bring about the change. But we are still a long way from such a consummation.

C.N. Chitta Ranjan

May 25

COMMENTARY

Indo-Arab Ties: Another Milestone

OUR DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

THE joint communique issued at the conclusion of Yasser Arafat's state visit to India recorded that the Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation and the Prime Minister of India held discussions covering a wide range of subjects of common interest. While it is not unusual for such formulations to figure in joint communiques, in the present case it need not be dismissed as a routine exercise. For in truth India and the PLO do indeed have not only interest but a vital stake in many contemporary global issues which have a bearing on international peace and security. The West Asian crisis and the Iraq-Iran war are certainly among them, and in their roles as peacemakers, non-aligned India and the PLO have a committed stake in ensuring that neither of the two factors comes in the way of holding the non-aligned summit in Baghdad later this year.

This apart, the PLO is gradually emerging as a vital link between India and the Arab world, which is one among the many reasons why India felt impelled to elevate the status of their relations in the recent past into full ambassadorial level. To the Western world Yasser Arafat evokes the image of a terrorist, but to Indians who have but recently emerged from the fires of a struggle for national liberation, the image is indubitably one of a friend and comrade-in-arms. That is why he is always welcome in India.

Though Arafat's visit had been scheduled and announced several weeks ago, his arrival in New Delhi last week attracted speculation on two counts: he came to India after paying an unscheduled visit to Saudi Arabia where the Indian Prime Minister was received hardly a fortnight ago, and he left India for Pakistan, again on an unscheduled visit. Arafat was in a position to confirm that Indira Gandhi's visit to Saudi Arabia had been regarded in Riyadh as a significant event in the promotion of understanding between India and the Arab world, and having had something to do with the organisation of the visit, his assessment was of some importance to Indira Gandhi. Similarly, his visit to Islamabad, apparently arranged suddenly — Arafat was to have journeyed to Beijing from New Delhi — also caused speculation that he was about to play a role in promoting Indo-Pakistan relations. This inference was largely because the joint communique recorded the PLO Chairman's appreciation of India's policy of promoting friendly relations with the Government and people of Pakistan. It was just as well therefore that Arafat asserted at a press conference that his visit to Pakistan was solely for strengthening the PLO's ties with Islamabad.

The Palestinians have never been more vulnerable to Israeli, and therefore Western, pressures as they are now. Paradoxically, the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai appears to have heightened rather than diminished tensions in West Asia. The Israelis have been for the time being restrained by the United States from carrying out their threat to wipe the refugee camps in southern Lebanon out of existence on the ostensible ground that there have been Palestinian intrusions into Israel via Jordan. Before the Sinai withdrawal, such threats were interpreted as Tel Aviv's quest for alibis to stall the evacuation of Sinai, but now that this crucial condition of the Camp David agreement has been carried out, Palestinians feel even more insecure. They have reason to. It was only some months ago that Israel bombarded some refugee camps in southern Lebanon; it was only some months ago that Israeli bombers destroyed the nuclear facility in Iraq.

The joint communique was not indulging in exaggeration when it noted that the developments in West Asia have reached a critical point. But for the preoccupation of Israeli leaders with the domestic crisis currently facing Premier Menachem Begin and his Cabinet, the threats of invasion of south Lebanon could indeed have been translated into action. The non-aligned world has been clamouring for concrete action to thwart Israel's expansionism and aggression, but it is aware that it is battling against a stone wall so long as the West backs Tel Aviv. The non-aligned coordinating bureau demanded at its meeting in Kuwait united action to isolate Israel at all international forums. But it stands to reason that Palestinian helplessness and heightened vulnerability are driving Yasser Arafat to friends like India and Saudi Arabia in his search for stronger action. Arafat indicated at his press conference that the PLO expected its non-aligned comrades and colleagues to think in terms of a more effective role for the non-aligned movement in bringing Israel to heel.

The Iraq-Iran war has entered its twentysecond month with no indications of a cease-fire. There have been parallel initiatives by the non aligned and the Islamic bloc to penetrate the obduracy of both countries and create an atmosphere favourable to a stoppage of the war, but neither have succeeded. The PLO is a participant in both the initiatives and is fully aware of the sensitivities of Iraq which is accused of starting the war and of Iran which is currently dictating its own terms for a settlement. The need for a cease-fire has assumed urgency because the fate of the Baghdad summit has become inter-linked with the conduct of the war. The venue itself has proved controversial and has tended to divide the movement on the one hand and the Arab world on the other. In such a situation, countries like India and organisations like the PLO, which claim both Iran and Iraq as friends, need necessarily to do some skilled tightrope-walking to preserve their neutral credentials.

Indira Gandhi and Yasser Arafat thought the occasion of the latter's visit appropriate enough to issue an appeal to Iran and Iraq "to resolve urgently their differences peacefully". They spoke in their capacities as members of the four-nation non-aligned committee (Zambia and Cuba are the other two members) "who have been exerting all-possible efforts to bring this un fortunate conflict to an end". In any case this is all they can do at the moment. Iran has been canvassing opinion within the movement against Baghdad as venue; Iraq has been insisting that any shift of venue will be interpreted by it as an affront to its status within the movement. A consensus between India and the PLO in favour of Baghdad would thus have its own implications for the rest of the members, some of whom are still wavering over participation in the summit.

To a specific question whether India was assisting the PLO by supplying arms, Arafat's answer was that while it was the prerogative of the Indian Prime Minister to respond, all he could say was the PLO was extremely grateful for all the support and assistance India was offering to the Palestinian cause. The question was a reflection of the popularly held belief that Indian assistance could stretch even to the extent of arms supplies, but if this is the case neither side can be expected to take the world into confidence. But it needs to be acknowledged — and Arafat was gracious enough to do so — that India has been unstinting in its moral support to the cause of the Palestinians. That such support has in turn buttressed the cause of Indo-Arab friendship is incidental because Indo-Arab relations are deeply rooted in history, tradition and principle. They stem from the realisation that the Western world can ignore the realities of the West Asian situation only at the cost of peace in the region and that Israeli expansionism needs to be curbed.

During his two visits to India, Yasser Arafat has discovered for himself the immense potential India has in making available to the Arab countries its expertise in many fields and he has made no secret of his conviction that this expertise, coupled with the experience of the last three decades since Independence, can be used in the development programmes of Arab countries. Yasser Arafat can be depended upon to spread this message in his part of the world. On its part, India can be depended upon to exert such influence as it possesses in the Third World to articulate not only the Palestinian cause but also the need for insulating the Arab world as a whole from the designs of imperialists who have no qualms in putting one Arab country against another to perpetuate their own hold on the region.

There is a meeting of minds between India and the PLO, and for this reason alone Arafat's visit to India needs to be acknowledged as another milestone in the consolidation of Indo-Arab ties. (*May 24*)

ELECTION SURVEY

Congress in Decline

SANJAYA

DESPITE the setback suffered by the Congress-I in the recent elections, there is bound to be a sense of euphoria in the party at the coming into being of party governments in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. But this ought not to lull Indira Gandhi into false complacency. On the contrary, this may be the appropriate moment for her to devote some thought and attention to measures to arrest the decline of her party and determine the causes that have brought it about. She may not find the answers palatable, but there may be no escaping the fact that the downward slide has indeed begun.

There will be many in the Congress-I who will be ready to attribute the triumph of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in Kerala to Indira Gandhi's charisma. They can also be expected to advance the proposition that the Prime Minister's personal influence resulted in the party's accretion of strength from 29 to 43 in the West Bengal Assembly. They will be only partially correct on both counts. Partially because there were, as the campaign in Kerala and West Bengal so vividly brought out, any number of factors responsible for this consummation unrelated to Indira Gandhi's personality or appeal. There is general acceptance of the assessment that the elections were not characterised by that phenomenon which has come to be known as "Indira wave".

In Kerala, the Congress-I no doubt increased its own strength in the Assembly from 17 to 20 but in the process it lost as many as 13 seats to the Marxists. The additional seats it won in West Bengal were mostly from urban constituencies. In both instances, the pro-Congress-I votes appear to have resulted from a sense of disenchantment with the Marxists rather than from any sentiment of love and affection for either the Congress-I or Indira Gandhi. It may well be argued that in any election, voter preferences are indeed based on disenchantment with some party and enchantment with another, but the lesson to be drawn from the Kerala and West Bengal verdicts is that Indira Gandhi's personal draw had much less to do with influencing voters than the objective reality confronting the electorate. In both cases, this reality was related to the role and performance of the Marxists in office. In this sense, there was indeed a negative wave blowing in the two States, and the UDF in Kerala and the Congress-I "alliance" in West Bengal proved to be the beneficiaries.

Had there been an "Indira wave", it would have swept all before it as it did in 1971 and 1980. In any case, as far as West Bengal and Kerala are concerned, the 1971 and 1980 waves had left the States' electorate cold and there was no reason to expect it to be swayed by any mythical emergence of another one this time. The fact is that in Kerala there was a sharp political polarisation, and the Congress-I was only a minor ingredient in it. In all probability, the outcome would have been exactly the same even if Indira Gandhi had not sought to make her presence felt in the State by traversing the length and breadth of it like a raging storm. The interaction of the constituents of the two alliances was indeed such as to validate this presumption.

The Congress-I performance has been truly unimpressive in Haryana and Himachal in spite of the intense personal campaigning by Indira Gandhi, who criss-crossed between the two States any number of times. Additionally, the ruling party gloated over its other asset in Rajiv Gandhi, who was not only "in charge" of Haryana and Himachal but also addressed more than a hundred regular and "wayside" meetings spreading his "Mr Clean" image. That such intensified and hectic efforts at garnering votes had only a limited success is a pointer certainly to the fading charisma of the beloved leader(s).

It was S. Satyamurthy who propounded the "lamp post" theory in the heydey of the Congress when the electorate could be expected to cast their votes blindly in the name of the organisation. The theory remained valid for a few years after Independence but had begun to erode even during the Nehru era. It received a rude jolt in 1967, but Indira Gandhi tenaciously revived it in 1971. It seemed to have some validity even in 1980 when a number of third-rate politicians entered the portals of Parliament for the only reason that their candidature had been commended by Indira Gandhi. The 1982 mini-general election can be said to have buried the lamp post theory once and for all. Between mother and son, they were unable to whip up popular enthusiasm for the party to the extent of ensuring a majority in the two States; nor did their combined authority control the patent rebellion within the ranks to prevent organised, and in several constituencies, open sabotage. That the number of these constituencies was nearly half of the total of 90 involved tells its own tale. The announcement by Indira Gandhi that she was in a position to identify each and every rebel and would inflict exemplary punishment on them turned out to be grim irony considering that the post-poll scenario made it imperative for Bhajan Lal to seek the support of the same rebels

The point must by now have

gone home that the electorate cannot be taken for granted and that it has become far too sophisticated to miss the distinction between loyalists and defectors. Ten out of 13 ministerial colleagues of Bhajan Lal were swept aside, as also a number of other Congress-I hopefuls including the Himachal PCC-I chief, Sarla Sharma. It may be difficult to determine whether the Ministers lost because they were among the 22 of the 40 defectors of 1980 who were re-nominated or whether their performance in office did not measure up to the electorate's expectations. Possibly the former. It has been argued that a similar fate befell some West Bengal Ministers, among them Dr. Ashok Mitra, who cannot by any stretch of imagination be described as a non-performing Minister. The reason for their defeat lies elsewhere; it would appear that they lost either because they were caught up in the urban disenchantment with the Marxists or because they could not muster sufficient resources to wage an effective campaign.

Apologists for the Congress-I will however find it difficult to explain away the debacle in Jabalpur, which came within six months of an earlier one in the same State of Madhya Pradesh in Sagar, where too it was the BJP which dealt the crushing blow. The Congress-I tended to regard the Jabalpur seat as a sure one not because of the candidate's relative superiority but because all factions within the party had found the choice acceptable. The candidate, Rattan Kumari, is the daughter of Seth Govind Das who never lost an election in that constituency. But this time the combined support of P.C. Sethi, V.C. Shukla, S.C. Shukla and Arjun Singh, all faction combatants, could not save her. Surely there is a lesson here for Indira Gandhi, who cannot be unaware of the boast of the BJP in its now famous Vrindavan Document that it was poised to replace the Congress-I as the number one party in the State. Of the seven parliamentary by-elections, the Congress-I won only three. Even if it is conceded that by-elections cannot be regarded as effective barometers, the loss of Jabalpur and Thane, and both to the BJP, is not to be dismissed lightly by a party which only two years ago rode to triumph on the crest of Indira Gandhi's popularity.

The party contested 486 seats in the four States. Of these, the bulk was in West Bengal — 294. If West Bengal is regarded as a special case because the outcome there was never in doubt, that leaves the party with 192 fights on its hands. In the event it secured 87 of these seats, representing a percentage under 50. Not much of a record, even in the context of the fact that the party has formed governments in Haryana and Himachal, and is the dominant partner of the ruling alliance in Kerala. And for the record, it needs to be pointed out that the margin separating the votes polled by the Left Front alliance and the United Front alliance in Kerala did not exceed 95,000 which does not hold out bright prospects for the Karunakaran Ministry.

There is some merit in the argument that the Congress-I need not be singled out for criticism for the inner-party squabbles resulting in one leader in Haryana and Himachal working against the interests of the other. (Indira Gandhi had occasion to publicly reprimand Bansilal and his supporters.) The squabbles in the Lok Dal and the apparent absence of pre-poll rapport between Charan Singh and Devi Lal have been no less unedifying. But the question is not whether opposition parties continue to be in disarray despite their relative good performance at the hustings. The question is whether Indira Gandhi can afford to live with defiance of her authority, as manifested by the conduct of the rebels in her party, for another two years, at the end of which she will be expected to deliver the goods at another and larger poll.

It is a pity that the right lessons are not being learned. To have introduced an element of friction in the State leadership in Haryana by encouraging the defectors was bad enough, but the deliberate flouting of democratic norms and conventions in manipulating the swearing in of Bhajan Lal as Chief Minister is worse. Had the Lok Dal-BJP combine been allowed to form the Government on the basis of their combined strength, it is conceivable, given its tenuous majority and the unpredictability of the independents, that it would have enjoyed only brief longevity. But the blatant assault on propriety while bringing in short-term benefits is bound to prove counter-productive in the long run since it will tend to unite the opposition once again. Indira Gandhi could have refrained from offering this calculated provocation to the opposition.☐ *(May 24)*

BJP's Chequered Fortunes

NARENDRA SHARMA

Has the Bharatiya Janata Party come up to its own expectations in the May 19 Assembly elections in four States and the byelections to the Lok Sabha? The BJP leadership will no doubt search for an answer to this question when they meet in their National Executive and National Council at Surat in the first week of June.

The BJP's electoral achievements and failures will have to be measured in terms of its pre-election claims and past performance and also in the context of the perspective it has set before itself, namely, of emerging as the national alternative to the ruling Congress-I.

The BJP went it alone in Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and West Bengal — its objective being different in each State — while in Haryana, it was an ally of the Lok Dal. The two allies, the Lok Dal and the BJP, could not come to terms in Himachal Pradesh because, for one thing, the BJP was confident of coming to power there on its own, and for another, the Lok Dal would not be satisfied with a dozen or so seats which the BJP was prepared to allot to it in that State.

As regards Kerala, BJP leaders like L.K. Advani had confidently predicted a crucial role for the party in the post-election polity by opening its account in the State Assembly with half a dozen legislators; they believed that with this much strength or even less, the BJP in Kerala would be in a position to hold the balance between the sharply polarised United Democratic Front and Left Democratic Front in the post-election Assembly and to give a "new orientation" to that State. The bloody clashes between BJP cadres and Marxist cadres in the last two years had given BJP the feeling that it had become the centre of gravity for a sizeable section of anti-Communist forces in Kerala, who would enable it to at last reach the Assembly forum this time.

As for West Bengal, the BJP did not enter the elections with great hopes; its idea of forging a third front was a non-starter; expansion of its base wherever it could and retaining its minimal presence in the Assembly appeared to have been its two-fold aim.

It may also be mentioned that the BJP had rejected a proposal made by the Lok Dal that the two parties should jointly contest the various Lok Sabha by-elections on the basis of seat adjustment. That rebuff to the Lok Dal showed the confidence and aspiration with which the BJP had entered what has been described by many as a mini-general election.

On the achievement side, the BJP has registered record advance in Himachal Pradesh; it has also annexed the prestigious Jabalpur Lok Sabha seat in a byelection in Madhya Pradesh and retained the Thane Lok Sabha seat in Maharashtra. On the minus side, its legislature strength in Haryana has come down to less than half of what it was in the dissolved Assembly; it has failed to open its account in the Kerala Assembly; in West Bengal even its one-member Assembly party has ceased to exist; and one of its stalwarts, Sunder Singh Bhandari, suffered defeat in the Udaipur Lok Sabha byelection from Rajasthan — undoubtedly a severe blow not only because of Bhandari's importance in the party but also because Udaipur happened to be his home constituency and the party had spared no efforts there in terms of men and money. In other words, the BJP's performance in the non-Hindi-speaking regions has been quite contrary to its expectations, while in the northern areas accounting for the bulk of its strength, its signal advance in Himachal is accompanied by serious reverses elsewhere. It is this two-fold process which the BJP will have to contend with in its struggle to emerge as "the only national alternative".

A closer look at the election results brings into bolder relief the BJP's success as well as failure.

Take, for instance, Himachal Pradesh. The BJP had 24 members in the dissolved Assembly; it had inherited them from the united Janata Party after its split in 1980. The BJP has now won 29 seats and along with one BJP-supported Independent it can claim a tally of 30, five short of absolute majority in a house of 68. At least, in the case of Himachal, the BJP's pre-election claim of winning a majority on its own has not materialised, though this goal was missed narrowly.

This advance would seem to be all the more impressive in the light of the fact that the erstwhile Jana Sangh (now largely constituting the BJP) could win only 5 seats and 7.75 per cent votes in 1972. The BJP's 24-member strength in the dissolved Assembly (1977-1982) was the product of the anti-Emergency wave in 1977 when the non-Jana Sangh constituents of the Janata Party had as many as 29 seats in the Janata legislature party of 53, having had a poll percentage of 49.01. In 1982, the BJP contested without allies.

The revolt within the Congress-I, did contribute to the BJP's successes in a number of constituencies in Himachal Pradesh. According to reports, the BJP was also able to exploit the Maneka factor to advantage in Himachal. But then the BJP too had to contend with rival Opposition candidates belonging to the Janata Party and the Lok Dal, both of whom formed part of the original Janata. The BJP's base was earlier known to have been confined to Kangra area and to Mahajans and Suds, namely, the trading community which wielded considerable influence among sections of the population. The BJP has now extended its base among other sections of the upper castes also.

The BJP's debacle in Haryana is certainly a jolt for the party, for its alliance here with the Lok Dal was considered important for the party not only in this State but also beyond its borders. It had hoped to increase its strength from 11 in the dissolved Assembly to between 15 and 20 on the basis of the Lok Dal's support in the rural areas adjoining the various urban constituencies. With its tally coming down to a mere 6, its calculations about the significance of its alliance with the Lok Dal proved illusory. Even the BJP's top Haryana leader, Mangal Sein, could only scrape through with a precarious margin of 420 votes over his Congress-I rival in Rohtak which has always been considered a stronghold of the BJP and where Mangal Sein wields personal influence. The State BJP chief, Kamala Verma, was defeated in Yamunanagar, another stronghold of the BJP.

What is perhaps even more shocking for the BJP is the fact that its traditional refugee base in Haryana has deserted it in a big way this time. This base clearly responded adversely to the BJP's alliance with the Lok Dal. In a limited sense this is a parallel of sorts to what happened to the BJP's urban Hindu base in Punjab after the erstwhile Jana Sangh went in for an alliance with the Akali Dal in its anxiety to hold power. It was a communal issue in Punjab and it is contradiction at different levels — caste, peasantry, traders — in Haryana. The BJP's effort to make a dent in rural Haryana on its own had failed in the past and its attempt now to advance in alliance with the Lok Dal has also had the same fate.

During one of his election tours in Kerala BJP General Secretary L.K. Advani had openly said that both the rival fronts, UDF and LDF, were wooing the BJP because of its vote banks in a large number of constituencies which could tilt the balance in favour of one or the other. Due to sharp polarisation between the Congress-I-led UDF and the CPI (M)-led LDF, almost all observers forecast that the BJP factor would play a considerable role to make or mar the fortunes of one or the other Front.

A scrutiny of the election results shows that the calculations about the BJP's voting strength were largely correct. The BJP in Kerala contested as many as 68 seats, many more than even the Congress-I and the CPI (M). Of these, in two constituencies — Kasargod and Manjeshwar — it polled over 17,000 and 19,000 votes, though it was far behind the winning candidates. In another 18 constituencies, it polled 3000 to 9000 votes; in 23 other constituencies its voting strength was between 2000 and 3000; and elsewhere it was below this mark.

In the Kerala context, the BJP displayed open sympathy for only the two casteist parties, NDP (Nairs) and SRP (Ezhavas), both forming part of the UDF, by withdrawing its candidates against them, indicating likemindedness. While the LDF partners believed that the BJP candidates would help their chances by splitting anti-Marxist votes, the UDF was naturally apprehensive on the same count. This no doubt explains why Prime Minister Indira Gandhi during her Kerala tour lashed out at the BJP as being in collusion with the Marxists. It also remains a fact that though there had been violent clashes between the CPI(M) and BJP-RSS cadres and the BJP had put up a large number of candidates, the Left Front partners concentrated their attack on the Congress-I and the UDF, and the BJP was largely spared during the election campaign. A strange logic of the struggle for power. It can also be seen that the BJP factor has been responsible for tilting the balance only in the case of a handful of seats which are shared by a cross-section of the candidates of both Fronts. It would remain a matter of speculation why the BJP chose to field such a large number of candidates in a State where it had a very limited base; maybe an investment to expand its base in future. But it has come a cropper insofar as the present Assembly election is concerned. And this will be a matter of controversy in the party, and the leadership will surely be called to account, for it had built a lot of calculations about the future of the party in the South on its hoped-for electoral successes in Kerala.

This is not to minimise the BJP's potential in that southern State, not only in view of the complexity of the composition of the UDF that has come to power but also because the BJP has projected itself as a phenomenon in the State through violent clashes with the Marxists and not through the Assembly.

These elections can be said to have presented the BJP strategists working to build it as a national alternative to the Congress-I with fresh problems not only in the South but also in the northern States. Simla may be far away from Trivandrum but not from Chandigarh. The BJP's success in Himachal may only help it to bear the shock of its failure in Haryana and Kerala.

One will have to wait for the BJP leadership's answer all the same. □*(May 23)*

Janata: Helter-skelter

THE Janata Party, a mixed bag of personalities pulling in different directions all the time, has been reduced to pathetic insignificance in the elections to four State Assemblies. And for this situation, the party leaders can hardly blame anyone but themselves. Despite all the thunder and lightning at Sarnath and elsewhere, few in that party showed interest in building an organisation.

In a way this is a pity, because the Janata Party is not without its sprinkling of high-minded persons — the reference is of course not to Morarji Desai, Piloo Mody and the rest of *that* crowd. Once before we had occasion to refer to the bizarre spectrum that goes by the name of the party's leadership. It is that spectrum, with all the implications for policy formulation and party-building, that has led to the party's present plight.

Realism is not the strong point of the party or its leadership. True, Some of its top leaders wanted only a small number of candidates to be put up in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, but they were overruled. Lacking the resources of the big guns in the field, and lacking an organisation as well, it was a foolhardy venture to have put up more than fifty candidates in each of the two States mentioned. The rout was a foregone conclusion. The same is true of West Bengal where the party drew blank, having fielded an impressive 93 candidates; but then the local lights of the party had their own illusions. The party never had a chance there, and could have kept out of the fray, devoting itself instead to doing some hard and honest work among the people. In Kerala the setting is different, and even there it has been a poor show so far as the Janata is concerned.

The unity move before the elections, which went haywire the very next day, showed either immaturity or naivete of an astounding kind. There is nothing to show that there is anything to stop the Janata stalwarts from running helter-skelter. And what will poor Chandra Shekhar, still trying to put on a brave face, do? Even he does not seem to know the answer.

If any other much-boosted party is as dead as the Janata, it is the Congress-S, despite its "presence" in the Kerala Assembly. *—CNC*

Communist Balance-sheet

ANALYST

THE significance of the Communists' performance in the recently-concluded elections in four States lies in the fact that it was only where they were locked in electoral battles did the campaign centre round policy issues and did not degenerate into a virtual referendum on the personality of Indira Gandhi, as it happened in most of the other theatres of election struggle. Perhaps a corollary to this fight on policies is the fact that there has been no defection whatsoever before, during or after the election campaign in either Kerala or West Bengal. The polarisation between the two Fronts, one led by the Congress-I and the other by the CPI-M, was sharp and clear in both Kerala and West Bengal. Those who kept out of these two Fronts — BJP in Kerala and Janata in West Bengal — suffered miserably.

If Kerala has turned out to be a disappointment for the Communists, they were amply compensated in West Bengal. In Kerala the two CPs together have this time got 39 seats (CPM 26, CPI 13) as against their strength of 52 seats in the dissolved Assembly (CPM 35, CPI 17). In contrast, the Communists in West Bengal have this time captured 181 seats (CPM 174, CPI 7) as against their strength of 180 in the dissolved House (CPM 177, CPI 3).

Statistics however do not bring out the full picture of the Communists' electoral performance. In Kerala, the CPM-led Front lost mainly because of the alienation imposed by the CPM's Big-Brother approach to allies and adversaries alike. The bloody clashes with RSS did not bring out CPM in a very favourable light. The incompetence of Nayanar as Chief Minister contributed in no small measure to the CPM's reverses. The land reforms and other programmes undertaken in the first phase of the Communist-led Ministries in the seventies were not vigorously followed up under Nayanar and this considerably weakened the standing of the Communists in the eyes of the masses.

It is being alleged in Communist circles that the Congress-led UDF has legitimised caste and communal politics: no doubt, the UDF mosaic looks like a caste-communal coalition. At the same time, it has to be conceded that since 1959, the wooing of votes on caste and communal lines has become the regular practice in the case of both Communists and non-Communists.

In West Bengal, what is remarkable is that the Communists have never given berth to communal or caste politics. However, there are other problems that stare the CPM-led Left Front in the face. The panchayat measures and Operation Barga have consolidated the CPM in the countryside. In the sixties and seventies, the bulk of CPM votes used to come from Calcutta and its industrial neighbourhood, while the Congress stronghold was in the countryside, particularly through medium and big farmers. This time the roles have been reversed: the Congress-I has made significant headway in Calcutta city and in the industrial belt. Some of the traditional Red bases returned Congress-I candidates.

This development may have important lessons for the CPM leadership. While the CPM has been able to win over the middle and poor peasants, it has yielded ground among the urban middle classes. Although CPM leader Promode Dasgupta has pooh-poohed the suggestion that the chronic mismanagement of the energy supply has soured the middle classes, it is the general belief that the continued power-cuts since the CPM came to power in 1977 have given the impression that the Communists are bad managers of any outfit entrusted to them. The controversy over Tagore's primer, the storm over the proposed abolition of English in lower classes, the crisis in the jute industry, closures and shut-downs of industrial units — all these antagonised the middle classes and some others to a considerable extent.

Unlike the situation in other States, West Bengal is preponderatingly dominated by Calcutta and its neighbourhood. To have lost this belt may make things uncomfortable for the Communists; all the tension in Calcutta can now be intensified by the adversaries of the Communists. It should be a matter of concern for the CPM leadership that some of the major working-class centres have voted for the Congress-I. No Left party can view this complacently. It is to be noted that even in the 1980 Lok Sabha election, the non-Bengali Hindustani workers (whose number is large) voted for Congress-I.

Jyoti Basu no doubt has earned high repute as leading not only a stable Ministry but heading a Government that can claim to have a record of achievements, however modest. But then the Centre-vs-State confrontation that was generated in the last five years was almost made an alibi by the former Finance Minister, Dr Ashok Mitra, who despite his widely-publicised flamboyance turned out to be a bad manager of the State's economy. In the coming period, Jyoti Basu with the reputation of being a cautious political leader, may with profit bring about a working relationship between the Chief Minister and the Prime Minister. Much can be done within the present constitutional framework to help West Bengal stand on its feet.

More serious than all this is the reality that the Communists have drifted into becoming a regional political force. By their pronouncements, manifestos and programmes, the CPM and CPI leaders have been claiming to be national, all-India parties, but the fact cannot be gainsaid that in practice the Communists have bases only in Kerala and West Bengal, while the vast Hindi belt is left untouched. Both the CPI and the CPM have for years talked about penetrating the backward Hindi belt, but nothing tangible has come out of such resolutions. Their electoral performance in Haryana and Himachal is a fresh reminder of this stark reality. □(*May 25*)

MEDIA AND ELECTIONS

Credibility the Casualty

C.P. RAMACHANDRAN

All India Radio, or Akashvani as it has been renamed to please the Hindi lobby, took a rather resilient formula to announce the results of the mini general election. In Kerala, it announced, 'the Congress(I)-led United Democratic Front had won a handsome majority over the Marxist-led Left Democratic Front. It forgot to say that eight defecting MLAs can bring down the Government. In West Bengal, Akashvani went on, the Marxist-led LF was winning but the Congress(I) had doubled its seats. In Haryana, the Congress(I) was the largest single party, and in Himachal the party was narrowing the gap with the BJP. The Government media does not recognise defeats of the ruling party, defections to or from the Congress(I), poverty, crime and so on. As far as AIR is concerned, India is a classless society where most people spend their time singing and dancing in praise of the achievements of the Government.

What of the private media? The owners of the big newspapers with the exception of the *Indian Express* know which side their bread is buttered. In the last week of the election campaign, there was a sudden switch-about in reporting. The opposition was giving way to the onslaught of the Congress(I). By the morning of the elections the reports said that the Congress(I) was well on the way to winning with impressive majorities because of the effect of Indira Gandhi's whirlwind campaign by road and helicopter. When the results were declared the *Times of India* did not find any surprises. Everything was anticipated, the victory of the Left Front in West Bengal, the emergence of the Lok Dal as a contender in Haryana and the BJP becoming a strong political force in Himachal. Other newspapers also took the line that the Congress(I) had not suffered very much.

Editorial comment was by way of homily and advice to the ruling party and its leader, Indira Gandhi, on how to go about making the Congress(I) stronger. If only she would listen to the advice offered! But there is also secret satisfaction that Right-wing parties are coming up in the Hindi-speaking belt. The Righter the better. After all, once these papers were supporters of the Swatantra Party which wanted India to abandon non-alignment and join the American camp so that our Indian industrialists could pick up some of the crumbs from the loaded tables in Wall Street.

The challenge of the BJP (read RSS for BJP) in Kerala was heavily played up. The BJP would be the decisive force in the State and both the CPI(M) and the Congress(I) would have to depend on the BJP in getting the support of the house. When the results were declared sixtysix BJP candidates out of 68 had forfeited their security deposits. But there were no apologies. The main thing was that the Left Democratic Front had been defeated. The defeat of P.K. Vasudevan Nair (CPI), former Chief Minister of Kerala, was particularly pleasing to the big newspapers. So was the defeat of Dr. Ashok Mitra, the articulate Finance Minister in the Jyoti Basu Ministry. These provided some solace in an otherwise bleak situation.

Doordarshan had for its commentary on the election, the editor of (what else?) the *National Herald*. He had nothing to say except to make some general noises in favour of the ruling party at a time when very little good can be said. This is quite in line with the policy laid down by Vasant Sathe. Information and Broadcasting Minister. That the *National Herald* is a party paper, that its circulation in Delhi is a big laugh, do not matter. The point is the views of the other side must be suppressed.

The media, both Government-owned and in the private sector, has lost all credibility. What is happening is a return to news by word of mouth. More was known about the hanky-panky over the Governor calling on Bhajan Lal to form a government in Haryana after asking Devi Lal to parade his followers in the Raj Bhavan, by word of mouth. Within half an hour the story was all over the Capital, even the very words used and the inflections employed. This is what happened during Emergency. That should act as a warning. But Sathe is adamant that his ethics are right. In a recent interview to a Delhi magazine, he held out: "... Going by the press, the general impression one gets is that there is total breakdown in law and order in the country, that civilians are totally corrupt. This has a fragmenting effect on the country. There are forces of parochialism everywhere. If they have failed to break up the country, it is only because we have a charismatic leader like Shrimathi Gandhi".

Still doing his loyal work. That is all right. Vasant Sathe must look after himself. But when the mini general election shows that some of Indira Gandhi's charisma has gone with the wind, what does the media do? Just say the opposite and hope for the best. Does this add up to a policy?☐ (*May 25*)

DISCUSSION

Indian Development

The perspective of Indian development is fast becoming a matter of crucial concern for the polity of the nation. Taking into account the need for serious discussion of the state of our political economy and the options before the country, *Mainstream* (March 20, 1982) published a contribution from a distinguished observer of the economic scene. This was followed by five thought-provoking contributions (*Mainstream*, April 10, April 24, May 1, and May 8. Here we publish a provocative contribution from Dr H.K. Paranjape, well-known economist and formerly member of the Monopolies Commission. —Editor

Must Left Repeat Its Mistakes?

H.K. PARANJAPE

THE approach advocated by A Student of Political Economy (*Mainstream*, March 20, 1982) is not different from that underlying the political policies adopted by many Left elements both in the Nehru era and *vis-a-vis* Indira Gandhi almost up to 1977. In the case of Nehru, the assumption was that Nehru was essentially interested in pursuing a socialist policy. It was only the vested interests surrounding him in the Congress, in the bureaucracy and also in the country which prevented his effectively pursuing such a policy.

It has thus been stated that he adopted the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956 and goaded the State Governments to introduce land reforms legislations, through forming an alliance "of all patriotic people, which included even some sections of business and landed interests, and middle classes and professionals, small and medium farmers and workers in general. But when it came to the implementation of the policies,he had to compromise again and again....The reason for this is mainly that the alliances which supported Nehru's introduction of these policies were not strong enough to withstand the pressures of the opponent vested interests, during the implementation of these policies". The lack of strength is attributed mainly to the failure of the Left forces to organise these alliances. It is further said that the Left actually derived a lot of its own strength from the leadership provided by Nehru. "But because of its inability to correctly gauge the balance of forces, the Left did not muster its strength to mobilise sufficient support for Nehru, when he faced the challenges of the vested interests".

Without questioning Nehru's basic contribution to the democratic and socialist movement in the country, a time has surely come when his inadequacies should be clearly understood and the deviations from the professed path of development squarely blamed not merely on the vested interests surrounding him but on his own weak leadership and poor understanding. Between 1953 and 1962, it would not be wrong to say that Nehru's sway over not merely the Congress Party but also over the Indian polity as a whole was hardly challenged. It was at the beginning of this period that he was able to pronounce the objective of policy to be a "socialistic pattern of society", support the new Plan thinking being attempted at the Indian Statistical Institute, have the Second Plan formulated to a significant extent along the lines suggested by P.C. Mahalanobis and other change-oriented economists, take steps to nationalise the Imperial Bank and life insurance, and redefine industrial policy in terms of the IPR of 1956. Of course there were outcries by vested interests in his own party as well as in the country generally. But what is significant is that he was able to easily overcome them and, in this, he received almost unstinted support from a large part of professional intellectuals in the country and also from the Left forces.

Which were the areas in which there was a conflict between the Left forces and Nehru? The most important conflict between Nehru and Left forces in this period was regarding the attitude of the Central Government to the first ever popularly-elected Communist Government in the world — Kerala. With the close relationship which had been established by India with world Communist powers such as the USSR and China, and with the overall acceptance of the economic strategy underlying the Second Plan by most Left forces, it should have been possible for Nehru to encourage collaboration between his party and the Communist Party in Kerala so as to provide an example of cooperative endeavour in the cause of socio-economic change and development. This was never done.* Not that the Namboodiripad Government did not make mistakes. It is also true that the Communist Party cadres were throwing their weight about, with the police and other Government authorities not inter-

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*The attitude that Nehru and the Central Government adopted towards Kerala is well explained in B.N. Mullick, *My Years With Nehru*, 1948-1964, esp. pp. 337-367.

fering. But this was nothing very unusual; this is what was happening in all Congress-ruled States right since 1946. One does not have to go into details except to recall that the Congress Party (led by Indira Gandhi who was playing her first major political role) took a load in the anti-Government agitation, and the Central Government dismissed the State Government. Was this a proper example to set for collaborative endeavour by the progressive and left forces in the country?

Nehru's antipathy to tying himself down to any specific socialist policies and programmes on a time-bound basis was clearly shown in the episode in 1953 when he invited Jayaprakash Narayan and the Socialist Party to cooperate with him but showed reluctance to agree to the suggested programme. His frank opinion of the Communists was that "it is exceedingly difficult to rely on their word or on their basic integrity". He also felt that Communist parties in non-Communist countries were quite out-of-date, and also ultra loyal to their party. (Nehru's letter to Zakir Hussain, August 12. 1955, quoted in *Jawaharlal Nehru, A Biography*, by S. Gopal, Vol. 2, p. 253). In such a situation, how could genuine cooperation between Nehru and the Left forces have developed? By even more one-sided adulation, and support, than was actually given by many Socialist and Communist admirers of Nehru?

The other major conflict between him and the Left forces in this period was about linguistic provinces, the most long-drawn of the tensions being regarding the creation of Maharashtra and the inclusion of Bombay city in it. Nehru's whole attitude from the time of Independence to this question betrayed the inadequacy of his confidence in the genuine democratic forces in the country. It was unquestioningly right of the national movement before Independence to have accepted the reorganisation of the political units in the country in such a manner as to enable the different linguistic nationalities in the country to come into their own. This was also expected to help an increasingly effective participation of the common people in the political, administrative and economic processes through the use of the various regional languages in their respective States. Nehru's participation in what was called the JVP Report which wanted the creation of linguistic provinces to be postponed for a long time, and his siding with moneyed interests which were dead set against the inclusion of Bombay city in Maharashtra, disclosed a major chink in Nehru's belief in democracy and his understanding of the roots of Indian nationalism. Initially, in his usual overbearing style, he was quite ready to dismiss the whole thing as trivial and too tedious to devote time and attention (*ibid*, p. 261). It was after a great deal of avoidable conflict that these matters were sorted out. Can one say that Nehru was right and the Left forces wrong in their understanding and action in this matter?

Even though the Second Plan was approved by the country with large-scale nation-wide support, and the development of metallurgy and machine-building on a large scale was taken up in earnest, within a short time India's national planning had to suffer a setback and large scale aid had to be sought from the World Bank and other foreign sources. The requirement of food aid was essentially caused by Nehru's permitting large-scale decontrol of foodgrains advocated by his closest supporter Rafi Ahmad Kidwai. It was not the Left which wanted decontrol; it was in fact against the advice of prominent economists and most Left forces that this was done. Moreover, this stop-go approach in food policy was not forced on Nehru; it was essentially his weakness in understanding the real implications and the economic effort required for development of the type envisaged by the Second Plan that was responsible for it.

It was the inadequacy of implementing the approach assumed in the IPR which was mainly responsible for the balance of payments crisis of 1958. Annual phasing of private sector investments was hardly attempted, and the result was a spurt in imports of various kinds of goods, raw materials, intermediate goods, machinery and consumption goods. The false optimism created by the successful management of balance of payments in the First Plan period led to a laxity in import control even though the machinery for such control was very much there. In this area, Nehru was largely guided by another Minister of his, T.T. Krishnamachari, who continued to enjoy among some Left elements a reputation for radicalism. It was he who insisted on a liberal import policy which created the balance of payments crisis which forced the Government of India to seek assistance from the World Bank.

Where did the Left forces let Nehru down in all this? In fact, enough material is available to show that all such slidebacks were opposed by not only the Left forces, but also by many prominent intellectuals and economists. But Nehru had become the prisoner of the traditional stalwarts in the party as well as the bureaucracy. Maybe his own inadequate understanding of economics was responsible for his undue dependence on others for economic and financial advice, Deshmukh at one stage and TTK for quite long. But the point is that he chose to follow such advice rather than that of radical thinkers.

The slide-back that followed the approaches to the World Bank and the USA for assistance is well known and does not need to be recounted in detail. In spite of the IPR, both indigenous and foreign capital were treated with kid gloves, and this was supported by advisers like TTK, B.K. Nehru and L.K. Jha by pointing out that any other policy would adversely affect the aid climate. The sharpest increase in the concentration of economic power together with the growth in the private sector took place in the period after 1957. Nehru himself felt cut up about what was happening. But all he could do was to appoint the Mahalanobis Committee to look into why inequalities in income and wealth were increasing.

As far as Nehru is concerned, new directions in economic policy were not effectively given after 1958. No doubt, the Third Five-Year Plan attempted to carry on at least a part of the Second Plan economic strategy regarding the growth of the public sector. But soon came 1962. Though brave talk about pursuing defence and development together was indulged in by Nehru, planned development received a major setback then, and plans and planning have never recovered from that setback.

It should not be overlooked that, since becoming Prime Minister, Nehru had gradually lost his faith (if he ever really held it) in what he himself had earlier described as scientific socialism. Urging his party as well as Parliament to adopt the socialist (initially socialistic) pattern of society as the objective, he repeatedly said that this meant no insistence on any particular ideology or dogma. He emphasised that nationalisation of private industry was not necessary to bring about a socialist transformation. "Why buy junk?" was his oft-repeated question. A somewhat naive theory of the state underlay the Second Plan strategy, that large and rapid growth of the public sector would overwhelm the private sector, and therefore usher in socialism. The naivety of this approach was soon shown up by the balance of payments crisis and the subsequent developments described above. One wonders whether, at least on the part of Nehru, it was all naivety, or there was also a definite feeling that a basic change in property relations would upset the applecart and this would not be welcome in his own party.

Another indication of the manner in which the interests of his party and therefore the class that it represented were attempted to be furthered was the setting up of the Indian National Trade Union Congress, so as to break the hold of Left leadership on trade unions. It was Sardar Patel who played a direct role in this; but there is not the slightest indication that Nehru opposed it. In any case, he did nothing after 1950 to bring about any change which would make it possible for Government patronage and support to the INTUC to diminish, and to enable unions which had genuine majority support to be recognised as the representative ones.

Though Nehru was individually very friendly to many socialists and Communists, there was no question but that he wanted the success of his party at any cost, even though it might mean that the persons with a completely non-socialist or anti-socialist approach would exercise power, whether it was Morarji Desai, S.K. Patil or B.C. Roy. "Am I responsible for building up the Opposition?", was a frequent rhetorical question which Nehru put. What the Socialists and the Communists expected was not his direct support, but a certain fairness in dealing with their organisations whether in the fields of labour unions, cooperatives or politics. It is well known that Nehru's Governments both at the Centre and in the States acted in a partisan manner in most such matters, and it is nothing but naivety on the part of many Left-oriented writers to assume this was all happening without Nehru's knowledge.

This somewhat long account of some aspects of Nehru's attitudes and actions has become necessary because there has been a persistant tendency on the part of many Left-oriented thinkers and writers to almost deliberately shut out such memories. That is why a conclusion is reached as in the article under discussion that it was not Nehru's failure that was responsible for the failure of Indian progressive forces, but the Left's not mobilising sufficient support for him.

When it comes to Indira Gandhi, the statement that she "went much further ahead compared to Nehru in championing the causes which could be identified with the pressure groups constituting the Left" leaves one amazed. Making such a statement in 1971 or 1972 might perhaps have been excusable; to make it in the year 1982 defies all logic. Whether it is the industrial licensing policy, the policy regarding monopolies and foreign capital, or planned assistance to the poorest sections of society, the record of Indira Gandhi's Governments has clearly been anti-socialist. Of course if one is to go by pronouncements and speeches, she continues to be in many ways a progressive and a socialist. But what has been the effective policy? Yes, banks were nationalised; but did this not happen more as a weapon of intra-party conflict so as to defeat the old leaders, rather than as a well-thought-out measure and part of a socialist-oriented strategy? In fact, it is known that she had not supported such a measure when it was earlier discussed whithin the Cabinet. The changes in industrial policy which followed the Report of the Dutt Committee and the passing of the MRTP Act were thought to involve a new orientation in the approach to curbing the concentration of private industrial power. But in fact, moves began to be made, almost right from the time these measures were initiated, to make them ineffective; and we now see that the MRTP Act has proved to be a toothless tiger, and licensing policy has been increasingly liberalised in favour of private and foreign capital. Those with black money have hardly had to worry much about their operations as long as they kept on the right side of those in power, and the culmination of this soft attitude was the issue of Bearer Bonds. While slogans like Garibi Hatao and end to bonded labour have been adopted, in effect Government policies have gone against the working classes, whether in the public or the private sector, and have favoured the bureaucracy in the public sector, and capitalists as well as large farmers in the private sector. It is true that the public sector has continued to expand; and the state continues to wield tremendous power over all sectors of the economy. But is this necessarily a mark of a socialist orientation? What has been the position of the Planning Commission? How important is that body, or its successive handiworks? How important have they been in the real operation of the economic system?

One cannot obviously object to the statement that "Indira Gandhi has become a historical force" and that she has a following among the masses which is unequalled by anyone else among the present political leaders in India. But, from stating that her political power is derived from this mass support to draw the conclusion that "she has to be against the dominance of monopolistic forces in the economy, because that dominance would militate against her base with the masses" is surely illogical. She certainly needs the support of the weak and non-privileged masses to be able to win elections and to maintain her political power. But from this, does it necessarily follow that she must pursue policies in practice which *really* help the poor and go against the interests of the rich and the powerful? The fallacious understanding of the author of the article in such matters is best illustrated by the following statement: "Anybody who has seen the faces of the millions that crowd around her wherever she goes would realise how strong is the appeal of the image, how the down-trodden, the poor and the weak, fondly believe that somehow it is she and she alone who can deliver the goods". He then states that it is not necessary "to debate the veracity of these beliefs". "It is the perception of the people which matters", and therefore she is bound to pursue anti-monopolisltic and other socialist policies! Are there not enough examples in the world of leaders who swayed the masses, posed as Messiahs come to deliver them from misery, and in reality — consciously or naively — served the interests of the Establishment? In fact, unless one has a blind belief in the common people and their understanding of their own interests, one should always beware of charismatic leaders who can cast spells of mass hypnotism; because more often than not they are in love with themselves, their popularity and their power, and not with any social objectives.

While correctly pointing out the nature of development strategy that will have to be logically followed if the emphasis is going to be on growth based on private including foreign capital, the author states that "if such a development scenario unfolds itself, the monopolist-large houses-multinationals alliance will find the greatest stumbling block in their path in Indira Gandhi....Her emphasis on self-reliance and growth of indigenous capabilities will clash with their demand for free imports of machinery and raw materials as well as technology. Her promotion of small-scale sector and spread of entrepreneurship will tend to negate the basis of their monopoly growth"; and so on. Surely anyone who is acquainted with the actual policies pursued in the economic field since 1973, and especially the increasing emphasis on liberalisation in imports, in industrial licensing and in the application of the MRTP Act since 1980, should not be unaware of the fact that Indira Gandhi has proved to be no real stumbling block in the way of the monopolist-large house-multinationals alliance?

It is true that her own prime goal is obviously personal power and, increasingly, dynastic power. She will certianly not brook any force that comes in the way of that objective. She was against Big Business in 1969-70 because she thought, probably rightly, that the dominant sections of Big Business were then against her, and in favour of the Syndicate. But soon after 1972, both Big Business and she learnt their lessons and entered into an understanding which enables her to carry on with her radical slogans, and business to continue to prosper on the basis of the actual practices of her Government. Of course, business has to pay the price, not only of supporting her but also of accepting a great deal of state interference, and the corruption at various political and bureaucratic levels that follows from its working. But this does not upset business much because they do not mind forming a partnership as long as their interests are also safeguarded. One should not forget that business has hardly ever taken up cudgels against strong rulers, as long as the strong rulers largely helped their profitable growth and when the alternative was either anarchy or socialism. The lessons of not only Germany and Italy in the thirties, but also of a number of countries in the present-day world, including South Korea, the Philippines and Singapore, are very much before us.

The Student of Political Economy is not being very original when he suggests that "the ultimate interest of the Left and the compulsions of the ruling group represented by Indira Gandhi" largely converge, and that therefore the Left forces must work as a part of the coalition that Indira Gandhi is trying to forge in her favour. As mentioned above, this was exactly the approach adopted by most Left forces in the period between 1969 and 1973, with some like the CPI continuing in that direction much longer. The idea underlying this at that time was also apparently that, because of her own compulsions, Indira Gandhi was bound to follow policies which help the movement towards socialism and thus strengthen the Left forces. She had to fight the Syndicate, and this, it was felt, she could only do by pursuing the policy which was in contrast with that of the rival Congress leadership. Whether it was a P.N. Haksar as the chief of her official secretariat, a Mohan Kumaramangalam or a Raghunath Reddy in the Council of Ministers, or so-called Young Turks like Chandra Shekhar, Mohan Dharia or Chandrajeet Yadav in Parliament, they all thought that by joining up with her, they would be able to ensure that, in her coalition of forces, they would be a strong element and thus would ensure a firmer and longer step towards socialism. Even the socialists and the Communists — even Charan Singh — thought that it was proper to support her against the Syndicate so as to strengthen the more progressive elements in the Congress.

Indira Gandhi proved that she was far more the master of this situation than any of these elements and persons, who thought that she could be the instrument of their strategy. Just as it happened with Kamaraj earlier, so with all these persons and groups later. By 1972, she had gained sufficient mastery over Parliament and the Government machinery. She also realised that her charisma combined with skilled image-building and effective slogan-mongering was largely adequate to ensure her a long spell of power. The Syndicate as well as the Grand Alliance had been routed. She did not therefore any longer need the cructches of Left support. Like Nehru, she could always steal the clothes of the Left Opposition by using populist language. This, combined with a masterly use of the Government machine which was effectively under her control (partly thanks to P.N. Haksar and Mohan Kumaramangalam), and large financial resources which she alone commanded (thanks again to the Left-supported ban on company donations and a plethora of economic controls), she was confident, would be enough to win the future battles on her own. Big Business was now humbled, and was realistic enough to realise that it should work with her. She could rely on the bureaucracy to do her bidding without raising awkward questions, or having political ambitions of their own. She also gradually found out that there were enough careerist politicians in the country who would happily act as her loyal instruments for enjoying the perquisites of political power. She therefore increasingly permitted the adoption of "realistic" policies with modifications of the earlier approaches.

The 'Student' is right when he suggests that "every time she puts forward an anti-poverty programme or formulates a slogan that encourages the poor to consolidate heightens the consciousness of the people and makes it even more difficult for them to be suppressed". But his conclusion that, as a result, she is compelled to follow progressive measures is unwarranted. Her perception appears to be that she has enough charisma, and the people are ignorant enough* for her to be able to ensure that they vote for her on the basis of populist slogan-mongering though in effect nothing much is done for the poor. It cannot be said that, in a largely semi-feudal economy, this approach of hers is necessarily unreasonable. Of course, one hopes that, in the last instance, this will be found to be an unwarranted assumption; that the politicisation following from populist slogans as well as democratic electioneering cannot but lead to disillusionment with her failure to do anything effective. Only if this is true can the Left forces have any hopes for the future. What they cannot reasonably assume however is that, in the pursuit of their objectives, Indira Gandhi and her opportunistic cohorts will be their allies.

One area where the Indian Left, especially various Communist groups, have thought that the policy of Nehru, and now of Indira Gandhi, is very praiseworthy is in respect of foreign policy. It is hardly possible in an article like this to go into details; but it is time everyone took a hard look at the reality. There is enough evidence to show that Nehru's original and preferred stance would not have been very different from what under the Janata regime came to be called "genuine non-alignment". His taking a more anti-West stance had little to do with ideology or even with a general anti-imperialist attitude. S. Gopal gives enough material to suggest that he bent over backwards to see whether some accommodation with the West was possible. The trouble was that the Western powers saw their interest to lie in backing insecure powers like Pakistan, rather than strengthening India which had the potential of becoming a regional power. Especially after Stalin's death, the USSR realised the importance of India in its global strategy, and offered a hand of cooperation and friendship which was willingly grasped. Only the USSR backed us on Kashmir. That this was in pursuit of its national self-interest rather than for any ideological reasons has been amply demonstrated over the period of friendship. Not that there is anything wrong in this. If one is to see things as they were, Nehru's foreign policy, especially friendship with the USSR, was essentially rooted in the evolving world situation in which, to guard India's national interest, friendship with the USSR was crucial.

This is even more so with Indira Gandhi. The 'Student' is right in his statement that few people will believe that she can be dictated to by any imperial power; but this includes what the Chinese call neo-imperialism. Her attitude, especially in the last two years, should make this very clear. Any idea that this anti-imperialist stand inevitably makes her anti-monopolistic and vice versa is nothing but an illusion. Like Nehru, she would also very much welcome an opening to the West, and every time it has been offered as by France, she has not failed to snatch it. Quite rightly, she would like to reduce our dependence on Soviet support if possible, so that we are able to maintain a stronger position. But, situated as we are at present, the USSR and India both need each other, and this friendship is therefore unavoidable. That it has almost total national support was indicated clearly by the speedy adoption of the essence of this policy by the Janata Government. But any elements in the Left who think that Indira Gandhi is specially interested in Soviet friendship may well be in for early disillusionment. An increasingly 'liberal' economic policy, including welcome to foreign capital and multinationals, cannot but have an impact — may be delayed — on foreign policy.

The basic question asked by the 'Student' is: In pursuing the necessary task of forging a coalition of interests, can the Left do "without aligning themselves with the coalition that Indira Gandhi will have to develop in order to retain her power and maintain her leadership of the ruling group?" My own answer is: Not only that the Left can do this, but also that they must, if they do not want again to get into a blind alley. It is high time the Left forces in India ceased to look for easy and short-cut solutions. While it is obvious that adventurism and sectarianism are no good, it is also true that a belief that the charisma of a Nehru or an Indira Gandhi can be used for rising to power for introducing socialism from the top has to be firmly cast aside, especially after the experience of the last twenty years. I have already referred to the illusions under which various individuals and groups on the Left worked in the period between 1969 and 1973. They thought they could use her; in fact, she used them to build up her personal power. It should be sufficiently clear by now, except to someone who insists on being blind, that her aim remains personal power, and dynastic power, and everything else is secondary. No institution, and no cause, is higher than this goal.

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*Indira Gandhi is essentially an aristocrat. Many of our people, not quite rid of a feudal attitude, revere her for that very reason. Hiren Mukherjee has applied to her Huxley's description of the "the courteous manner of an aristocrat, oversure of superiority over the herd". This is relevant in this context.

When people advocate cooperation with Indira Gandhi, they overlook that she has increasingly shown that she has no use for anyone who is not ready to accept her as the Supreme Leader. As long as this is done, one's past or even present, however corrupt; inefficient as well as anti-common-people it may be, does not matter. If one becomes a great embarrassment, than maybe one will have to accept a transfer, or even a demotion. A corrupt Chief Minister may have to become a Governor, or even the Chairman of a Corporation! But as long as there is at least a show of unquestioning loyalty to the leader, and since 1976 to the heir-apparent son, one need never be at a loss for her support. I do not know whether this is good politics in the traditional sense; but it surely is of little use for any genuine social or economic transformation or a new political order.

I realise that such statements may sound harsh and perhaps cynical. I admit that it is difficult for many of us to shed the illusions about the possible progressive role of Indira Gandhi. Such illusions make life so much more comfortable. If we cannot ride to socialist power in India on Soviet (or Chinese) tanks, perhaps we could do that on the back of a Nehru or an Indira Gandhi. This has been the unstated premise of many Left individuals. The 'Student' is only reiterating that unstated — perhaps not quite consciously realised — assumption. It is time to understand that this way no progress can be made. Those who want political power at any cost usually find it not difficult to come to terms with those who want to maintain their hold over wealth and economic power; for the latter are also only interested in keeping their wealth and power intact and increasing at any cost. The unscrupulous politicians and unscrupulous businessmen increasingly find each other's company congenial; and this is very much happening in India. By not recognising the real implications of the power politics of the ruling Congress Party, all that the Left groups have achieved during all this time has been to look for short-cuts and, in the process, be divided and used.

It is high time we realised that in the vast problem of transforming this complex society that is India, there are no short-cuts. Modernisation has touched only the fringes, and industrial or modern agricultural islands are still surrounded by a vast sea of feudalism and backwardness. A great deal of grassroots work patiently undertaken over a long period is the only way by which the people can be educated, organised and oriented towards a proper political and economic approach.

What is necessary for this purpose is to ensure that the plural and federal democracy that exists in India at least in form is maintained. If any possibility of genuinely organising the dispossessed is to remain open, this is an essential precondition. The working classes have to be organised, educated and forged into an instrument for helping genuine transformation. But this can only be possible if the gains made by way of a democratic Constitutional structure are not permitted to be whittled away, through the use of pseudo-radical slogans, in effect for ensuring support to a state capitalism which operates in the interest of a microscopic minority. Any idea of an alliance with groups which have given adequate indications of their anti-democratic tendencies will be suicidal. Let not the Left tragically repeat its past mistakes. ☐

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Shaping of Nehru's World-view

GANESH PRASHAD

THE foreign policy of India reflects the compulsions of national interest and the socio-politico-economic milieu. It is rooted in the tradition of the liberation struggle. Also, it has a rational design which embodies Jawaharlal Nehru's vision based on his knowledge and understanding of the modern world. This process of understanding began during his twenty-one months' stay in Europe (March 1926 to December 1927). In that period the most important event was his participation in the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities held at Brussels from February 10 to February 15, 1927. He attended that gathering as the representative of the Indian National Congress. He was elected a member of the Executive Committee of the League against Imperialism formed at the Brussels Congress. He took part in the meetings of these two bodies with keen interest. His writings on world affairs during the European sojourn after the Brussels Congress form a composite whole. For the sake of convenience the period can be called the Brussels days. Two documents of those days stand out — 'Report on the Brussels Congress' (February 19, 1927) and 'A Foreign Policy for India' (September 13, 1927). These were addressed to colleagues in the highest echelons of the Indian National Congress. In them are found the seminal ideas which became the foundation of the superstructure of his knowledge of world affairs acquired by constant study and experience.

Three important points of the Brussels days need mention. First, he came in contact with Communist leaders and intellectuals in whom he found genuine anti-imperialists equipped with a sound ideology. Second, he started studying Marxist-Leninist literature in which he discovered a rational anti-imperialist account of the contemporary world and of different aspects and stages of capitalism and imperialism. Third, he visited the Soviet Union where he had a "glimpse" of the new civilisation free from the ills of capitalism and imperialism. Though he did not become a Communist, his patriotic conscience and reason, rising above his class prejudices, readily appreciated the anti-imperialist aspects of Communists, Marxism-Leninism and the Soviet Union. This appreciation had been one of the central features of his personality as freedom-fighter. Above all, he acquired a habit. Whenever he was called upon to speak or write on world affairs, he would unconsciously put his Marxist-Leninist glasses on his patriotic liberal humanist eyes. To this habit he owed an insight into and a foresight of world affairs. The acquisition vitally influenced the foreign policy of Indian nationalism. That those policies were readily accepted by nationalist India provide a measure of the patriotic character of his insight and foresight.

An important element of Nehru's intellectual acquisition of the Brussels days related to his understanding of three dominant phenomena of the bourgeois world: (1) The declining phase of British imperialism and the emerging supremacy of the neo-imperialism of the United States. (2) The nature and method of exploitation and domination by US imperialism. (3) The role of bankocracy and the 'Secret International' in bourgeois economy, society and polity. Having grasped the basic features of the age, the international scene ceased to be a mystery. This was the gift of Marxism-Leninism to the resilient mind of a humanist colonial patriot. With this background, Nehru pursued study of the ever-changing world scene, and unveiled world phenomena with the confidence of an expert. The enviably clear analysis of the contemporary world scene as found in the *Glimpses of World History* became possible.

THE two documents of the Brussels days show that Nehru clearly saw the decline, weakness, predicament and role of Britain. Its farflung empire was vulnerable and its main problem was to survive as a major power. In the 'Report on the Brussels Congress' it was argued that in China the success of the national movement would usher in some sort of socialism-oriented republic. True, there might be minor ideological differences between future China and the Soviet Union regarding the form of socialist structure. "But in essentials and in their hostility to British and other imperialism, Russia and China will stand together. Japan must of necessity gravitate to this bloc." Obviously, such a combination posed a serious threat to the very existence of the British Empire. It directly affected the future of India as well. In order to meet the likely danger Britain was strengthening its Singapore naval base. But that alone would not enable it to face the challenge. "It is exceedingly doubtful", Nehru proceeded, "if England, even with the aid of other European countries, can do much injury to this continental bloc. What is more likely is that England, in order to save herself from extinction, *will become a satellite of the United States and incite the imperialism and capitalism of America to fight by her side*". (Emphasis added). Thus the position of Britain and its Empire was quite vulnerable. "It is the knowledge of this inherently weak position that has been the governing factor in British diplomacy of late." In fact, that weak position influenced its foreign policy during coming years.

The anticipation concerning the progress of the Chinese national movement and the birth of a powerful combination in the Far East did not come true. But the general assessment of Britain's

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predicament and the forecast about its future were undoubtedly correct. These were based on the knowledge of world affairs that Nehru possessed. He clearly saw that one of the central phenomena of world politics was the struggle between Britain and the USA for leadership of the bourgeois world. World War I had brought about the end of Britain's unchallenged supermacy and made the USA the richest and most powerful nation. During the interregnum between the two World Wars friction and rivalry marked the relations between these two powers. "Behind soft and pleasant phrases", wrote Nehru six years later (July 5, 1933), "the bankers of the two countries, backed by their governments, fought for this great prize, the world leadership in finance and industry. In this game America seemed to have most of the winning cards and trumps, but long experience and good play were on the side of England."[2] In the long run, "the winning cards and trumps" inevitably triumphed over "long experience and good play." And during World War II Britain, "in order to save herself from extincition", "did incite the imperialism and capitalism of America to fight by her side" and in the process, did become a "satellite of the United State".

There were differences on the issue of immediate goal of the national movement. A section of leaders would not hesitate to accept Dominion Status for the time being. The radical wing, headed by Nehru and Subhas Bose, stood for Independence. In that debate Nehru made a special contribution. Viewing the problem in world perspective, he argued that membership of the British Commonwealth was against the nation's dignity, self-respect and self-interest. Two important considerations were highlighted in "A Foreign Policy for India". First, the document unveiled the disintegrating tendencies in the British Empire. Second, it showed that racialism characterised the domestic policy of the British Commonwelth and that in the international sphere Britain's role was reactionary. Such an approach had great pedagogical value.

Nehru showed that the British Empire was a disintegrating phenomenon. Except for India and other dependencies, it was "becoming more and more nebulous". "It is held temporarily together chiefly by the sentiment of its component members, but signs of disruption are evident enough. South Africa openly and continuously pulls in a contrary direction and advocates separation; Canada, and in a lesser degree Australia, gravitate economically and culturally towards the United States". (Here he forgot to mention Ireland which, as he said elsewhere, was pulling away from the group.) In case of an armed conflict between England and the USA, Canada, and probably Australia, would cut away from the former and join the latter. Even if the two major powers did not go to war against each other, a world conflagration was not unlikely in the not distant future. "*If any such war comes, the British Empire will hardly emerge from it as an Empire.* For the present, however, it holds together largely because of sentimental ties and common economic interests". (Emphasis added).

Regarding the domestic policy of the British Commonwealth, Nehru wrote, "We see colour and racial prejudice and the doctrine that the white man must be supreme even where he forms a small minority. South Africa offers the most flagrant example of this, but Canada and Australia are equally strong believers in this doctrine." In Kenya and the adjacent territories devices were contemplated by which a few white settlers would wield all powers over the large numbers of Indians and the overwhelming African population. Further, Nehru unfolded the reactionary role of Britain. "She is the bully of all Eastern nations striving to be free and an enemy of all progressive movements. In China her armies and fleets and aeroplanes try to hamper and break up the national movement; her army keeps the Egyptians in their proper place and her cruisers are very ready to bombard. In Europe she is the friend of every dictator, whether it be in Italy or Spain or Hungary or Greece. Even in the League of Nations her attitude is always the most conservative.... *Today England is without doubt the most reactionary force in the world.*" (Emphasis added)

While moving the "War Danger" resolution in the Madras Congress (1927) Nehru said: "The most feared and hated country in Europe is England." The exposure of the reactionary role of Britain had a particular significance in the annals of the national movement. Generations of the Indian elite had known about Britain and its achievements, and of its heyday when it was the Workshop of the World and what not. Now after the October Revolution and Versailles a radical change took place in Britain's position and role in the world. Knowledge of the new situation was therefore imperative for the leadership of a mature liberation movement. Nehru's new intellectual acquisition fulfilled the historic necessity.

IN the 'Report on the Brussels Congress', while describing the peculiarities of delegates who had come from different lands to participate in the Congress, Nehru made a striking statement: "Most of us, specially from Asia, were wholly ignorant of the problems of South America, and of how *the rising imperialism of the United States*, with its tremendous resources and its immunity from outside attack, is gradually taking a stranglehold of Central and South America. But we are not likely to remain ignorant much longer for *the great problem of the near future will be American imperialism, even more than British imperialism.* Or it may be, and all indications point to it, that the two will join together *to create a powerful Anglo-Saxon bloc to dominate the world....* So far the weakness of Latin America has been the want of unity. Each state quarrels with the other and often within the states there is also disunion, *usually fomented by the United States.*" (Emphasis added).

Whether Nehru was ignorant of the problems of Central and South America and the related issues is not important. What is relevant is the remarkable urge to study and understand those problems and their implications for a colonial country like India. He was very keen to know the nature and working of the neo-imperialism of the USA and to acquaint his countrymen with them. Discussions with progressive leaders and intellectuals during the Brussels days must have enlightened him. He read literature, Marxist and near-Marxist, on the subject as was available in India under conditions of imperialist censorship. Within a few months after return to India appeared his short, but significant, article "The Changing Face of Imperialism" in the *Bombay Chronicle* (July 28, 1928). It was based on Margaret A. Marsh's book, *The Bankers in Bolivia*, one of the vanguard publications specialising in detailed studies of American imperialism.

The article began with a quotation from Manuel Ugarte 1878-1961) whom Nehru called "the new prophet of Latin America". It ran: "In olden times imperialism was satisfied with no less than a general levy of the inhabitants of a conquered territory to make them serve as slaves; later on it took possession of the land, leaving the people a certain autonomy; today it contents itself with taking hold of the sources of wealth, leaving the land and the inhabitants to themselves". The British or European imperialist system belonged to the second category, while the Dollar imperialism of the USA represented the third. The latter or latest type of imperialism was more advanced, subtle and perfect than the former. It ensured exploitation of land and inhabitants without entailing the responsibility of administering them. This latest mode of imperialist exploitation and domination was perfected by the USA. It was in vogue in the countries of Central and South America or Latin America. Hence it was known as the system of Latin-Americanisation. Bolivia provided a good example. While remaining politically and internationally independent, it had become a virtual colony of the USA. The process was subtle. In order to develop industrially, Bolivia borrowed money from the US banks. What was the result? Within two decades the career of borrowing reduced Bolivian economy to a state of total surveillance to Wall Street, placed the Bolivian state under practical control of the Equitable Trust Company of New York and made the great majority of the Bolivian people "spend their lives .... in toiling for a miserable pittance in mines for foreign masters". The article ends: "In Nicaragua, Salvador and other countries (of Latin America) the United States Government has already acted as the tax collector for its financiers. In Bolivia the need has not so far arisen. Should it arise, Washington will not be slow to act. And Bolivia is the third largest country in the South American continent".

To an anti-imperialist rational mind, Ugarte's classification of imperialist systems is as promptly acceptable and assimilable as Lenin's thesis on Imperialism. The relevant portions of Nehru's *Glimpses of World History* bear this out. In it the treatment of capitalism and imperialism is based on Lenin's thesis and that of Latin-Americanisation on Ugarte's classification. The chapter "The Invisible Empire of America" begins with a short account of the growth of industrialism and capitalism in the USA. This is followed by a brief description of the manner by which US capitalists and bankers came to control the economic and political life of the states of the South American continent. Thus was established a new kind of empire, the modern type of empire. "But it is invisible and economic, and exploits and dominates without any obvious outward signs. The South American republics are politically and internationally free and independent. On the map they are huge countries, and there is nothing to show that they are not free in any way. And yet most of them are dominated completely by the United States". After paraphrasing Ugarte's classification with additional elucidations, it is maintained that the British type of empire was "already passing away, and giving place to a more advanced and perfected type" represented by the American invisible empire.

In the last decade of the last century M.G. Ranade, a pioneer thinker and preceptor of modern India, wrote: "The political domination of one country by another attracts far more attention than the formidable, though unfelt, domination which the capital, enterprise, and skill of one country exercise over the trade and manufacture of another. This latter domination has an insidious influence which paralyses the springs of all the varied activities which together make up the life of a nation." (*Essays in Indian Economics*). A remarkable perspective indeed. Jawaharlal Nehru elaborated the theme in the climate of his age. Thereby he endeavoured to enable the nature liberation movement to meet the challenge of neo-imperialism, to escape the "insidious influence" of invisible domination. In the late twenties of this century he enlightened the nationalist elite about the mechanism by which US neo-imperialism dominated and controlled the life of the Bolivian people. He told his compatriots: "Some of us talk of independence for India, others of Dominion Status, but few realise that these are mere words which may mean much or nothing at all. There are many countries today calling themselves independent, with fine constitutions on paper, which dare not do anything which displeases their real masters in Wall Street or in the city of London." A few years later he forewarned: "It is quite possible that Britain's visible hold over India might go before long, and yet the economic control might remain as an invisible empire. If that happens, it means that the exploitation of India by Britain continues." This was followed by words reminiscent of Ranade's: "*Economic imperialism is the least troublesome form of domination for the dominating power.* It does not give rise to so much resentment as political domination because many people do not notice it." (Emphasis added).

THE Brussels days equipped Nehru with a clear perception of the place and role of bankocracy and the "Secret International" in the affairs of the bourgeois world and in the international problems of war and peace. This is evident from a passage in "A Foreign Policy for India". He stressed the necessity for the Congress to develop an international outlook and maintain international contacts through various means. For, the modern world was too closely knit together to permit isolation. This was brought home by briefly referring to the events and situation in the contemporary world. He wrote:

> "The Arcos raid in London is followed by a murder in Warsaw and many executions in Moscow, and has its reverberations on the North-West Frontier of India. France, the most intensely national of countries, cannot have a minister who interferes too much with the plans of high finance of New York. M. Caillaux falls because Wall Street does not approve of him; M. Poincare succeeds because Wall Street helps him to do so. *We talk of labour and socialist internationals but the greatest and most powerful international organisations today are those of capital and finance which control the governments of even so-called democratic countries and bring about war and peace.* The American marines take possession of Nicaragua because Messrs. Brown Brothers of New York have money invested there. Cuba is not fit for independence, says President Coolidge, but all the world knows that her unfitness is due to the presence of rubber which American capitalists covet. China cannot be free because too much British and Japanese capital is locked up there." (Emphasis added).

The passage shows the author's unique grasp, perspective and analysis. Facts exist; but it is the historian or the statesman who invests them with meanings, makes them speak and determines the order in which they are to be called upon to speak. Behind this process lie his predilection and his habit of mind. With Nehru the exercise commenced during the Brussels days. The predilection was already there and so was the habit of mind — the former being anti-imperialist and the latter, humanist liberal. What was new was the additional or supplementary habit of viewing the world scenario through Marxist-Leninist glasses. The new habit proved immensely rewarding. His study of world phenomena became systematic, coherent and purposeful; he could confidently and clearly unfold the complex, complicated and ever-changing world scene. While studying contemporary international affairs he always remembered the central phenomenon of the bourgeois world, namely, the role of "the greatest and most powerful international organisations" of capitalists and financiers in controlling the governments of various countries and in bringing about war and peace. This gave him a clear perspective and his description became lucid and meaningful. The coherent and convincing analysis of the contemporary bourgeois world, as found in the *Glimpses of World History*, became possible only as a result of the new knowledge and the new habit acquired during the Brussels days.

In the age of finance capitalism the most important part is played by bankers and financiers. It is they who regulate, directly or indirectly, almost all aspects of life in capitalist society. Bankers, wrote Nehru. "are the real bosses of the capitalist world today." The banks control industry and agriculture; they influence the governments not only of their own countries but also of other lands. New York bankers, for example, "control many of the governments of Central and South America." "A remarkable feature of these big banks is that they prosper both in good times and bad." It is in the interest of the bankers "to have cycles of prosperity and depression." As regards the means that the bankers and financiers adopt to preserve and strengthen their hegemony, "daily it is becoming more evident that the methods of 'high finance are most shady, and differ from what is usually considered robbery and deception only in the big scale of their operation." In the years following World War I the USA "was undoubtedly the banker of the world; rich, prosperous, and bursting with wealth." The general standard was very high, and yet it was not as high as it could be. For, the wealth of the country was concentrated in the hands of millionaires and multimillionaires. "This 'Big Business' ruled the country. They chose the President, they made the laws, and often enough they broke the laws. There was tremendous corruption in this Big Business, but the American people did not mind so long as there was general prosperity." And what happened as a result of the crisis? "The great land of opportunity, which had attracted men and women from after, *became a land of despair*. Big Business, which had ruled the country, was found to be thoroughly corrupt, and confidence in the leaders of finance and industry was shaken." (Emphasis added).

The so-called national interest, about which the US statesmen talked so loudly, was, in fact and in effect, the interest of Big Business. It was in its interest that the US Government interfered in the affairs of other states. Since the Brussels days Nehru had been closely following this aspect of international politics. In 1931 the New York and Paris bankers indirectly contributed towards Ramsay MacDonald's inglorious conversion from a 'Socialist' to a 'Nationalist'. But the classical example of interference by US Big Business in the affairs of other states was provided by the happenings in Central and South America, especially during and after the Economic Crisis (1929-31). "In South America the stoppage of loans from the United States and the Depression brought a crisis which upset most of the republican governments, or rather the dictators that ruled there. There were revolutions all over the South....These revolutions were, like all South American revolutions, palace affairs, just changing dictators and governments at the top. The person or group that controls the army and police governs the country." Most of these so-called revolutions were manipulated in Wall Street. They replaced one puppet regime by another. Historically viewed, they were early rehearsals of the subversion craft for which the neo-imperialism of the USA has become notorious in recent times. The earlier imperialist systems too employed this strategem. It had an important place in the well-known classics on statecraft written by Kautilya and Machiavelli, namely, the *Arthashastra* and *The Prince*. As the imperialism of the USA is most subtle, advanced and perfect, so is its subversion craft with its sphere widened, scope broadened and tools dehumanised. The states of Central and South America were client states of US Big Business. They were its mouthpieces in international organisations. The USA was not a member of the League of Nations, yet it was always present in it — by proxy. These client states obliged it. Such was the power and working of the bankocracy.

At the Brussels Congress one of the five subjects of deliberations was "Imperialism and the Danger of War." It was perhaps there that Nehru came to subscribe to the Marxian analysis highlighted during speeches on the problem. Seven months later he asserted that "the greatest and most powerful organisations" of the bourgeoisie brought about war and peace. Apparently casual, the remark was, in fact, the basis of his subsequent study of the subject. And the more he studied the international panorama the greater became his conviction in the validity of Marxist-Leninist analysis. While as a result of the economic crisis many industries in all capitalist countries were closed down, rendering millions jobless and helpless, the trade of the armament manufacturers continued as usual. These merchants of death went on piling huge profits; their factories were not closed down. "This trade prospered and paid fat dividends to the shareholders. It was not affected by the Depression, for it trafficked in national rivalries and conflicts, and these grew worse under the crisis." The banker class too remained unaffected by the Depression. The armament makers and the bankers were the same persons or cousins. So these few thousands flourished even under the worst economic condition created by their selfish class interest. They constituted the 'Secret International' which abetted national rivalries and conflicts and was responsible for bringing about wars. Nehru vividly described in the *Glimpses of World History* the role and functioning of this International in the contemporary world. The description is a refreshing study even today:

> "War and the preparation for war mean profit to these armament firms. They traffic in wholesale death, and, impartially, they sell their engines of destruction to all who pay for them. When the League of Nations was condemning Japan for aggression in China, English and French and other armament firms were supplying arms freely to both Japan and China. It is obvious that *real disarmament will mean ruin for these firms.* Their trade will be gone. They try to prevent what is, from their point of view, catastrophe. Indeed, they go further. A League of Nations Commission, especially appointed to inquire into the private manufacture of arms, came to the conclusion that these firms had been active in fomenting war scares and in persuading their own countries to adopt warlike policies. It was also found that the firms spread false reports about the military and naval expenditure of various countries so as to induce other countries into increasing their expenditure on armaments. *They tried to play off one country against another, and helped in promoting an armaments race between them. They bribed government officials and bought up newspapers in order in influence public opinion.* And then they formed international trusts and monopolies to increase the price of arms, etc. These armament firms of different countries are closely associated with each other. They exploit patriotism and play with death, and yet they are themselves international in their operations — the 'Secret International' they are called. It is natural that these people should object strongly to disarmament, and they have done their best to prevent any agreement. Their agents move in the higher diplomatic and political circles, and these sinister figures have been in evidence at Geneva, trying to pull the wires from behind the scenes." (Emphasis added)

Here is a rare piece of indictment of the capitalist system, its masters and their 'Secret International' and life-mission. Substitution of references will suffice to make it applicable to the present situation. Nehru briefly described the career and activities of Sir Basil Zaharoff, "a very mysterious person and the typical modern international financier." He "seemed to influence governments considerably from behind the scenes" and "grew into the mysterious giant of today." The present-day Zaharoff may not necessarily function from behind the scenes. For, the line of demarcation between salesman and statesman has, in practice, become quite thin, even indistinct. The cousinhood between bankers and armament owners now embraces statesmen, administrators and military men. In 1969 US economist R. Barnet showed that between 1940 and 1967 "of the 91 key posts in the US Administration 70 were filled by representatives of Big Business." Further, in 1970 the US scholar S. Lens noted that "many Congressmen owned blocks of shares in the military-industrial corporations" and that in the 91st Congress 30 Senators and 100 members of the House of Representatives were reserved or retired officers" of the armed forces.

Nehru was writing during the interregnum between the World Wars when not a day passed without an armed conflict in one part of the world or the other. In those battles the European powers fought by proxy, their armament manufacturers, supplying weapons to the belligerents. After the Second World War more than a hundred wars have taken place, all being fought on the soil of developing countries and newly-independent nations. But for these wars and the constant war hysteria in and between nations of the Third World, the huge armament factories of the developed bourgeois world, headed by the USA, would close down. It is, therefore, imperative for the masters of the developed capitalist countries and their Secret International that an atmosphere of war and brinkmanship is kept up in different parts of the Third World. This necessitates the maintenance of a huge army of agents and pen-pushers.

To sum up, Jawaharlal Nehru's insight into the affairs of the developed bourgeois world has a special place in his own career and in the history of the colonial world and the Third World. In our own country, Gandhi's moral code and Nehru's rational code raised the level of discussions, recorded and unrecorded, in the higher echelons of the Indian National Congress. The most valuable piece of political literature that the Congress has bequeathed to progressive humanity is found in its resolutions on foreign policy and in the utterances and writings of the architect. In the "dark and dismal world" of the thirties the value-based foreign policy of mature Indian nationalism was a ray of hope for all progressive humanity, even if not as powerful as the Soviet Union. While Nehru's comprehensions of Britain's predicament, place and role in the modern world enabled the Congress to formulate its foreign policy, his knowledge of the nature and working of neo-imperialism helped in evolving the foreign policy of independent India. Throughout Indian nationalism has been the pacesetter of the struggling Afro-Asian humanity. Such, in short, was the legacy of the Brussels days. □

Genesis of Punjab Problem—II

P.K. NIJHAWAN

GURU Gobind Singh changed the whole situation as if with a wrench. In fact, it was he who consciously made Sikhism the sword-arm of the Punjabi Hindu society for the protection of its *Dharma*. This point is not so well understood, and therefore needs some elaboration. The general impression is that by creating the *Khalsa*, he took the Sikhs away from Hinduism. Far from it. Facts tells a different story.

It was more than clear to Guru Gobind Singh that the fight with the Mughals would be a fight to the finish. In this battle, no quarter could be asked for, or would be given. Aurangzeb was ruthless. He wanted to convert India into *Darul-Islam* which means the home of Islam. Persuasion or coercion, any weapon was good enough for that purpose. There is no dearth of apologists for him. But they can afford to quote chapter and verse for they are not only 300 years away from the events but also not engaged in the sort of mortal combat it was! It was not a question of fighting merely one battle. With a handful of people with him, he knew that he could be overwhelmed. The Guru as the leader had, therefore, to provide an apparatus so that the war could be fought over generations and still neither could the fire be extinguished nor the fuel exhausted. The *Khalsa* was that framework.

But he did not create the Khalsa in one day. He consciously and assiduously worked for it for years. Why? The crude history books provide no real answer to it. Rather they mislead. What is the correct position?

Guru Gobind Singh understood very well the philosophical nature of the Sikh church. With such a conceptual commonality between Sikhism and Islam, a real war could not be waged. To enable his church to play this role, complete identity of form and content between Hinduism and Sikhism had to be established. He achieved it with singular success.

To first and foremost thing he did was to change the nature of his leadership. He wrote *Dasham Granth*, an autobiographical work which gave details about his past life as well. He told his followers and the populace how in his past birth, when he was undergoing hard penance at Hem Kunt near Badrinath, in the Himalayas, for his salvation, he was directed by the Almighty Himself to take rebirth to fight the tyranny of the Mughals. Now when does God do so? The Gita explicitly says "re-establish the kingdom of *Dharma*". What better testimony was required by the common Hindu to fight for the cause? To a common Hindu, he was no longer the Guru. He was an *Avatar*, an incarnation sent by God Himself to restore the pristine glory of Hindu *Dharma*.

Another very conscious act of his was to give the Hindu philosophy and mythology to the Sikhs. For this he sent scores of scholar poets of his court to Kashi to study Sanskrit. When they came back fully equipped, he commissioned them to translate the entire philosophical and religious lore of the Hindus. This was a very far-reaching effort by any single individual. Was it for the heck of it? No, not at all. It had a very high priority and purpose in his total master plan. How dear this work was to him can be gauged from the fact that when he was made to leave Anandpur Sahib with Mughal armies in hot pursuit and there was every danger of his being overtaken, he did not leave without mule-loads of this literature. It is unfortunate that most of it was washed away in the high floods of the Sirsa rivulet that was in spate.

The third most important act of his towards this end was the *Chandi Yajna*, thereby pleasing Bhavani, the Goddess Durga. This gave the Sikhs the *Kirpan*, the symbol of the mother. But the question is: Was he as superstitious as the story suggests or did he want to drive out superstition as is made out? Neither of the suppositions is correct; the fact is that the *Trigarta* country in which Anandpur Sahib lay had a special place in the *Shakta* tradition. It is generally believed that Punjab was never a *Shakta* country as Bengal is. But the *Trigarta* country was a triangle with Jullundur as one end — the other two being Kangra and Shivalik ranges and Jammu. Let us count the famous shrines of the mother: Kot Kangra, Jwala Mukhi, Chint Purani, Asa Devi, Naina Devi, Vaishno Devi, Chandi at Chandigarh, Kalka, Ambala (once Ambalaya — the abode of the Mother) and many others. A visit to any of them, particularly the Vishno Devi cave, will enlighten anyone as to how powerful the tradition is even today.

The author is a noted journalist and author. This contribution is reproduced with due acknowledgement from **Man & Development** *quarterly, (Vol. IV, No: 1, 1982). The first part appeared in* **Mainstream** *last week (May 22, 1982), and this is the second and concluding part.*

Besides, the Goddess was the ruling diety of the Rajput kingdoms scattered around Anandpur Sahib. That the Guru was specially blessed by the Mother with Her own victorious sword, immediately won over the mass of Rajputs to the Guru's banner. Thereafter, the Rajput kings always fought a losing battle with the Guru.

The Guru was evidently one of the greatest poets of the martial ardour. His praises of the Mother in *Chandi Shataka* are matchless, for they actually conjure up pictures of furious battles going on between the Mother and the demons. Wasn't the Guru ranged against the demonic forces of Mughal tyranny? Local tradition has it that the *'Panj Piaras'* were baptised after propitiating the Goddess. As a matter of fact they were offered in sacrifice! But the creating of the institution of the *'Panj Piaras'* takes the cake. If *Panchjanya* (पाँचजन्य) was the conch bugle of Krishna representing the voice of the people, *Panj Piaras* also in the traditional Hindu mind stood for the whole congregation or the mass of the people. The creation of *'Panj Piaras'* as the collective leadership of the *Panth* signified that the entire Hindudom was in revolt.

Let us see how the Hindus responded to the Guru's call. Now it was clearly a *Dharma Yuddha* and the entire Hindu population stood squarely behind him as one man. And then started the famous Mona-Sikh tradition of Punjab in which every *Khatri* and *Arora* father consecrated his first-born son to the cause of the Gurus. Nobody went out to convert these people. All those shorn of hair were known as *Monas* (not Hindus) and all those with *Kesha (hair)* the Sikhs. In essence, it means that most of them followed the Guru's religion only. Gradually, the whole *Birodaris* had both *Monas* and Sikhs sharing the *Roti-Beti* relationship.

Sikhism has one more very important dimension and it has to be understood both in its sociological aspects and placing in perspective the *Mona-Sikh* tradition. This is the conversion of Punjab's Jat peasantry to Sikhism.

Before they embraced Sikhism, the clans of *Jats* in Punjab followed their own pagan religion. Their association with Hinduism was not so well-defined. They were fiercely freedom-loving people and believed in the rough and ready customs of their clans. They fought bitter internecine battles carrying on vendetta for generations. When the Guru took shelter at Machhiwara, he devoted his time and energy to convert these hardy people to his religion. It suited both. The *Jats* got a cohesive face in the form of Sikhism and the Guru an army of horse-riding, weapon-wielding fierce warriors. Hence, he felt strong enough to write his Zafarnamah, "the epistle of victory", in his hour of defeat.

I have deduced this because when for a short while I was Editor of the Revision of Gazetteers in Punjab, I happened to go into the revenue records of some of the villages. After 5 to 6 generation, the names of the *Jat* Sikhs became clannish, having no affinity either with Hinduism or with Islam. Waris Shah also remembers the days when the peasants of the land became *Sirdars*, though he laments over it.

Once the *Jats* got religious organisation and political Aurangzeb might have succeeded in his mission of converting the entire Hindu population to Islam, at least in North India! ambition, it was clear that the days of Muslim supremacy were numbered.

But for the conscious role played by Guru Gobind Singh, This backdrop is necessary to understand what happened in recent years between the Hindus and the Sikhs. In fact, it has been happening since the early decades of the 20th century but has only accentuated or snowballed after Partition. Only for some time around Partition when Master Tara Singh, the last great product of the *Mona* Sikh tradition, emerged as the sole leader of all the Hindus and Sikhs of Punjab, it appeared that Hindu-Sikh differences were really unreal in essence. But then, thanks to the Urdu press of Jullundur, this mood of oneness soon evaporated. Thus, a historic opportunity of restoring the oneness of the Hindus and Sikhs was allowed to slip away to the lasting disadvantage of Punjab as a whole. The cultural, social and political offshoot of all this is the erosion of the Punjabi Hindu's sense of belonging to Punjab.

As the events after Partition have cut him away from his Sikh brothers, he has lost all roots in Punjab. One day, not long ago, Sikh religion was his own religion created by him for his own historical needs. Today, those of his brothers and sons he made Sikhs himself do not belong to him or at least he does not belong to them. Out of the *Roti-Beti* relationship, only the togetherness of dining is left and that too is now dying out. Let us see the participation in a marriage party or a funeral procession. Seldom will you find on family level a large mixed gathering of Hindus and Sikhs. Similarly, where have his martyrs gone? For whom had Guru Teg Bahadur given his head? For which *Dharma* did the young *Shaibzadas* get themselves bricked alive? The new crop of Hindus simply do not know who Bhai Mati Singh was or who Baba Deep Singh was.

If a non-Punjabi Indian finds this difficult to understand, it is explainable. But if Punjabi Hindus themselves do not know what they are losing or have lost, then whom are we to blame?

Then is this separateness implicit in the situation? Probably not. One day the Punjabi Hindu is sure to go back to his Punjabi roots. For example, a little before his death in 1956, my father, all through a staunch Hindi protagonist, said in a reflective mood: "Once it appeared that Hindi was uniting us Indians. But today it looks like it is going to divide us." Perhaps he had understood the divisive role of language in human communication! But all of us must see that dawn does not come a day too late!

SO FAR, we have discussed three facets of the Punjab problem. In fact, all these three aspects are off-shoots of the one divisive force which is language. The common belief is that language as a basic tool of human communication brings people closer. But it is not necessarily so.

There is a very instructive story in the Bible. It says that once upon a time, all men spoke one language and hence were one. So they felt strong enough to build a tower that could take them to heaven — their destiny — while in flesh and blood. Accordingly, they started constructing the tower of Babylon. But the gods, infuriated at the vanity and impiety of man, destroyed the tower and hurled a curse on the mortals that hereafter different groups would speak different languages. The result was that there was a lot of misunderstanding and men split up into innumerable groups, each group leaving for a different place.

This allegorical story has many lessons. But one thing is clear. The British rulers had learnt the lessons of history better then we Indians. With the help of language (with religion going hand in hand), they divided India into India and Pakistan. Then, we saw with our own eyes the fragmentation of the Punjabi society.

Why did the Punjabi Hindu act in such an irrational manner? Because his perception was that, having lost such a big chunk of India in Partition, it was his duty now to save the rest of India which was, in fact, his homeland — Hindustan! From that point of view, theocratic Sikhism supported by the Panjabi language appeared to him as another growing divisive force. He wanted to resist it. But what is the fact? He verily became a tool in the hands of those whom he identified as demanding a separate State of Punjab. The extremists among the Sikhs and the extremists among the Hindus in fact achieved the same result, though following diametrically opposite paths.

So far, we have discussed the situation only from the point of view of the Hindu perception of reality, and how wrong that perception is! Now we shall discuss the Sikh view.

While discussing the 'oneness' and 'separateness' of the Hindus and Sikhs we have briefly hinted at Sikh sociology and two of its main components, namely, the urban Sikhs who belong to the larger Hindu fold and the Jat Sikhs who have no identity with Hindudom as such. Mutual interplay of these two groups has much to do with the present-day Punjabi situation. How?

At the fall of the Sikh empire of Maharaja Ranjit Singh which embraced the entire Panjabi-speaking population of India and hence throws up a perception that Sikhism is in fact Punjabi nationalism, the *Jat* Sikh felt greatly deprived. It was his political ambition, so to say, which had pushed back the Abdalis and Durranis beyond Khyber and created a sovereign state of Punjab and brought Ranjit Singh to the throne of Lahore. During the entire 18th century in which the *Misls* went from strength to strength, the role of the urban *Mona*-Sikh tradition was not very distinct. A *Jat* Sikh only recognised a *Mona* as a *Khatri* whose Shylock ways he thoroughly detested, though it is rather strange that while the *Jats* would murder and plunder each other, they would never harm the solitary *Khatri* in the whole village. Even as a state functionary like the *Patwari*, his role was that of an exploiter. Similarly, the urban Sikhs were to *Jats* either the itinerant peddlers and hawkers of cloth or other fancy ware or *Gyanis* who managed the Gurudwaras, muttered the *Bani* and dished out religion to them.

But Ranjit Singh, the wily ruler of Punjab who was loved for his pugnacious common sense, strong passions and native humour, immediately ditched the *Jat* Sikhs. If Akbar created his empire as a commonwealth of the Mughal and Rajput nobility to keep the Afghans in check, Ranjit Singh too joined hands with the Dogra Rajputs to keep his own kith and kin at arm's length. In the common *Jat* Sikh mind, it is Dogras who betrayed the Lahore Darbar, particularly in its hour of need in the Anglo-Sikh wars. Anyway, the point to be understood is that Ranjit Singh distrusted the Sikh generals. Now, in retrospect, he appears to have been right because what he feared actually happened when his strong authority was no more there to enforce law and order. Otherwise, how come that in the common mind, the period of anarchy following his death was known as *Sikhashahi?* The role of *Jathedars* during the two Akali regimes in recent years, does precious little to dispel the fears that they are not amenable to law. Is it not remarkable that the same Sikh *Jat* who is a picture of fortitude when under pressure, unleashes forces of anarchy when he comes into his own?

The British understood this sociology better than we Indians. They did not disturb the social fabric of the Sikh *Jat*. All that they did was that while they deprived the ruling line of the family of the *Jagir*, they settled it on the next nearest line of the same family which in fact created a new nobility without causing any problem whatsoever. Even today, in every *Jat* family, one brother is always available to supplant the other. This is quite visible at the time of elections. If the chief of a family is an Akali, often the Congress is able to field his brother or uncle or nephew against him, thus dividing the whole clannish electorate.

During British times, the Sikh *Jat* was generally happy for he got ample opportunities of colonizing the new canal-irrigated lands of the *bars* as they are called. His love of land is proverbial, so much so that thoroughly hates the cities and urban ways of life. He wants to till as much land as he can. And when he sees the expanses of lush green, grain-laden crops, he grows wild with joy and dances *Bhangra* with a rare animal passion and primitiveness of spirit

But in spite of all internecine strifes and vendettas or the wild anarchic spirit, the Sikh *Jat* society is more well-knit than it appears to be. Every *Jat*, wherever he be, loves his roots. This explains why the settlers abroad always send so much money back home. Not only that, even a retired ICS officer or General likes nothing better than to go back to his native village. Another example: the small-scale industry of Punjab, which has made the State so prosperous in recent years, is in the *Jat* eyes nothing but an extension of their agricultural activities. How? A struggling family in the village will send one or two of the more enterprising sons to the nearest city where they will not only work hard but also learn a trade. Then they will come back to the family, sell a bit of land to raise the capital, and set up their own small unit. When they start earning well, they will send back the earnings to purchase more land. The proliferation of Sikh taxi drivers all over India is an example of this very phenomenon. You talk to a Sikh taxi driver in Bombay. Even after having worked in the city for over a generation and owning a flat there he identifies his village-home as his real home where his brothers and their sons till his land. Now, when he guards his lands so jealously, he is no less power hungry. Instinctively does he know that he, in fact, is the ruler of the State and if he is not in power then the wily *Khatris* (the *Monas*) and *Bhapas* (the urban Sikhs) have connived at keeping him out of power.

Let me reproduce two statements of Sardar Pratap Singh Kairon, a true *Jat* leader and one of the finest administrator-Chief Ministers of Punjab. Towards the end of his rule, when his administration was too much under attack for corruption, someone close to him advised him to resign. At that, he snapped: "A *Jat* is not prepared to part with even a furrow and you want me to part with the rule of a whole State?"

Another time, Kairon was requested by a senior Congressman not to use force to put down the Betterment Levy agitation. Asked why, he said that the use of force would jeopardise the chances of his re-election from that area. Kairon said: "How come you do not talk like the son of a *Jat*? I'll bring them to their knees by using excessive force, if necessary. And you'll see that not only the agitation is withdrawn but the same people re-elect you with even greater majority." And exactly the same thing happened!

This is but a very sketchy profile of the *Jat* Sikh. But it is necessary to keep it at the back of one's mind to understand what sort of power politics took root among the Sikhs themselves. The urban Sikh, who was the backbone of the renaissance, was mainly represented in the Akali movement which fought the struggle of independence hand in hand with the Congress. This movement was separate from puritanical Hindudom only to the extent that it projected the reformed Sikhism. This puritanical reform got a powerful boost from the Gurudwara reform institutionalised in the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) and the Chief Khalsa Diwan — the educational arm of revivified Sikhism. In fact, both the puritan Hindu reform and puritan Sikh reform represented by the Arya Samaj and Akali movements respectively, though mutually exclusive, were always in the vanguard of the national movement. The middle-class bourgeois or the urban *Khatris* and *Aroras* found their aspirations thus well-articulated in the Congress. However, let us also recognise one fact, that as soon as the British left and the Punjabi Muslim went to Pakistan, the same people (two Reformist movements) found refuge in communalism — the Hindus attacking the Sikhs for being communal and the Sikhs paying back in the same coin!

But the *Jat* Sikhs were divided. The landlords among them stood with the Unionist Party and the mass of *Jats* were generally happy with them because the Unionists were sworn to save the rural peasantry from the stranglehold of the urban classes — the object of general ire being the Hindu money-lender and trader. The underdogs among the *Jats* were represented by the semi-literate *Jathedars* who had largely aligned themselves with the urban Sikhs, for that way they not only opposed the landlords but also remained a part of the mainstream of the national movement. A minority of them was also turning to the Marxist type of revolution.

During the period, the renaissance Sikhs produced a remarkable leader in the person of Master Tara Singh. In a way, as already said, he was the last of the greats of the *Mona*-Sikhs and controlled for almost half-a-century the Akali and the SGPC politics, commanding the loyalty of the *Jathedars* as well as the Sikh intelligentsia!

The *Jat* Sikh feudal lords were a day too late to recover from the fall of the Unionist Government in March 1947. That was why when the Partition plan of Mountbatten came, they had no bargaining power left. The Sikh masses had stood by the Akali Dal whose sole leader was Master Tara Singh. And before some stand could crystallise, Master Tara Singh's emotional action of tearing the Muslim League flag before the Punjab Assembly building set the seal on the events to come. Otherwise there was a minuscule minority among them which talked in terms of a separate Sikh State, claiming that as the British took the reins of Punjab from the Sikhs, they should return them to the Sikhs only. But thereafter the Muslims let loose such a reign of terror in the western districts of the Punjab that there could be no other stand possible than that of Master Tara Singh. At that time, after a century almost, the Punjabi Hindu and Sikh had one and only one leader, and he was Master Tara Singh.

But after Partition when the Akalis were left out of power and the *Jat* Sikhs saw Bhargavas and Sachars as the Chief Ministers of Punjab, they felt cheated and frustrated. The first reaction was of injured martyrdom. Then the *Jat* Sikh set out to capture the Akali Dal, the SGPC and the Punjab Government. It is in this struggle that Panjabi as a platform came handy. The Hindus, by and large, felt that it was not really the question of Panjabi but that it was a demand calculated to carve out a separate State in which Sikh theocracy dominated. Whereas the Hindu was thoroughly atomised, the Sikhs were highly organised and had an institution like the SGPC — a state within a state. This in fact, helped raise the Hindu suspicion. But the best way to counter the Sikh aspirations was not to adopt Hindi as a counterpoise but themselves demand a Punjabi-speaking State. So, when they got Kangra go to the Hindi Regional Committee, they had in fact conceded the Punjabi *Suba* of the type the Sikhs had wanted. Pratap Singh Kairon as a *Jat* let the forces of reaction have their way.

Among the Sikhs the struggle in the Akali Dal and the SGPC was bitter and long. Hindu reaction on one side and Sikh extremism on the other made Master Tara Singh fight for causes in which he sometimes had no heart. In fact, he always fought for truth and justice but did not want to go so far as to divide the composite Hindu-Sikh society of Punjab. He held that the Sikhs were better Hindus and that Hindus should see reason. But no one shared his views.

In this cross-fire of forces Master Tara Singh, who had all along been a fighter and never a politician, was ultimately isolated and vanquished. And soon the Akali Dal, the SGPC and the Punjab Government were taken over by the Sikh *Jats*. And today the role of Master Tara Singh as a towering Sikh personality is not remembered much.

It may be pertinent to sum up how the urban Sikh feels now. When the so-called linguistic division of Punjab came about in 1959, a senior *Khatri* Sikh officer of the Punjab Government, commenting on the event, said to me: "The *Jats* will not even touch you (the Hindu) but they will certainly *Jaatise* us (the urban Sikhs)!"

THE last facet of the Punjab problem, though of recent origin, is perhaps the ugliest. It is the framework through which we have decided to govern ourselves. This democracy, based on 'one adult, one vote', which is the ultimate evolved by the political genius of man as they call it, is the real villain of the piece. Even if we are not endowed with a finer sense apparatus, it is not difficult to understand how it makes bad and dishonest of the good and honest, corrupt of the incorruptible and communal of the secular. And in a society where secularism is only skindeep, it has given birth to rank communalists.

To cite an example, let me take you back to the first general election of free India in 1952. The scenario is Simla, a place where literacy is the highest and since our Independence is still young and the Constitution the finest ever evolved anywhere in the world, there is great enthusiasm to see democracy in action. At the national level, two great Indians, perhaps the greatest ever two-some, Jawaharlal Nehru and Jayaprakash Narayan, are pitted against each other. No amount of idealism is lacking. Of the handful of Socialist candidates in Punjab, one is for Simla. He is Pandit Basant Rai Dutta, who till yesterday was a Government servant and has left his cosy job to serve the motherland. The Congress is finding it hard to field a candidate of equal stature. Ultimately, they find a comparatively obscure advocate in the person of Som Dutt Bahri. People think that this has been done to offer symbolic opposition only. There are some more insignificant independents. Akalis, an organised Sikh group, have no candidate. The sole Sikh candidate is one Joginder Singh "Jogi" who has a tea-shop near the Mall.

There is intense house-to-house campaigning. Every one in the teaching community is working for the success of Pandit Basant Rai. Even the lawyers are not fully backing Bahri. There are no caste brothers whose votes can be taken for granted. The 'democratic temper' is in full cry everywhere. It is clear that without extraneous considerations, Simla will return the candidate best equipped for public service. Clean methods are being employed by both the opponents for there is no one who will sell his vote.

On the eve of election-day, all of a sudden there is great consternation. Everyone is agog with the news that 'Jogi' has secured the Akali ticket and the Sikhs in the Gurudwara have decided to back him. As the Hindu votes are in any case going to be divided, "Jogi" is now in with a chance. People are apprehensive but for a short while only. Then they vote and vote decisively for the Congress. The politically conscious voter thanks the Congress for saving him from communalism. It is evident to me that they are no more than atoms in the whole process of their governance. They are incapable of exercising the franchise according to their lights. One could point out that one need not be cynical as this was a solitary case. Yet the fact is that it represented the symptom of a disease which is much worse.

Somehow it appears that the Congress with its secular face not only benefits from Hindu-Sikh communal polarisation but has developed a direct vested interest in keeping it alive. It is no criticism of any person, programme, policy or party. It is the acceptance of the inexorable logic of the process itself as it is operating in Punjab. Why Simla alone, elsewhere too people vote according to this logic only. Overtly, they vote Congress to defeat communalism, but covertly they do so because they themselves are no less communal! It is a vicious circle from which thereis no escape.

Let us see how this double communalism works to the advantage of the Congress. The general pattern is that if it is a Sikh majority constituency, the Akali candidate will be opposed by a Sikh on the Congress ticket. If the caste-factor is strong, then in most cases the Congress candidate will be from the same caste or from the next best caste with sufficient votes. Supposing it is an overwhelming one-caste pocket, then the Congress candidate will also be chosen from the same caste and if possible from the same family. The secular image of the Congress attracts all other votes, particularly of the Hindu community on the same analogy as that of the Simla experience. Thus, the communal polarisation becomes stronger each time communal forces are opposed.

In the Hindu majority constituencies, about the same pattern is followed with almost the same result. The Congress knows beforehand that the Sikh vote can be taken for granted and all that they have to do is to divide the Hindu vote. Supposing a strong Sikh candidate is also in the field, then this helps the Congress still more because then the Hindu majority must see to it that the Hindu vote is not divided because whether a Congress Hindu wins or a communal Hindu wins, he is a Hindu after all, better than a Sikh in any case. It is quite rarely that the calculations are upset. However, it does sometimes happen, but only when a strong non-party man with a good record of public service is in the field, because then he can transcend the communal barriers. But with the cost of election being what it is, it is becoming increasingly difficult for a non-party independent to win in the face of well-oiled party machines.

By looking at the problem from the point of view of negative reasoning, we may understand the operation of double communalism better. What happens when the Hindu party, be it Jana Sangh or Bharatiya Janata Party, comes to an understanding with the Sikh party, say the Akali Dal? If the understanding is without reservations, then there is very little chance of the Congress winning. Such a change of heart was brought about for the first time by Sant Fateh Singh. The argument was that as long as the two cats fought over the size of their loaves of bread, the monkey would become the mediator and eat away each one's loaf of bread. So, why should the cats not decide between themselves who would get which loaf? The result was that the Congress was voted out of power. Justice Gurnam Singh and Dr. Baldev Prakash, leaders of the two groups respectively, got on so famously together that for a time it appeared that any communal cleavage between Hindus and Sikhs was superficial. It was a total change of scene. It could not be tolerated. But what to do? The Congress had no majority and defection if any to the Congress would not be permitted by the people. For once, no communal bait worked. But then tensions could be created between urban and rural interests. "Marla Tax" and things of that sort came handy. But in spite of those pressures, Justice Gurnam Singh and Dr. Baldev Prakash stood their ground. Ultimately, Lachhman Singh Gill, a grabber of opportunity all his life, was encouraged to split the Akali Dal, the Congress supporting him from outside. This type of minority Government was seen for the first time in Punjab. To make the defection look principled, Panjabi was introduced in Government service almost overnight. In the next elections, the Congress again came back into power.

I do not purposely want to come down to more recent times, though the thesis built by me may hold good even today. Then why is this politics necessary? Is the Congress really communal or does it use the communal stick to beat the communalists? Both questions can be answered in the affirmative to that extent that they, in the end, lead necessarily to communal tension. In the name of being secular, no Congress government has ever tried to restrain the communal press of Jullundur. It is upset only when the communal forces attack it for non-acceptance of a communal demand. Why? To be more explicit, perhaps keeping alive the communal forces and keeping the people divided along those lines is its need! Which in other words means that its existence would otherwise be jeopardised. How? In most general elections, it has got only minority vote but the majority of seats. For example, it has been firmly in saddle on an average of 35-40 per cent of votes polled whereas the combined opposition which polled 60 to 65 per cent had no share of power. Well, it is the logic of our Constitution. Perhaps the real meaning of democracy today is the rule of minority. The majority must be kept divided.

To put the record straight, I am not against the Congress. As an Indian, I am for it because there is no alternative to it under the present circumstances. Moreover, no other power group has produced leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru or Indira Gandhi — those endowed with a sense of destiny. But as a Punjabi watching from a distance, I can only grieve at what is happening there. If the end-product of present-day power politics is to distort the image of reality and befog issues, then what will happen to my land of birth. And if Punjab is in peril today, then India will also be in danger before long. My thesis is that without being a good Hindu-Sikh, you can't be a good Punjabi and without being a good Punjabi, you can't be a good Indian. As to who is secular, it is a value or a quality of mind and not a dogma. In Punjab only those people are really secular who cherish the composite Hindu-Sikh culture of Punjab.

Those believing in this culture are in great majority. Only they are unaware of what is happening and what they can in fact do once they come to know their power. Hanuman had to be told each time what he could really do: Left to himself he was always unsure of his strength. Is not this same as what has overtaken the Punjabi-Hindu-Sikh?

Some months back I was talking to a great Punjabi intellectual. He asked me "What is your ambition?" I said: "To be a good Punjabi". He reflected over it but only for a fraction of a second and then said: "That has been my ambition too!" I know for certain that *that* is the ambition of every thinking Punjabi — a Sikh or a Hindu — who loves his roots. (Concluded)

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Nuclear Weapons and Western Strategy

McGEORGE BUNDY
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The Second Special Session on Disarmament of the UN General Assembly is due to begin on June 7, 1982. The nuclear threat is the biggest issue before the UN and the mass of mankind, and even in the nuclear weapons nations citizens' fear and frustration are evident, judging by the popular demonstrations throughout the West, including the United States. In this context, a statement jointly issued recently by four prominent Americans who in the past were among senior policy-makers, calling for at least a no-first-use position and emphasizing that to have nuclear weapons "for any other purpose than the prevention of their use" makes no sense "in the age of massive thermonuclear overkill"; assumes significance.

About the four signatories: McGeorge Bundy was Special Assistant to the US President for National Security Affairs (1961-65) and President of Ford Foundation (1966-79). He is now Professor of History at New York University. George Kennan, former US diplomat, is Professor Emeritus at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton. Robert McNamara was Secretary of Defence (1961-68) and President of the World Bank from 1968 to mid-1981. Gerard Smith was chief of the US delegation to SALT talks (1969-72) and earlier held key positions in the State Department dealing with strategic affairs. In 1977-80 he was Ambassador-at-large and Special Presidential Representative for non-proliferation matters.

We are reproducing the text of the joint statement with due acknowledgement from *Foreign Affairs Quarterly*, Spring 1982, in view of the relevance of the views of these outstanding Americans to the forthcoming debates in the UN Special Session. —Editor

WE are four Americans who have been concerned over many years with the relation between nuclear weapons and the peace and freedom of the members of the Atlantic Alliance. Having learned that each of us separately has been coming to hold new views on this hard but vital question, we decided to see how far our thoughts, and the lessons of our varied experiences, could be put together; the essay that follows is the result. It argues that a new policy can bring great benefits, but it aims to start a discussion not to end it.

For 33 years now, the Atlantic Alliance has relied on the asserted readiness of the United States to use nuclear weapons if necessary to repel aggression from the East. Initially, indeed, it was widely thought (notably by such great and different men as Winston Churchill and Niels Bohr) that the basic military balance in Europe was between American atomic bombs and the massive conventional forces of the Soviet Union. But the first Soviet explosion, in August 1949, ended the American monopoly only one month after the Senate approved the North Atlantic Treaty, and in 1950 Communist aggression in Korea produced new Allied attention to the defence of Europe.

The "crude" atomic bombs of the 1940s have been followed in both countries by a fantastic proliferation of weapons and delivery systems, so that today the two parts of a still-divided Europe are targeted by many thousands of warheads both in the area and outside it. Within the Alliance, France and Britain have developed thermonuclear forces which are enormous compared to what the United States had at the beginning, although small by comparison with the present deployments of the superpowers. Doctrine has succeeded doctrine, from "balanced collective forces" to "massive retaliation" to "mutual assured destruction" to "flexible response" and the "seamless web." Throughout these transformations, most of them occasioned at least in part by changes in the Western view of Soviet capabilities, both deployments and doctrines have been intended to deter Soviet aggression and keep the peace by maintaining a credible connection between any large-scale assault, whether conventional or nuclear, and the engagement of the strategic nuclear forces of the United States.

A major element in every doctrine has been that the United States has asserted its willingness to be the first — has indeed made plans to be the first if necessary — to use nuclear weapons to defend against aggression in Europe. It is this element that needs re-examination now. Both its cost to the coherence of the Alliance and its threat to the safety of the world are rising while its deterrent credibility declines.

This policy was first established when the American nuclear advantage was overwhelming, but that advantage has long since gone and cannot be recaptured. As early as the 1950s it was recognised by both Prime Minister Churchill and President Eisenhower that the nuclear strength of both sides was becoming so great that a nuclear war would be a ghastly catastrophe for all concerned. The following decades have only confirmed and intensified that reality. The time has come for careful study of the ways and means of moving to a new Alliance policy and doctrine: that nuclear weapons will not be used unless an aggressor should use them first.

II

THE disarray that currently besets the nuclear policy and practices of the Alliance is obvious. Governments and their representatives have maintained an appearance of unity as they persist in their support of the two-track decision of December 1979, under which 572 new American missiles of intermediate range are to be placed in Europe unless a satisfactory agreement on the limitation of such weapons can be reached in the negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union that began last November. But behind this united front there are divisive debates, especially in countries where the new weapons are to be deployed.

The arguments put forward by advocates of these deployments contain troubling variations. The simplest and intuitively the most persuasive claim is that these new weapons are needed as a counter to the new Soviet SS-20 missiles; it may be a recognition of the surface attractiveness of this position that underlies President Reagan's striking — but probably not negotiable — proposal that if all the SS-20s are dismantled the planned deployments will be cancelled. Other officials have a quite different argument, that without new and survivable American weapons which can reach Russia from Western Europe there can be no confidence that the strategic forces of the United States will remain committed to the defence of Western Europe; on this argument the new missiles are needed to make it more likely that any war in Europe would bring nuclear warheads on the Soviet Union and thus deter the aggressor in the first place. This argument is logically distinct from any concern about the Soviet SS-20s, and it probably explains the ill-concealed hope of some planners that the Reagan proposal will be rejected. Such varied justifications cast considerable doubt on the real purpose of the proposed deployment.

An equally disturbing phenomenon is the gradual shift in the balance of argument that has occurred since the need to address the problem was first asserted in 1977. Then the expression of need was European, and in the first instance German; the emerging parity of long-range strategic systems was asserted to create a need for a balance at less than inter-continental levels. The American interest developed relatively slowly, but because these were to be American missiles, American planners took the lead as the proposal was worked out. It has also served Soviet purposes to concentrate on the American role. A similar focus has been chosen by many leaders of the new movement for nuclear disarmament in Europe. And now there are American voices, some in the executive branch, talking as if European acceptance of these new missiles were some sort of test of European loyalty to the Alliance. Meanwhile some of those in Europe who remain publicly committed to both tracks of the 1979 agreement are clearly hoping that the day of deployment will never arrive. When the very origins of a new proposal become the source of irritated argument among allies — "You started it!" — something is badly wrong in our common understanding.

A still more severe instance of disarray, one which has occurred under both President Carter and President Reagan, relates to the so-called neutron bomb, a weapon designed to meet the threat of Soviet tanks. American military planners, authorised by doctrine to think in terms of early battlefield use of nuclear weapons, naturally want more "up-to-date" weapons than those they have now; it is known that thousands of the aging short-range nuclear weapons now in Europe are hard to use effectively. Yet to a great many Europeans the neutron bomb suggests, however unfairly, that the Americans are preparing to fight a "limited" nuclear war on their soil. Moreover, neither weapons designers nor the Pentagon officials they have persuaded seem to have understood the intense and special revulsion that is associated with killing by "enhanced radiation".

All these recent distempers have a deeper cause. They are rooted in the fact that the evolution of essentially equivalent and enormously excessive nuclear weapons systems both in the Soviet Union and in the Atlantic Alliance has aroused new concern about the dangers of all forms of nuclear war. The profusion of these systems, on both sides, has made it more difficult than ever to construct rational plans for any first use of these weapons by anyone.

This problem is more acute than before, but it is not new. Even in the 1950s, a time that is often mistakenly perceived as one of effortless American superiority, the prospect of any actual use of tactical weapons was properly terrifying to Europeans and to more than a few Americans. Military plans for such use remained both deeply secret and highly hypothetical; the coherence of the Alliance was maintained by general neglect of such scenarios, not by sedulous public discussion. In the 1960s there was a prolonged and stressful effort to address the problem of theatre-range weapons, but agreement on new forces and plans for their use proved elusive. Eventually the proposal for a multilateral force (MLF) was replaced by the assignment of American Polaris submarines to NATO, and by the creation in Brussels of an inter-allied Nuclear Planning Group. Little else was accomplished. In both decades the Alliance kept itself together more by mutual political confidence than by plausible nuclear war-fighting plans.

Although the first years of the 1970s produced a welcome if oversold detente, complacency soon began to fade. The Nixon Administration, rather quietly, raised the question about the long-run credibility of the American nuclear deterrent that was to be elaborated by Henry Kissinger in 1979 at a meeting in Brussels. Further impetus to both new doctrine and new deployments came during the Ford and Carter Administrations, but each public statement, however careful and qualified, only increased European apprehensions. The purpose of both Administrations was to reinforce deterrence, but the result has been to increase fear of nuclear war, and even of Americans as its possible initiators. Intended as contributions to both rationality and credibility, these excursions into the theory of limited nuclear war have been counterproductive in Europe.

Yet it was not wrong to raise these matters. Questions that were answered largely by silence in the 1950s and 19(0s cannot be so handled in the 1980s. The problem was not in the fact that the questions were raised, but in the way they seemed to be answered.

It is time to recognise that no one has ever succeeded in advancing any persuasive reason to believe that any use of nuclear weapons, even on the smallest scale, could reliably be expecteld to remain limited. Every serious analysis and every military exercise, for over 25 years, has demonstrated that even the most restrained battlefield use would be enormously destructive to civilian life and property. There is no way for anyone to have any confidence that such a nuclear action will not lead to further and more devastating exchanges. Any use of nuclear weapons in Europe, by the Alliance or against it, carries with it a high and inescapable risk of escalation into the general nuclear war which would bring ruin to all and victory to none.

The one clearly definable firebreak against the worldwide disaster of general nuclear war is the one that stands between all other kinds of conflict and any use whatsoever of nuclear weapons. To keep that firebreak wide and strong is in the deepest interest of all mankind. In retrospect, indeed, it is remarkable that this country has not responded to this reality more quickly. Given the appalling consequences of even the most limited use of nuclear weapons and the total impossibility for both sides of any guarantee against unlimited escalation, there must be the gravest doubt about the wisdom of a policy which asserts the effectiveness of any first use of nuclear weapons by either side. So it seems timely to consider the possibilities, the requirements, the difficulties, and the advantages of a policy of no-first-use.

III

THE largest question presented by any proposal for an Allied policy of no-first-use is that of its impact on the effectiveness of NATO's deterrent posture on the central front. In spite of the doubts that are created by any honest look at the probable consequences of resort to a first nuclear strike of any kind, it should be remembered that there were strong reasons for the creation of the American nuclear umbrella over NATO. The original American pledge, expressed in Article 5 of the Treaty, was understood to be a nuclear guarantee. It was extended at a time when only a conventional Soviet threat existed, so a readiness for first use was plainly implied from the beginning. To modify that guarantee now, even in the light of all that has happened since, would be a major change in the assumptions of the Alliance, and no such change should be made without the most careful exploration of its implications.

In such an exploration the role of the Federal Republic of Germany must be central. Americans too easily forget what the people of the Federal Republic never can: that their position is triply exposed in a fashion unique among the large industrial democracies. They do not have nuclear weapons; they share a long common boundary with the Soviet empire; in any conflict on the central front their land would be the first battleground. None of these conditions can be changed, and together they present a formidable challenge.

Having decisively rejected a policy of neutrality, the Federal Republic has necessarily relied on the nuclear protection of the United States, and we Americans should recognise that this relationship is not a favour we are doing our German friends, but the best available solution of a common problem. Both nations believe that the Federal Republic must be defended; both believe that the Federal Republic must not have nuclear weapons of its own; both believe that nuclear guarantees *of some sort* are essential; and both believe that only the United States can provide those guarantees in persuasively deterrent peace-keeping form.

The uniqueness of the West German position can be readily demonstrated by comparing it with those of France and the United Kingdom. These two nations have distance, and in one case water, between them and the armies of the Soviet Union; they also have nuclear weapons. While those weapons may contribute something to the common strength of the Alliance, their main role is to underpin a residual national self-reliance, expressed in different ways at different times by different governments, which sets both Britain and France apart from the Federal Republic. They are set apart from the United States too, in that no other nation depends on them to use their nuclear weapons otherwise than in their own ultimate self-defence.

The quite special character of the nuclear relationship between the Federal Republic and the United States is a most powerful reason for defining that relationship with great care. It is rare for one major nation to depend entirely on another for a form of strength that is vital to its survival. It is unprecedented for any nation, however powerful, to pledge itself to a course of action, in defence of another, that might entail its own nuclear devastation. A policy of no-first-use would not and should not imply an abandonment of this extraordinary guarantee — only its redefinition. It would still be necessary to be ready to reply with American nuclear weapons to any nuclear attack on the Federal Republic, and this commitment would in itself be sufficiently demanding to constitute a powerful demonstration that a policy of no-first-use would represent no abandonment of our German ally.

The German right to a voice in this question is not merely a matter of location, or even of dependence on an American nuclear guarantee. The people of the Federal Republic have demonstrated a steadfast dedication to peace, to collective defence, and to domestic political decency. The study here proposed should be responsive to their basic desires. It seems probable that they are like the rest of us in wishing most of all to have no war of any kind, but also to be able to defend the peace by forces that do not require the dreadful choice of nuclear escalation.

IV

WHILE we believe that careful study will lead to a firm conclusion that it is time to move decisively toward a policy of no-first-use, it is obvious that any such policy would require a strengthened confidence in the adequacy of the conventional forces of the Alliance, above all the forces in place on the central front and those available for prompt reinforcement. It seems clear that the nations of the Alliance together can provide whatever forces are needed, and within realistic budgetary constraints, but it is a quite different question whether they can summon the necessary political will. Evidence from the history of the Alliance is mixed. There has been great progress in the conventional defences of NATO in the 30 years since the 1952 Lisbon communique, but there have also been failures to meet force goals all along the way.

In each of the four nations which account for more than 90 per cent of NATO's collective defence and a still higher proportion of its strength on the central front, there remain major unresolved political issues that critically affect contributions to conventional deterrence; for example, it can be asked what priority the United Kingdom gives to the British Army of the Rhine, what level of NATO-connected deployment can be accepted by France, what degree of German relative strength is acceptable to the Allies and fair to the Federal Republic itself, and whether we Americans have a durable and effective answer to our military manpower needs in the present all-volunteer active and reserve forces. These are the kinds of questions — and there are many more — that would require review and resolution in the course of reaching any final decision to move to a responsible policy of no-first-use.

There should also be an examination of the ways in which the concept of early use of nuclear weapons may have been built into existing forces, tactics, and general military expectations. To the degree that this has happened, there could be a dangerous gap right now between real capabilities and those which political leaders might wish to have in a time of crisis. Conversely, there should be careful study of what a policy of no-first-use would require in those same terms. It seems more than likely that once the military leaders of the Alliance have learned to think and act steadily on this "conventional" assumption, their forces will be better instruments for stability in crises and for general deterrence, as well as for the maintenance of the nuclear firebreak so vital to us all.

No one should underestimate either the difficulty or the importance of the shift in military attitudes implied by a no-first-use policy. Although military commanders are well aware of the terrible dangers in any exchange of nuclear weapons, it is a strong military tradition to maintain that aggressive war, not the use of any one weapon, is the central evil. Many officers will be initially unenthusiastic about any formal policy that puts limits on their recourse to a weapon of apparently decisive power. Yet the basic argument for a no first-use policy can be stated in strictly military terms: that any other course involves unacceptable risks to the national life that military forces exist to defend. The military officers of the Alliance can be expected to understand the force of this proposition, even if many of them do not initially agree with it. Moreover, there is every reason for confidence that they will loyally accept any policy that has the support of their governments and the peoples behind them, just as they have fully accepted the present arrangements under which the use of nuclear weapons, even in retaliation for a nuclear attack, requires advance and specific approval by the head of government.

An Allied posture of no-first-use would have one special effect that can be set forth in advance: it would draw new attention to the importance of maintaining and improving the specifically American conventional forces in Europe. The principal political difficulty in a policy of no-first-use is that it may be taken in Europe, and especially in the Federal Republic, as evidence of a reduced American interest in the Alliance and in effective overall deterrence. The argument here is exactly the opposite: that such a policy is the best one available for keeping the Alliance united and effective. Nonetheless the psychological realities of the relation between the Federal Republic and the United States are such that the only way to prevent corrosive German suspicion of American intentions, under a no-first-use regime, will be for Americans to accept for themselves an appropriate share in any new level of conventional effort that the policy may require.

Yet it would be wrong to make any hasty judgment that those new levels of effort must be excessively high. The subject is complex, and the more so because both technology and politics are changing. Precision-guided munitions, in technology, and the visible weakening of the military solidity of the Warsaw Pact, in politics, are only two examples of changes working to the advantage of the Alliance. Moreover, there has been some tendency, over many years, to exaggerate the relative conventional strength of the USSR and to underestimate Soviet awareness of the enormous costs and risks of any form of aggression against NATO.

Today there is literally no one who really knows what would be needed. Most of the measures routinely used in both official and private analyses are static and fragmentary. An especially arbitrary, if obviously convenient, measure of progress is that of spending levels. But it is political will, not budgetary pressure, that will be decisive. The value of greater safety from both nuclear and conventional danger is so great that even if careful analysis showed that the necessary conventional posture would require funding larger than the three-per cent real increase that has been the common target of recent years, it would be the best bargain ever offered to the members of the Alliance.

Yet there is no need for crash programmes, which always bring extra costs. The direction of the Allied effort will be more important than its velocity. The final establishment of a firm policy of no first-use, in any case, will obviously require time. What is important today is to begin to move in this direction.

V

THE concept of renouncing any first use of nuclear weapons should also be tested by careful review of value of existing NATO plans for selective and the limited use of nuclear weapons. While many scenarios for nuclear war-fighting are nonsensical, it must be recognised that cautious and sober senior officers have found it prudent to ask themselves what alternatives to defeat they could propose to their civilian superiors if a massive conventional Soviet attack seemed about to make a decisive breakthrough. This question has generated contingency plans for battlefield uses of small numbers of nuclear weapons which might prevent that particular disaster. It is hard to see how any such action could be taken without the most enormous risk of rapid and catastrophic escalation, but it is a fair challenge to a policy of no-first-use that it should be accompanied by a level of conventional strength that would make such plans unnecessary.

In the light of this difficulty it would be prudent to consider whether there is any acceptable policy short of no-first-use. One possible example is what might be called "no-*early*-first-use"; such a policy might leave open the option of some limited nuclear action to fend off a final large-scale conventional defeat, and by renunciation of any immediate first use and increased emphasis on conventional capabilities it might be thought to help somewhat in reducing current fears.

But the value of a clear and simple position would be great, especially in its effect on ourselves and our Allies. One trouble with exceptions is that they easily become rules. It seems much better that even the most responsible choice of even the most limited nuclear actions to prevent even the most imminent conventional disaster should be left out of authorised policy. What the Alliance needs most today is not the refinement of its nuclear options, but a clear-cut decision to avoid them as long as others do.

VI

WHO should make the examination here proposed? The present American Administration has so far shown little interest in questions of this sort, and indeed a seeming callousness in some quarters in Washington toward nuclear dangers may be partly responsible for some of the recent unrest in Europe. But each of the four of us has served in Administrations which revised their early thoughts on nuclear weapons policy. James Byrnes learned the need to seek international control; John Foster Dulles stepped back somewhat from his early belief in massive retaliation; Dwight Eisenhower came to believe in the effort to ban nuclear tests which he at first thought dangerous; the Administration of John F. Kennedy (in which we all served) modified its early views on targeting doctrine; Lyndon Johnson shelved the proposed MLF when he decided it was causing more trouble than it was worth; and Richard Nixon agreed to narrow limits on anti ballistic missiles whose large-scale deployment he had once thought indispensable. There were changes also in the Ford and Carter Administrations, and President Reagan has already adjusted his views on the usefulness of early arms control negotiations, even though we remain in a time of general stress between Washington and Moscow. No Administration should be held, and none should hold itself, to inflexible first positions on these extraordinarily difficult matters.

Nor does this question need to wait upon governments for study. The day is long past when public awe and governmental secrecy made nuclear policy a matter for only the most private executive determination. The questions presented by a policy of no-first-use must indeed be decided by governments, but they can and should be considered by citizens. In recent months strong private voices have been raised on both sides of the Atlantic on behalf of strengthened conventional forces. When this cause is argued by such men as Christoph Bertram, Field-Marshal Lord Carver, Admiral Noel Gayler, Professor Michael Howard, Henry Kissinger, Francois de Rose, Theo Sommer, and General Maxwell Taylor, to name only a few, it is fair to conclude that at least in its general direction the present argument is not outside the mainstream of thinking within the Alliance. Indeed there is evidence of renewed concern for conventional forces in governments too.

What should be added, in both public and private sectors, is a fresh, sustained, and careful consideration of the requirements and the benefits of deciding that the policy of the Atlantic Alliance should be to keep its nuclear weapons unused as long as others do the same. Our own belief, though we do not here assert it as proven, is that when this possibility is fully explored it will be evident that the advantages of the policy far outweigh its costs, and that this demonstration will help the peoples and governments of the Alliance to find the political will to move in this direction. In this spirit we go on to sketch the benefits that could come from such a change.

VII

THE first possible advantage of a policy of no-first-use is in the management of the nuclear deterrent forces that would still be necessary. Once we escape from the need to plan for a first use that is credible, we can escape also from many of the complex arguments that have led to assertions that all sorts of new nuclear capabilities are necessary to create or restore a capability for something called "escalation dominance" — a capability to fight and "win" a nuclear war at any level. What would be needed, under no-first-use, is a set of capabilities we already have in overflowing measure — capabilities for appropriate retaliation to any kind of Soviet nuclear attack which would leave the Soviet Union in no doubt that it too should adhere to a policy of no first-use. The Soviet Government is already aware of the awful risk inherent in any use of these weapons, and there is no current or prospective Soviet "superiority" that would tempt anyone in Moscow toward nuclear adventurism. (All four of us are wholly unpersuaded by the argument advanced in recent years that the Soviet Union could ever rationally expect to gain from such a wild effort as a massive first strike on land-based American strategic missiles.)

Once it is clear that the only nuclear need of the Alliance is for adequately survivable and varied *second strike* forces, requirements for the modernisation of major nuclear systems will become more modest than has been assumed. In particular we can escape from the notion that we must somehow match everything the rocket commanders in the Soviet Union extract from their government. It seems doubtful, also, that under such a policy it would be necessary or desirable to deploy neutron bombs. The savings permitted by more modest programmes could go toward meeting the financial costs of our contribution to conventional forces.

It is important to avoid misunderstanding here. In the conditions of the 1980s, and in the absence of agreement on both sides to proceed to very large-scale reductions in nuclear forces, it is clear that large, varied, and survivable nuclear forces will still be necessary for nuclear deterrence. The point is not that we Americans should move unilaterally to some "minimum" force of a few tens or even hundreds of missiles, but rather that once we escape from the pressure to seem willing and able to use these weapons first, we shall find that our requirements are much less massive than is now widely supposed.

A posture of no-first-use should also go far to meet the understandable anxieties that underlie much of the new interest in nuclear disarmament, both in Europe and in our own country. Some of the proposals generated by this new interest may lack practicability for the present. For example, proposals to make "all" of Europe — from Portugal to Poland — a nuclear-free zone do not seem to take full account of the reality that thousands of long-range weapons deep in the Soviet Union will still be able to target Western Europe. But a policy of no-first-use, with its accompaniment of a reduced requirement for new Allied nuclear systems, should allow a considerable reduction in fears of all sorts. Certainly such a new policy would neutralise the highly disruptive argument currently put about in Europe: that plans for theatre nuclear modernisation reflect an American hope to fight a nuclear war limited to Europe. Such modernisation might or might not be needed under a policy of no-first-use; that question, given the size and versatility of other existing and prospective American forces, would be a matter primarily for European decision (as it is today).

An effective policy of no-first-use will also reduce the risk of conventional aggression in Europe. That risk has never been as great as prophets of doom have claimed and has always lain primarily in the possibility that Soviet leaders might think they could achieve some quick and limited gain that would be accepted because no defence or reply could be concerted. That temptation has been much reduced by the Allied conventional deployments achieved in the last 20 years, and it would be reduced still further by the additional shift in the balance of Allied effort that a no-first-use policy would both permit and require. The risk that an adventurist Soviet leader might take the terrible gamble of conventional aggression was greater in the past than it is today, and is greater today than it would be under no-first-use, backed up by an effective conventional defence.

VIII

WE have been discussing a problem of military policy, but our interest is also political. The principal immediate danger in the current military posture of the Alliance is not that it will lead to large scale war, conventional or nuclear. The balance of terror, and the caution of both sides, appear strong enough today to prevent such a catastrophe, at least in the absence of some deeply destabilising political change which might lead to panic or adventurism on either side. But the present unbalanced reliance on nuclear weapons, if long continued, might produce exactly such political change. The events of the last year have shown that differing perceptions of the role of nuclear weapons can lead to destructive recriminations, and when these differences are compounded by understandable disagreements on other matters such as Poland and the Middle East, the possibilities for trouble among Allies are evident.

The political coherence of the Alliance, especially in times of stress, is at least as important as the military strength required to maintain credible deterrence. Indeed the political requirement has, if anything, an even higher priority. Soviet leaders would be most pleased to help the Alliance fall into total disarray, and would much prefer such a development to the inescapable uncertainties of open conflict. Conversely, if consensus is re-established on a military policy that the peoples and governments of the Alliance can believe in, both political will and deterrent credibility will be reinforced. Plenty of hard questions will remain, but both fear and mistrust will be reduced, and they are the most immediate enemies.

There remains one underlying reality which could not be removed by even the most explicit declaratory policy of no-first use. Even if the nuclear powers of the Alliance should join, with the support of other Allies, in a policy of no first-use, and even if that decision should lead to a common declaration of such policy by these powers and the Soviet Union, no one on either side could guarantee beyond all possible doubt that if conventional warfare broke out on a large-scale there would in fact be no use of nuclear weapons. We could not make that assumption about the Soviet Union, and we must recognise that Soviet leaders could not make it about us. As long as the weapons themselves exist, the possibility of their use will remain.

But this inescapable reality does not undercut the value of a no-first-use policy. That value is first of all for the internal health of the Western Alliance itself. A posture of effective conventional balance and survivable second-strike nuclear strength is vastly better for our own peoples and governments, in a deep sense more civilised, than one that forces the serious contemplation of "limited" nuclear scenarios that are at once terrifying and implausible.

There is strong reason to believe that no-first-use can also help in our relations with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Government has repeatedly offered to join the West in declaring such a policy, and while such declarations may have only limited reliability, it would be wrong to disregard the real value to both sides of a jointly declared adherence to this policy. To renounce the first use of nuclear weapons is to accept an enormous burden of responsibility for any later violation. The existence of such a clearly declared common pledge would increase the cost and risk of any sudden use of nuclear weapons by either side and correspondingly reduce the political force of spoken or unspoken threats of such use.

A posture and policy of no-first-use also could help to open the path toward serious reduction of nuclear armaments on both sides. The nuclear decades have shown how hard it is to get agreements that really do constrain these weapons, and no one can say with assurance that any one step can make a decisive difference. But just as a policy of no-first-use should reduce the pressures on our side for massive new nuclear forces, it should help to increase the international incentives for the Soviet Union to show some restraint of its own. It is important not to exaggerate here, and certainly Soviet policies on procurement are not merely delayed mirror-images of ours. Nonetheless there are connections between what is said and what is done even in the Soviet Union, and there are incentives for moderation, even there, that could be strengthened by a jointly declared policy of renouncing first use. At a minimum such a declaration would give both sides additional reason to seek for agreements that would prevent a vastly expensive and potentially destabilising contest for some kind of strategic advantage in outer space.

Finally, and in sum, we think a policy of no-first-use, especially if shared with the Soviet Union, would bring new hope to everyone in every country whose life is shadowed by the hideous possibility of a third great twentieth-century conflict in Europe — conventional or nuclear. It seems timely and even urgent to begin the careful study of a policy that could help to sweep this threat clean off the board of international affairs.

IX

WE recognise that we have only opened this large question, that we have exhausted no aspect of it, and that we may have omitted important elements. We know that NATO is much more than its four strongest military members; we know that a policy of no-first-use in the Alliance would at once raise questions about America's stance in Korea and indeed other parts of Asia. We have chosen deliberately to focus on the central front of our central alliance, believing that a right choice there can only help toward right choices elsewhere.

What we dare to hope for is the kind of new and widespread consideration of the policy we have outlined that helped us 15 years ago toward SALT 1, 25 years ago toward the Limited Test Ban, and 35 years ago toward the Alliance itself. Such consideration can be made all the more earnest and hopeful by keeping in mind one simple and frequently neglected reality; there has been no first use of nuclear weapons since 1945, and no one in any country regrets that fact. The right way to maintain this record is to recognise that in the age of massive thermonuclear overkill it no longer makes sense — if it ever did — to hold these weapons for any other purpose than the prevention of their use. □

Nehru on Disarmament

THE main purpose of the United Nations is to build a world without war, a world based on the co-operation of nations and peoples. It is not merely a world where war is kept in check by a balancing of armed forces. It is much deeper than that. It is a world from which the major causes of war have been removed with social structures built up which further peaceful co-operation within a nation as well as between nations.

In the preamble to the constitution of UNESCO it is stated that war begins in the minds of men. That is essentially true; and ultimately it is necessary to bring about the change in our minds and to remove fears and apprehensions, hatreds and suspicions. Disarmament is a part of this process, for it will create an atmosphere of co-operation. But it is only a step towards our objective, a part of the larger effort to rid the world of war and the causes of war.

In the present context, however, disarmament assumes a very special importance for us, overriding all other issues. For many years past, there have been talks on disarmament and some progress has undoubtedly been made in so far as the plans and proposals are concerned. Still we find that the race of armaments continues, as also the efforts to invent ever more powerful engines of destruction. If even a mall part of these efforts was directed to the search for peace, probably the problem of disarmament would have been solved by this time.

Apart from the moral impeative of peace, every practical consideration leads us to that conclusion. For, as everyone knows, the choice today in this nuclear age is one of utter annihilation and destruction of civilisation or of some way to have peaceful coexistence between nations. There is no middle way. If war is an abomination and an ultimate crime which has to be avoided, we must fashion our minds and policies accordingly. There may be risks, but the greatest risk is to allow the present dangerous drift to continue. In order to achieve peace we have to develop a climate of peace and tolerance....

It may not be possible to reach full disarmament in one step, though every step should be conditioned to that end... (The) sands of time run out, and we dare not play about with this issue or delay its consideration. This, indeed, is the main duty of the United Nations today and if it fails in this, the United Nations fails in its main purpose....

From Speech at UN General Assembly, October 3, 1960.

MANEKA VERDICT

I think Indians love mediocrity and hypocrisy. We hate to see someone obviously superior to ourselves, so we try our level best to reduce him to terms we can understand. If a man says a mere "yes" or "no" we call him brusque. If he doesn't tell lies we say how simple, how unintelligent. If he doesn't make excuses for his style, we call him arrogant. We expect our politicians to be servile, hypocritical, apologetic creatures and so we get them.

— *Maneka Gandhi in interview to* Indian Express, *May 16, 1982.*

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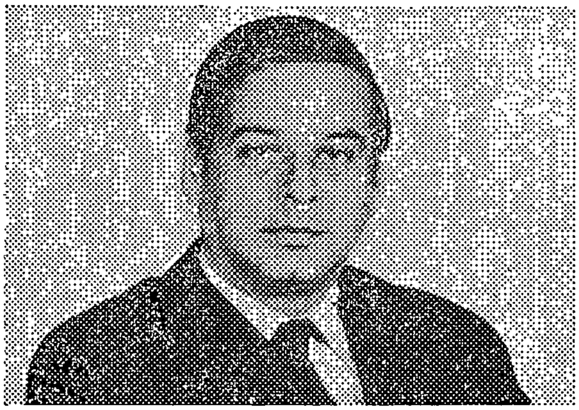
International Banking in India—Strategic Issues



Mr. Ashok Dayal—
Regional Director, Grindlays Bank p.l.c.

The world of international banking is in a state of continual growth and change. Its phenomenal growth has had a profound impact on the economies of some of our neighbouring countries, particularly in the Pacific Basin. In India we need to focus today on the changes taking place around us and produce our strategic response to these developments. I am talking basically of two areas of development—one is the opening up of banking to international financial markets and the other is the explosion of technology in the industry which has really made the internationalisation of banking a reality.

Indian banking: a historical perspective

Banking in India enjoys a tradition that dates back to more than 2,000 years. Even in its organised form as it is known today, banking can claim a history of more than 200 years in this country—a record that not many countries can match. In recent years the banking industry in India was used as an instrument of socio-economic change. This was the priority of the seventies and a remarkable job has been done in inculcating the banking habit throughout the country by a massive branch expansion programme. On the international side, the experience of Indian banking has been less satisfactory. Branches have been opened abroad with a view more to chase ethnic business or for prestige than to becoming truly international in terms of the market opportunities or development of skills.

I feel that with changes in policy the stage is now set for Indian banking to catch up with banking developments around the globe. With the balance of payments position, and the reality of being allowed to rely less on concessionary loans from international institutions, India has emerged as a prime contender for external commercial borrowing. In 1981 Indian companies crossed the billion dollar mark for commercial borrowing abroad.

Towards international banking capabilities

Can Indian banking meet the challenge of participating in the international capital markets? This is not a rhetorical question but highlights the urgent needs of the day. We have inadequate skills, poor communications, the markets are highly volatile and creative, and modern technology has not been introduced into Indian banking. International financial markets see massive changes in exchange and interest rates, and vast movements of funds from one financial centre to another in search of a safe return. We do not understandably wish to expose our domestic credit stability to the imbalances which might be created if vast movements of capital were completely free. At the same time we have not created a situation whereby our banking system can handle the surpluses and needs of genuine international transactions in an environment free from controls. As a start we need to create a limited offshore banking capability which would attract deposits from persons of Indian origin resident abroad, and surpluses from the earnings of Indian companies operating abroad. These surpluses could be utilised to book approved loans to Indian companies on a tax-exempt basis. At present this capability does not exist and loans to Indian companies even by nationalised banks are booked in Nassau or

elsewhere in Hong Kong, Bahrain, London or even Colombo. If we make a beginning now, in a few years our bankers will be trained to think in international business terms. India has a special position in South Asia; it has mature political systems and leadership; it has the productive base in both agriculture and industry; it has the potential in technological and human terms. We are poised to make a breakthrough and this should be encouraged as a matter of Government policy.

Need for high technology for banking industry

The other major development in international banking which has bypassed us so far is the use of high technology. Today it is possible from most parts of the world to make an international money transfer to New York and ensure that the account of the beneficiary is credited on the same day. In India it can take up to five days for a local cheque to be cleared and credited to an account! Product delivery systems in banking are based on electronic data processing and telecommunications networks, but in India these developments have not entered the banking scene. The capability certainly exists and in the 80's India will grow in importance in the field of software exports. What we need to do initially is to lay at rest the bogey that the introduction of modern technology in banking is not good for employment. This is certainly not the experience of other countries and it is inconsistent for us to accept the progressive increase of modern technological inputs in the manufacturing sector but not in the service industries. The banks have 36,000 branches in this country all performing vital functions manually. If one is concerned about the quality and speed of economic data produced by such a system, the case for technology in the banking industry does not even have to be argued.

Grindlays India in 1981

For us in the Bank, the year 1981 has been an extremely satisfying one. Our growth in deposits and advances was ahead of our expectations and we maintained our share of priority sector commitments throughout. In fact, our export commitments touched a new high during the year as a result of determined efforts made to promote such business. In line with increased business volumes, our profit after tax recorded a substantial gain over the previous year, despite a high inflationary impact on our costs.

I take this opportunity to place on record our high appreciation of the able guidance and direction provided by the Indian Advisory Board under the Chairmanship of Justice A. Alagiriswami, who retired in February 1982 after serving in this capacity with distinction, for six long years. His leadership spurred us on to greater successes and his mature counsel was a source of strength to me, personally. In his place, we welcome Dr. K.S. Krishnaswamy, who has distinguished himself in the field of banking and finance in India and abroad. Mr. M.K. Raju retired from the Board after ably serving two full terms spanning 3½ years. We welcomed Prof. Amlan Datta, Air Chief Marshal Arjan Singh, DFC (Retd), Mr. S.S. Marathe and Dr. Easo John, who joined the Advisory Board. Mr. R.V. Subrahmanian resigned in August 1981 due to other commitments. Before concluding I must also take this opportunity to thank all members of our staff, without whose tireless and determined effort, this year's good performance would not have been possible.

Ashok Dayal
Regional Director

Bombay
1st May, 1982

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Neighbours : Hopes and Hurdles

Mainstream

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POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

Choosing the President

WITH the election of the Republic's next President due next month, nine Opposition parties have thought fit to ask the Prime Minister to convene a meeting to consider the possibility of finding a "consensus" candidate for the highest office in the land.

In the choice of the person who for the next five years is to be the Head of State, the principle of unanimity is obviously unexceptionable. At the same time, recent history cannot be forgotten that easily, and the lessons of controversies contrived by interested quarters around that august office for their own purposes can hardly be ignored except at great cost to the nation and its cherished democratic values. It is not as if the public is unaware of past attempts by such groups to create the impression that the President is some kind of independent authority, using seeming ambiguities in wording in the Constitution — their purpose being to reduce the Prime Minister, the Executive and even Parliament to near-nullity. That the basis of such attempts lies in prejudice against the individual occupying the office of Prime Minister does not reduce the long-term dangers of allowing this line of thinking to proceed unchallenged.

To cite the 1977 "consensus" which led to Sanjiva Reddy becoming President is misleading. Reddy was chosen because of the events of 1969 when the then Syndicate tried to place him in Rashtrapati Bhavan as *their* man who could deal suitably with the Prime Minister who was defying their own authority as party bosses. The way they were outmanoeuvred, with cooperation from sections of the Opposition, rankled, and the 1977 choice was the result. At that time the Indira Congress was a badly battered party and was in no position to put up a contender. Common sense dictated that it go along. It must be noted that the President has not always been an uncontested or "consensus" choice, and the office did not lose any of its dignity or authority merely because the incumbent had been chosen through a well-

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fought-out election. In any case, today the Opposition is not in a position either to find a candidate acceptable to all the parties concerned or to defeat a candidate the ruling party may choose to put up.

It needs to be said that a consensus is based upon an assumption that there exist accepted parameters within which all sides concerned can arrive at a commonality of views on a given matter. And even such a commonality of views, to be meaningful, has to be based on a well-defined purpose. Surely it cannot be a matter of convenience or based merely on the prevailing weakness or strength of one side or the other. Consensus as a tactical manoeuvre, with implications other than clear-cut national interest, must be deemed unacceptable. But if there can be a consensus regarding a person who will be widely respected and who can be trusted to bring grace and dignity to the high office as well as harmony to the functioning of the whole parliamentary system, without being ambitious or merely churlish, there should certainly be no objection. The 1979 episode, when Sanjiva Reddy caused bitter controversy in the country by asking Charan Singh to form the Government, should serve as a warning. That implicit warning relates to the choice of the right person who will at all times act in accordance with the *spirit* of the Constitution, amply spelt out by Dr Ambedkar, Jawaharlal Nehru and others during the Constituent Assembly debates and later. As M.V. Pylee has rightly pointed out: "If the constitutional crisis of 1979 gives us any lesson, it is this: the President cannot and should not be left to himself to make momentous decisions in matters of vital importance affecting the well-being of the nation."

Two unfortunate facts have to be borne in mind in the coming days. First, society seems so denuded that one scans the horizon in vain for a person outstanding in all respects and commanding respect all round, a person who can be trusted to behave neither as a rubber-stamp nor as the supremo who can ride roughshod over the three arms of parliamentary democracy. He has to be one who can maintain the great dignity and authority of the nation's highest office, without at the same time coming in the way of the effective functioning of the parliamentary system through the Executive and the Judiciary. The second aspect is that while some sections of the Opposition view the office of President as some kind of countervailing force vis-a-vis the office of Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi has, consciously or unconsciously, created the impression that she would like the person holding the highest office to subserve some purpose of her own. This may not be the case, but certainly such an impression has been allowed to gain ground. And that is not a healthy situation either.

Without going into the provisions of the Constitution, which will have to be amended where necessary if it is found that misinterpretation of the powers of the President is possible, it may be said that the choice of the next incumbent has to be made most carefully. The office calls for wisdom, statesmanship and possession of what perhaps may be called the healing touch. The ruling party today may be in a position to choose anyone and get him into Rashtrapati Bhavan, but it would be wrong and against the national interest to use present strength and power to go in for a yes-man. We have had Presidents who adorned the office, bringing to it much grace and dignity, like Rajendra Prasad, Radhakrishnan, Zakir Hussain, Giri. They were different types of persons, with different backgrounds and accomplishments. Some of them did have differences of opinion with the Prime Minister concerned. But they were able to handle matters with restraint, and even more important, wisdom. These are the qualities one looks for in the future President of this country. In spite of changed values and the patent decline in standards, the endeavour should be to find a person who meets the requirements of the office and who is totally committed to the national credo inscribed in the Preamble to the Constitution.

No one can dispute the view that the office of President of India is one of great dignity as well as authority. Indeed, that is precisely why anyone chosen for that office should be wise and discerning, a harmoniser and not a partisan, one who has the capacity to reconcile the oath he takes while assuming office with the realities of administration in all its wings.

What is crucial is not consensus, even if it is desirable, but right choice. This is the test the ruling party faces today, and the Opposition has the duty of playing a constructive role in enabling such a choice to be made in the short-term and long-range interest of the nation.

C.N. Chitta Ranjan

June 1

COMMENTARY

PLA, or Someone Else?

A new phenomenon is in evidence in Delhi — the colossal complacency of the citizens. Nothing ruffles the citizen here — not even time-bombs in air-conditioned markets where he is likely to be shopping or whiling away his time. When anything is administered in small doses continually, people develop immunity to it, terror being no exception. The panic that gripped Delhi after last week's discovery of 26 sticks of dynamite, capable of blowing up 78 cubic feet of concrete, is already on the wane despite (or because of) the series of bomb hoaxes throughout the week. That is not to say people should remain frightened for ever, but there is a difference between being responsibly coolheaded when a bomb smelling squad walks into a cinema hall and being agitated about the tickets that may go waste. Even if the other scares turned out to be hoaxes, nobody can afford a slackening of alertness, for that is what the culprits may be waiting for. Stringent action against pranksters availing themselves of this opportunity to play practical jokes will be welcome.

That three chits of paper found with the bomb in Palika Bazaar attributed the act to an insurgent group of the North-Eastern Region, the PLA, is significant. Whoever wrote that had motives other than self-gratification. The chits were meant to be discovered. It does not require high intelligence to realise that the bits of paper would disappear if the bomb exploded. This leads to the speculation that the professional either did not intend the bomb to go off and would have engineered its discovery sooner or later, or had counted on the possibility of discovery in time. The bomb, it has now been calculated by forensic experts headed by Dr Moitra, was to explode at 11 p.m. So whoever planted it did not want human lives on his hands, but wanted to cause panic. The papers with PLA printed on them in red ink were in childish contrast to the professional slickness of the job, rather in the vein of a mystery thriller. It may have been placed there by the organisation mentioned or by someone who wanted to shift the blame.

There is no other evidence except the three bits of paper to suggest that the mischief-monger is the PLA. The false alarm raisers have also mentioned their connection with it but that came in the wake of the initial discovery of the scraps which immediately came to public knowledge. It is amazing that the PLA — if it is responsible — has not made the best of the publicity. No press statements, leaflets, pamphlets or posters have arrived in the city to explain its aims. Nor have any demands been made, if the bomb was meant as a pressure tactic. Creating panic and leaving it at that does not sound a plausible purpose, for nothing can come out of it. It can also be retaliatory action of the sort the PLA was known to take in the past. But it is almost a year now since the Eastern Command swooped down on it on July 6, killing seven of its top leaders and arresting two including Lhasa-trained N. Biseshwar Singh. In fact prompt retaliation did come on July 12, when a road-bridge was blown up in Manipur.

It would also be ironic if a force out to liberate people, as its nomenclature suggests, went around butchering people indiscriminately, squandering what little public sympathy it may have. For, although the PLA has a history of apparently indiscriminate violence, even the sternest critics of its activities have to concede that a group of over 200 youths (this is considered an underestimation) with an arms and ammunition smuggling racket, a viable storage network — a large cache was unearthed in Gauhati last year — cannot exist without secret support from people of the region where they operate. On July 12, while the road bridge exploded, hundreds of men and women for the first time defied Section 144 Cr. P.C. in Imphal to demonstrate in support of the illegal PLA and against the "encounter" deaths of its leaders.

It is equally surprising that the PLA has not made any efforts to deny the charge levelled against it, leading one to surmise that they are perhaps too deep underground to hear the rumblings on the surface or dare not attempt contact with the outside world. The explosives detected at Palika Bazaar and IP power station bore markings of Gomia, a place in Bihar, while the PLA is known to have suppliers in UP. Not that it cannot turn to new sources, but with its cream dead or jailed and the police and military vigilant this seems a tough proposition.

There is another story doing the rounds in Delhi with as much or as little evidence as the PLA case has. This story is about certain interested elements in the Capital trying to create a panic situation with ulterior motives. Let us hope this is just one of those nasty rumours.

June 1 *Anjali Deshpande*

Neighbours : Hopes and Hurdles

OUR DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

NATWAR SINGH was basically acting as a courier between Indira Gandhi and Pakistan President Zia in his latest mission to Islamabad, and regardless of its outcome it needs to be noted that it is high time for a thaw in Indo-Pakistan relations. Indira Gandhi obviously entertains the hope that such a thaw will result from her fresh initiative which was in the form of a letter to President Zia which Natwar Singh delivered to Zia, along with the expression of India's sincerity in wanting resumption of the interrupted dialogue.

Natwar Singh's mission should not be dismissed as an exercise in gimmickry just because the normal diplomatic channels for exchange of communications were avoided and he was sent to Islamabad as the Prime Minister's special envoy. If Indira Gandhi wished to invest a routine chore with special significance — her letter was actually a reply to Zia's letter of February — the attempt was worth undertaking. Natwar Singh has just relinquished his assignment as India's Ambassador to Islamabad and has taken charge of the Pakistan-Iran-Afghanistan desk at the External Affairs Ministry. His acquaintance with Pakistani leaders and knowledge of the vicissitudes which have of late characterised Indo-Pakistan relations must have made his task of explaining India's positions on them easy.

After many ups and downs, Indo-Pakistan relations had actually taken a turn for the better in February and there was room for moderate euphoria when former Foreign Minister Aga Shahi visited New Delhi. The talks at that time had in fact paved the way for arriving at a mutually acceptable basis for concluding a no-war pact despite the fact that India had no heart in the proposal, which was seen in New Delhi as a typical Pakistani stunt to impress its American ally. Even so, New Delhi thought it useful to have an understanding with Pakistan formalised in the form of a pact so long as it strengthened and reinforced the Simla Agreement, which India regards as the cornerstone of bilateral ties. One of the tangible outcomes of Aga Shahi's visit was the mutual agreement to set up a joint commission to promote economic co-operation, but even more than that was Indira Gandhi's offer to sign a treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation with Pakistan if the latter wanted concrete proof of India's bona fides.

The Indian Foreign Secretary's scheduled visit to Islamabad to resume the dialogue was called off following the Pakistani delegate. Aga Hilaly's calculated action in raking up the Kashmir issue in the Human Rights Commission meeting in Geneva. Given the circumstances in which Hilaly's interjection came, India was right in concluding that the atmosphere was being deliberately vitiated and no useful purpose could be served by resuming the dialogue at a time when Pakistan was attempting to put its own interpretations on the implications of the Simla Agreement. Subsequent allegations and counter-allegations on either side had engendered virtually no hopes for the creation of an atmosphere conducive to a dialogue.

There have been some public airing of views on both sides since then. Pakistan has argued that the Simla Agreement recognises Jammu and Kashmir as a disputed territory and that nothing in it bars Islamabad from raising the issue in international fora and that this is its sovereign right which the Simla Agreement could not deprive it of. India in turn has argued that while the exercise of such a right was not being questioned, it tended to violate the Simla Agreement in spirit if not in letter, and that no forward momentum to the process of normalisation could accrue if Islamabad constantly chose to introduce an element of bitterness in the atmosphere.

In the state of confusion and uncertainty that followed the postponement of the Indian Foreign Secretary's visit to Islamabad, many statements emanated from Pakistan which tended to create fresh suspicions in the Indian mind in regard to the prospects of resumptions of the dialogue. Pakistan sought to de-link the establishment of the joint commission and the signing of the no-war pact, advocating the theory that it would be possible and was necessary to do the one without the other. Additionally, it held that Indira Gandhi's offer to sign a treaty of friendship was not seriously meant since it was not made "officially" but only "in passing" during a chat with Pakistani newsmen accompanying the Foreign Minister. Besides, Pakistan continued to assert that the Indian decision to postpone the Foreign Secretary's visit was an example of "over-reaction" unwarranted by the objective situation which, it held, contained all the ingredients favourable to the conclusion of a no-war pact. India could not buy any of these claims for the simple reason that they were all based on wrong premises. New Delhi's response was that the totality of the scenario had altered with the vitiation of the atmosphere following the Geneva episode.

While a stalemate prevailed in the interregnum, India had an occasion to renew its commitment not only to the no-war pact proposal but also to the offer of friendship treaty. In the joint communique issued at the end of Indira Gandhi's Saudi Arabian visit, not only were these commitments forcefully reiterated on India's part but new Delhi's sincere desire to normalise relations with Pakistan on a mutually beneficial basis was recorded. The communique appeared to have made an adverse impact on Pakistani perceptions of the state of Indo-Pakistan relations, if the reaction to it is any guide. The newly appointed Foreign Minister, Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, issued a statement on his return from a two-week tour of Arab countries questioning the formulations in the communique which he contended did not represent the facts. Yaqub Khan noted that the matter in regard to the friendship treaty was not pursued "as it was realised that such a treaty was premature" and that in any case no such proposal had been made by New Delhi "officially".

New Delhi had yet another occasion to dispel Pakistani misgivings during the visit to India of the PLO Chairman, Yasser Arafat. The India-PLO joint communique recorded that Indira Gandhi informed Arafat about India's efforts towards "building up peaceful, friendly and cooperative relations with Pakistan". The Prime Minister of India, it noted, "reiterated her Government's resolve to keep the doors open for continuation of the dialogue on the proposal for a no war pact and a treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation". The clubbing together of the no-war pact and the friendship treaty should not have been lost on the Pakistanis, although the joint communique issued at the end of Arafat's visit to Islamabad strangely made no mention of the treaty offer but confined itself only to "Pakistan's offer of a non-aggression pact to India" and the expression of Pakistani hope for an early resumption of negotiations which would lead to the conclusion of such an agreement.

Bearing in mind the recent public expression of India' positions vis-a-vis the no-war pact and the friendship treaty, it stands to reason that Indira Gandhi has sought once again to place Indian perceptions on thse two crucial issues in her letter to President Zia. In fact, one of the very first things Indira Gandhi did on her return to power was to write to him to convey Indian commitment to Pakistan's "independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty". In the normal run of things, such a commitment by itself ought to have constituted the framework within which the two countries would approach their bilateral problems, but Islamabad's aspirations are not matched even by such unequivocal reiterations of Indian positions. During a chat with newsmen in Islamabad last June, President Zia sought "more tangible evidence" of Indian guarantees without however stipulating what forms such evidence could take.

Indira Gandhi's reply to President Zia was long overdue, but if she has chosen the present time for it, it can only be on the assumption that Indian readiness to reopen the dialogue is matched by Pakistan's, notwithstanding some of Zia's recent actions which were calculated to separate the two countries rather than bring them closer. The appointment of "observers" to the Majlis-e-Shoora (the Federal council) from disputed areas and the claims to the northern territories of Gilgit, Skardu and Hunza as integral parts of Pakistan were clearly meant to ruffle tempers in New Delhi. It has been stated officially in New Delhi that Indira Gandhi's letter is intended to be a "contribution to the continuing dialogue", which clearly means that the Indian initiative is directed to persuading Pakistan to create the necessary atmosphere in which the normalisation process can be given a forward momentum. This would in turn imply that the Prime Minister has informed Presient Zia that India would be willing to start once again the process which could involve yet another look at the entire gamut of bilateral relations, including the no-war pact, the friendship treaty and the joint commission for economic and trade cooperation. Implicit in the Indian gesture is the hope that there will be realisation in Islamabad that it needs two hands to clap.

The promotion of friendly relations with India's other immediate neighbour, Bangladesh, is also based on similar hopes. That despite the passage of a year since the assassination of the former President, Ziaur Rahman, and the advent of martial law in Bangladesh, there was no organised attempt at an Indo-Bangladesh dialogue testified to the delicacy of the situation. It is a truism that India's relations with both Pakistan and Bangladesh keep registering ups and downs periodically, tensions alternating with cordiality. Though both India and Bangladesh made appropriate noises in the last one year, there seemed to be an absence of political will on either side to get closer to each other. This may partly have been because Gen. H.M. Ershad, who took over a few months ago, may, have been testing the waters. Narasimha Rao's visit to Dacca must therefore be regarded as a turning point in relations. In sofar as it has evoked goodwill on either side, leading to the prospect of a smoother course in the coming months, the visit was worth making. That Rao's visit to Dacca was the first ever by a foreign dignitary to Bangladesh ever since Ershad took over has its own significance, since it can be interpreted as denoting Bangladesh's priorities in its foreign relations.

Gen. Ershad had just returned to Dacca from Saudi Arabia when Rao landed in Dacca. Undoubtedly, he had obtained from his Saudi hosts an inkling of Indira Gandhi's perceptions on subcontinental peace and security. Additionally, the mutual India-Saudi Arabia agreement that the security of the sub-continent and the Gulf are interlinked must have provided Gen. Ershad as indication that at least on the larger issue of regional peace, Indira Gandhi and her Saudi hosts had established a commonality of views. Reports suggest that Gen. Ershad's views on this issue differ from those of Indira Gandhi and that he indicated to King Khaled that Bangladesh had more to fear from India than from any other country in the region.

Rao's Dacca visit was the first occasion for a major dialogue between India and Bangladesh. But the objectives of the visit were "limited", as Rao candidly acknowledged. They were largely aimed at assessing each other's attitudes and to explore the possibilities of extricating the two neighbours from the state of uncertainty and anxiety into which the relations were threatening to slip. Rao carried with him a letter to Gen. Ershad from Indira Gandhi, and if Bangladesh newspapers can be relied upon, the communication created a friendly atmosphere for the hour-long "substantive talks" between Ershad and Rao. The outcome in any case has been satisfactory, and there seems to be good ground to envisage future development of ties on a note of better understanding. At the present stage of relations, this must be deemed a good augury.

Gen. Ershad told Indian newsmen that he had reason to feel confident that "all our problems can be solved mutually". This statement needs to be read in the right context and background. Despite the statesman-like attitude of Gen. Ershad's predecessor, Gen. Ziaur Rahman, there were occasions when he seemed unable to resist the temptation to play to the domestic gallery and to prevent the eruption of jingoism over such issues as the New Moore Island and the sharing of Ganga waters. The joint statement at the end of the Ershad-Rao talks commits both sides to continue amicable negotiations on these seemingly intractable issues, and there is a reassertion of the wish for frequent meetings to "approach the problems in a spirit of goodwill, cordiality and good-neighbourliness."

Two specific developments stemming from the Rao visit are noteworthy, in the sense that they elevated the visit from one of goodwill to one of business-like formality. Firstly, India promised to send 100,000 tonnes of wheat to Bangladesh to help relieve the present scarcity there. Secondly, there was agreement to set up a joint economic commission. Of the two, the latter has significant potential for long-term cooperation. It will institutionalise the process of consultation and ensure that a stimulus is provided for implementing several joint venture projects proposed long ago.

Basically, what is being sought to be done by the two countries presently is to revive a similar commission which was in existence till 1975 and which went practically defunct after the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Because of the absence of political rapport between leaders of the two neighbours, previous attempts at widening the scope of economic and technical cooperation never took off. The frequent eruption of tensions over such relatively trivial matters as the New Moore Island or such contentious matters like Farakka and sharing of Ganga waters, tended to throw into the background the genuinely important issue of promoting better economic relations. There have been a few other minor and major irritants too: Bangladesh had not taken kindly to New Delhi dragging its feet over its proposals for South Asian Regional Cooperation or the setting up of a South Asian Common Market. There seem to be new hopes that while major issues will be tackled in future on the basis of greater give and take, the larger question of a political rapport between the leaderships of the two countries will receive a stimulus from Rao's visit. (*June 1*)

Note: *Since this article was written, a joint press statement has been issued from Islamabad and New Delhi to the effect that discussions between the two countries will be resumed "on the basis of the understandings" reached between the two Foreign Ministers in February.* — **Editor**

A PLAN FOR COOPERATION

A former Federal Minister (of Pakistan), Dr. Mubashir Hasan, has offered the leaders of the two countries (India and Pakistan) some wholesome food for thought. Dr. Mubashir Hasan argues that if the promise of benefit to the two countries through economic collaboration is raised to a reasonable level, it would help the parties to overcome their paranoiac responses to any move in the direction shown by the Simla Agreement. This is possible, according to him, if India is prepared, of its own or on Pakistan's seeking, "to participate in projects of substantial economic worth to Pakistan, through an acceptable mix of investments and loans, partially to be paid back through Pakistani goods and services. In return, Pakistan may agree that the benefits of the projects, so much as feasible, may flow to India on a long-term basis. Pakistan may also agree to purchase from India, on the basis of competititve landed cost, a large portion of the capital goods required for the projects."

To be effective, the proposal envisages a minimum outlay of 20,000 million dollars over a period of five to seven years, He has also specified some of the more obvious areas of investment, such as establishment of power generating plants based on Lakra coal, a battery of cement factories of a total capacity of 10,000 tons a day, and fertiliser plants of a total capacity of one million nutrient tons per year; joint production of rolling stock for railways and the laying of a new railway track between Calcutta and Peshawar capable of supporting 400 km an hour train service; expansion of the capacity of the Karachi Steel Mills based on Indian ore; and development of copper mining and refining in Baluchistan and of coalfields in India.

In his view, the potential helpers include oil-rich Islamic countries, the recession-hit economies and the rich industrialised countries, inclusive of the two super-powers... However, he concedes that of primary importance at this stage is "the need for a statesperson-like vision that rises above narrow and short-term considerations and is able to view objectively and in totality requirements and problems..."

The point implicit in Dr. Hasan's proposal is that, as against calls for trade expansion on the basis of present capacities of the two economies he is arguing for collaboration to raise Pakistan's capacity to trade with India...

The tendency, indeed the habit, of looking at the poverty-stricken people's interest through glasses borrowed from the patrons we knew and their native clients has caused incalculable harm. Every time national economic interest has been sacrificed to prejudices and causes touted in faraway lands, a heavy price has been paid. Nothing less than a new definition of national interest and the acquisition of means to guard it will prove effective.

—*Groundsman in* Viewpoint *Weekly, Lahore, May 27, 1982.*

Falklands: Moment of Truth

C.P. RAMACHANDRAN

THE quarrel between the US Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, and Jeanne Kirkpatrick, the US ambassador to the United Nations, over the Falkland Islands issue is symptomatic of the dilemma of the US in the face of conflicting claims by allies. In the present context, the US must make up its mind whether by backing Britain, she can afford to lose the sympathy of the Latin American nations. The US is backing Britain for various reasons. One, it needs the Falkland Islands for strategic reasons and hopes that, as in the case of Ascension Island and Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, Britain will hand over the region to the US to build bases. Two, it wants to oversee Antarctica and all activities there. Three, it wants to show that the US can be a reliable friend of a NATO partner.

What the US did not foresee was that Gen Leopoldo Fortunato Galtieri of Argentina would make the Islands an issue for all the Latin American nations. But the US expectation must be that in view of the fact that most of the Latin American states are run by tin-pot dictators, they have nowhere else other than the US to turn to. Surely, the Soviet Union is not going to assist nations that have imposed bans on Left and democratic political parties and conduct what in fact are petty tyrannies. Gen Haig surely supports this line of thinking. Jeanne Kirkpatrick is looking at the problem from the angle of the United Nations where as it is the non-aligned nations are in a big majority. And if to that lot a number of Latin American nations are also added, then the US will lose face.

China is also in a difficult situation. She likes to pretend that in the Falkland Islands there is super-power rivalry. But the essential justness of the Argentina claim she does not want to support openly so as not to invite American resentment. At the same time, China cannot fail to see that her own claims to Hong Kong and Macao are based on arguments similar to those raised dismiss the claim either. At the moment she is astride a fence of her own making. Not a healthy position for a nation that shows great concern for sovereign rights.

The European Economic Community's support for Britain in the trading sphere is not very important. It is only meant to show that the EEC will not profit at a time of trouble for Britain. It is unthinkable that a single European soldier (other than from Britain) will fight for the Falkland Islands. But the result of this show of solidarity by the EEC and the US will only harden feelings in the Latin American nations who keenly resent the superior airs of the gringos. The next meeting of the organisation of American States is bound to be a stormy one. There may even be a show of support for the Soviet Union which alone has openly condemned British colonialism and come out in favour of sovereignty and territorial integrity. Gen Haig, for all his support for Britain, must be worrying about this aspect of the problem.

The rift has now spread to the British Cabinet itself. Margaret Thatcher is playing the hawk to Francis Pym, the Foreign Minister's dove. The contention is that the matter has to be negotiated. But Margaret Thatcher is relying on a military solution. That may be risky and will certainly be more costly. As it is, the British have suffered badly in the loss of two major warships including, it is said, the glamorous aircraft-carrier, H.M. *Invincible*. This is not good advertisement for the Thatcher Government.

A curious side-development of the Malvinas (Falklands) affair is that a lot of people in the arms business are studying the potential of the various weapons used with an eye on sales possibilities. A seminar was held in Delhi where retired generals and admirals, not to mention air-marshals, sat down to consider how India's armed forces can be revamped in the light of the fighting in Malvinas. The con- should acquire Excocet missiles which are said to have played mayhem with British war vessels. Of course, most of these gentlemen are really bothered about their commissions. The lobbies are hard at work.

It should be the business of the non-aligned bloc at its next meeting at Havana to take a position on the Malvinas affair. There can be no doubt that the non-aligned cannot back Britain. At the best they can suggest negotiations and the adoption of a face-saving formula. Fidel Castro of Cuba and other Latin American states have already taken the stand that Argentina has sovereign rignts over the Malvinas. Time is running out for all the parties concerned. If Britain allows itself to be bogged down in the islands, it may suffer the fate of American troops in Vietnam. The Galtieri regime may be an unlovely one, but the appeal of nascent nationalism can override the ugliness of the government. Britain is not exactly popular in Latin America.

What about a Soviet role? So far Galtieri has avoided taking any assistance from the Soviet Union because he does not want to alienate the US. But a time may come when he runs out of arms replacements and will have to turn to the Soviet bloc. The radical political parties in Argentina, those that are illegal as well as those that can function openly will have to devise a strategy for themselves to make the regime more liberal and egalitarian. The US ruling circles know this possibility. Therefore, Haig is hoping for a quick British victory to be followed by negotiations. Jeanne Kirkpatrick thinks that a prolonged war will help only the radical forces in Argentina and indeed in all the Latin American states.

It is a truly fateful moment for all the countries, for the fate of these largely bleak and inhospitable islands can play a notable part in shaping the future political life of not only South America but also of the governments in Washington and

Namibia : Back to Square One

HARI SHARAN CHHABRA

THE South-West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) has finally rejected the latest Western proposals for the independence of Namibia. With all efforts of the previous years having been frustrated and Namibian independence still a far cry, we are, as they say, back to square one.

SWAPO President Sam Nujoma has described as unacceptable the new Western proposals on the electoral process for a constituent assembly. He said he had documents in his possession which revealed that the proposals redound to the interests of the South African racist regime, which he said was endeavouring to place its supporters in the future Namibian Parliament.

Both Nujoma and SWAPO have called for a new UN-sponsored international conference aimed at tackling all outstanding issues. SWAPO has suggested that the conference should discuss additional proposals in connection with the contact group's 'three-stage plan'. It will be recalled that a similar conference held in Geneva last year soon after the induction of the Reagan Administration ended in failure.

Members of the Western contact group consisting of Britain, the United States, France, Germany and Canada, had suggested that a Namibian constituent assembly be chosen on a 'one vote counted twice' basis which will result in half the assembly members being chosen on a proportional representational basis and half being chosen on a constituency basis. SWAPO had earlier rejected Western proposals for a 'one man, two votes' electoral system. SWAPO feels that the two proposals are similar in substance, and both mean to give too much weightage to the White minority.

Soon after the SWAPO statement, Africa's frontline states meeting in Dar-es-Salaam on May 4 expressed full support to SWAPO's rejection of the Western proposals and endorsed the call for a new international conference. The communique of the frontline states said: "By preferring proportional representation, while being equally ready to accept a single-member constituency system, SWAPO has indeed accepted the electoral systems universally practised. The Foreign Ministers commended SWAPO for its continued flexibility and goodwill in the negotiations and rejected claims portraying SWAPO and the frontline states as the stumbling block to a negotiated settlement".

After the rejection of the Western proposals, the SWAPO leader is on record as having said that the negotiations on independence cannot be separated from the armed struggle which must be intensified against South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia.

A recent communique of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), the armed wing of SWAPO, released in Luanda states that several military operations have been carried out in central and northern Namibia and that five South African soldiers were killed. As a result of the growing Namibian offensive, the communique said, many White minority farmers, settled in rural zones, have left their farms to take refuge in the cities.

The guerilla detachments are advancing on Windhoek, the Namibian capital, says the military despatch, detailing different regions that it controls in the vicinity of the cities of Grootfonte in Otavi and Oucho. Commenting on this situation, the Johannesburg daily *Rand Daily Mail* points out that the recent offensives by the SWAPO refute South African racist regime reports on the dismemberment of that organisation.

Meanwhile, South African Defence Minister Magnus Malan has admitted that a new large-scale aggression against Angola was being prepared. He told the South African Parliament that this action was being taken because of the "presence of South-West African People's Organisation bases in the Angolan territory". Malan said among those taking part in the aggression were the "buffalo battalion" comprising war veterans of Vietnam, former Rhodesian soldiers, mercenaries from the United States, Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel.

As the Namibian talks are stalemated, disturbing reports of the way in which the racists treat SWAPO prisoners have been filtering out recently. The South Africans have refused to grant the PLAN guerillas prisoner-of-war status. Although the regime signed the original Geneva Convention, it refused to ratify the 1977 protocol which covers those captured in liberation wars. SWAPO has made a Declaration of Intention under this protocol that it will treat captured South Africans according to the Geneva Convention. As for the South Africans; in May 1978 they captured 118 Namibians on a raid in Angola; they denied the existence of these people to the Red Cross for two years.

It is thus abundantly clear that confrontation on an intensified scale is on the cards. It is also clear that the US—abetted Pretoria regime will face all the blame for death and destruction that will follow. After all, it is Washington which is making South Africa all the more intransigent. It is sad to think that Namibian independence, which was expected even before that of Zimbabwe, now two years old. is nowhere in sight. So much precious time has been wasted. Should we continue to have faith in the Western contact group, which is clearly under South African pressure and influence?

It is now the duty of the United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity and the non-aligned movement to step up their aid to SWAPO and to forthrightly demand that the original proposals on Namibia contained in Resolution 435 of the Security Council be implemented without any amendment or dilution.☐ (*June 1*)

UN Special Session

The Second Special Session on Disarmament of the United Nations General Assembly, due to begin on June 7, 1982, will be held in a world atmosphere vastly different from that at the time of the First Special Session in mid-1978. From the May 22 issue, *Mainstream* has been publishing valuable contributions on disarmament and the threat of nuclear war that hangs over mankind. In this issue we publish two contributions, one by M. Zuberi, Senior Fellow in Disarmament Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, and the other by Nilima Mitra, who is associated with the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi. More articles will be published in the coming issue.—*Editor*

Disarmament at Crossroads

M. ZUBERI

A secret operation, code-named Ivy League, was conducted by American top officials at the White House two months ago. The objective of the exercise was to test the American nuclear war apparatus through a mock Soviet attack, which began with the use of tactical nuclear weapons on US ships in the Atlantic and a chemical weapons attack on US overseas troops. The situation escalated for four days. The officials playing the roles of President and Vice-President took "real life" decisions which included a tactical weapons response and the placing of the Vice-President in the National Emergency Airborne Command Post, a special aircraft nick-named Doomsday Plane. On the fourth day it was reported that the Russians had launched 5,000 megatons on the United States. At that moment the Vice-President was in the Doomsday Plane. The President was vaporised in the basement of the White House. President Reagan was apparently satisfied with the exercise. He thanked the warning-posts and command centres and said the system had worked well.

This exercise is part of the constant state of alertness which is required to maintain the balance of terror. The command post of the American Strategic Air Command consists of a special aircraft appropriately called the Looking Glass Plane which has been in the air without interruption since February 3, 1961. A similar Navy plane is on constant alert over the Atlantic. It is called TACAMO, which stands for Take Charge and move Out. There must be similar preparations and constant alertness in the Soviet Union, but we do not know much about it.

This is the world of Mutual Assured Destruction. The grim realities of this MAD world have been summarised by President Carter in the following words:

> In an all-out nuclear war, more destructive power than in all of World War II would be unleashed every second for the long afternoon it would take for all the missiles and bombs to fall. A World War II every second — more people killed in the first few hours than in all the wars of history put together. The survivors, if any, would live in despair amid the poisoned ruins of a civilisation that had committed suicide.

The planetary increase in destructive capability threatens human existence; it also entails an incalculable drain on human and material resources. An elaborate and carefully structured system of threats endangers human survival and freezes the normal processes of history. All human beings on this planet live under the shadow of weapons, fearsome in their numbers and awesome in their capacity to inflict pain and destruction. The explosive power of a million Hiroshimas is already stored for instant use. A single Poseidon submarine can inflict 30 million casualties.

Much has been written about the destructive potential of these weapons and the threat they pose to world peace. Dangerous as these weapons are, the moral, psychological, political, social and economic conditions which have led to their production and deployment represent a kind of moral degeneracy symbolised by such barbaric terms as "overkill" and "mutual assured destruction". The availability of such resources of monstrous destructiveness has resulted in the bureaucratisation of homicide. For instance, at a meeting to discuss the alternative choices of strafing or bombing Vietnam, an American official resolved the dilemma in the following words:

> It seems to me that our orchestration should be mainly violins, but with periodic touches of brass.

This detachment of the decision-makers is further reflected in the dissociation of war from violence in the minds of the participants. An American B-52 pilot stationed in Thailand during the Vietnam war exclaimed:

> It sure is a funny way to fight a war. I mean, I have yet even to see Vietnam or Laos. I get up in the morning, have breakfast and fly off. And man, I do not see anything — just clouds, sky and sun. I get the coordinates on the map, drop my load, and I am back in time for beer and lunch in the base restaurant complete with air-conditioning. After a nap, I usually spend the afternoon swimming.

DURING early years of the nuclear age there was a sense of awe about the destructiveness of nuclear weapons which was further increased by the fall-out from thermal nuclear explosions in the atmosphere. Nuclear physicists, biologists and other groups campaigned for the end of atmospheric testing and educated the public about the dangers of radioactive fall-out on succeeding generations. This campaign was, an important contributory factor in the conclusion of a Partial Test Ban Treaty in 1963 allowing testing only underground. The milk got clean and fears were allayed. Then the nuclear world went underground and the dangers of a nuclear holocaust also went into the deeper recesses of the human mind. In recent years, changes in the declared nuclear deterrence doctrine from war-prevention to war-fighting have brought the dangers of nuclear war again to the surface. The shift is from mutual assured destruction (MAD) to nuclear target selection (NUTS). The increasing talk of war-fighting and war-winning, the discussions about limited nuclear war and the increasing budgetary allocations for weapons purposes have heightened the anxieties of the people, and protest movements are gathering momentum. Last year a Conference of Physicians was held in the USA which included participants from the Soviet Union as well. About a hundred physicians gathered to discuss the medical implications of a nuclear war. An American doctor declared:

> A nuclear attack on just one US city, the size of Boston, would more than exhaust the entire medical resources of the nation just in healing burned victims.

Another doctor from Yale University warned:

> We doctors want to say to political leaders that if there is a nuclear war, do not expect us to be able to patch up your wounds, physical or psychological.

A Soviet doctor declared:

> A one megaton nuclear explosion on a Soviet city would kill about 300,000 people immediately and wound or burn another 300,000.

A group called Physicians for Social Responsibility has been formed in the United States. It consists of more than 20,000 doctors who are travelling around the country warning people of the medical consequences of a nuclear war. A loose national coalition, embracing such diverse groups as the American Friends' Service Committee, the National Council of Churches, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and the Council for a Liveable World, has issued a call for a nuclear weapons freeze. Such weapons freeze resolutions have been passed by the legislatures of Massachusetts, Oregon, New York, Wisconsin, Vermount, Kansas, and Connecticut. These protest movements have had some impact on US Senators and Congressmen; 171 members of Congress have proposed a joint resolution calling for a mutual freeze on nuclear weapons to be followed by major systematic reductions.

A campaign for nuclear disarmament in Europe has also been gathering momentum. The triggering event was NATO's double-track decision taken in December 1979 to deploy new long-range nuclear forces in the European theatre by 1983 and to enter into arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union about these forces. A mass protest movement of continental dimensions has been gathering popular support. Membership of this movement consists of not only the fringe protest groups but also people who have been in the mainstream of political life. This movement is particularly strong in West Germany, which has been one of the main pillars of NATO. Reagan's election and consequent toughening of the US-military posture has increased the anxiety of the Europeans. Many West Europeans feel that the danger from the Soviet Union is being exaggerated. They think that Soviet entanglement in Afghanistan and the Polish crisis have considerably eased the situation for NATO. They would like the removal of nuclear weapons from "Poland to Portugal". Moreover, the economic crisis in West European countries has made them more concerned about losing the dividends of *detente*. This movement is being viewed with suspicion in the United States as another example of an idealistic cover for the materialism of the Europeans eager to do business with the Russians at almost any cost.

The significant thing about this protest movement in Europe is that its membership makes it difficult to dismiss it lightly. Moreover, the groups which previously were protesting against the danger of civilian nuclear power have joined this movement. This link has been provided by many decisions of the US Government. For instance, in October last year, the US Government approached the British Government with an offer to purchase five tons of British plutonium for use in the American breeder reactor called Clinch River Plant at Tennessee. According to an article in the *Guardian*, Washington's decision to step up nuclear weapons production had resulted in a shortage of plutonium for the breeder programme.

Apart from these protest movements in the United States and Western Europe, four members of the American policy-making elite — Robert McNamara, George Kennan, McGeorge Bundy and Gerard Smith — have written an article advocating a policy of no-first-use of nuclear weapons by NATO (see *Mainstream*, May 29, 1982). It is, however, significant that their policy recommendation is confined to Western Europe. General Haig, in a major address at the Georgetown University Centre for Strategic Studies on April 6, 1982, dealt with the questions raised by the four leaders. He said that a policy of no-first-use was consistently proposed by the Soviet Union and it had received some resonance in the United States. He however added: "NATO has consistently rejected such Soviet proposals, which are tantamount to making Europe safe for conventional aggression." Dealing with the policy implications of the proposal he added: "Those in the West who advocate the adoption of a 'no-first-use' policy seldom go on to propose that the United States reintroduce the draft, triple the size of its armed forces, and put its economy on a war footing." Regarding the movement for a freeze on nuclear weapons, he said: "A freeze at the current level would perpetuate an unstable and unequal military balance".

WHAT are the forces behind the revitalisation of containment policy, the toughening military posture, and the increasing talk of limited nuclear war and use of force in the context of resource politics? While the world is militarily still bipolar, politically it is multi-polar. There has been a steady diffusion of power in many dimensions; from the United States to the Soviet Union resulting in essential equivalence; from the super-powers to the other industrialised countries like those of Western Europe, and Japan; and even from the industrialised world as a whole to a small group of developing countries which have become producers and exporters of manufactured goods and commodities. This transformation has occurred under the overshadowing presence of the nuclear deterrence. The triangular relationship between the United States, the Soviet Union and China is entangled with the other triangle — Northern America, Western Europe, and Japan. The increasing importance of the security of the flow of oil has been inter-linked with these triangles. The steady increase in Soviet military power has led to worries in the United States about the so-called "window of vulnerability". This provides the the justification for the increasing military build-up, and this build-up has become a "window of opportunity" for the domestic vested interests who gain from military expenditure. The so-called "arc of instability", or the "crumbling triangle" or the "cresent of crisis" has become the focus of attention. The geographical proximity of the Soviet Union to the area increases the anxieties of the Western policy-makers.

Power projection is considered an essential hallmark of a super-power. Such power projection could be accomplished for a long time by the United States with impunity because it was the only superpower capable of doing it. Advances in strategic mobility have enabled the Soviet Union to pose a serious challenge to the United States. Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and the Soviet blue-water navy are indications of this challenge. These developments point to an era of competitive interventions in which both the super-powers may find themselves in a game of policing each other. Brzezinski once spoke with approval of future Fashodas in which the Great Powers would test each other's strength. This was a reference to an episode in the inter-imperialist rivalry between Britain and France in the late 19th Century when both powers rushed to control a key point on the upper Nile called Fashoda. A British general appeared in the uniform of an Egyptian officer to challenge the presence of a French officer who claimed that he was there "in the name of France". If this is the likely future pattern of events in the developing world, we may once again find ourselves in the midist of a new era of imperialist conflict.

WHILE the industrialised world has remained peaceful and has consequently prospered, it is the developing countries which have had about 120 wars between 1945 and 1976. The total duration of these wars adds up to more than 369 years. The cumulative total for Asia is 150.3 years; for Africa 94.1 years; for the Middle East 71.5 years; and for Latin America 39.3 years. The figure has increased since then.

To the global thinkers who have become security managers of the globe, the whole world appears as a single strategic stage, its separate theatres linked with each other. The scene changes but the contestants remain the same — the two super-powers. The developing countries appear as "grey areas" which are prone to convulsive change directed from abroad. In this military analysis of the complex realities of the international scene, revolutions and changes are viewed as problems in the management of violence. Each revolutionary success is interpreted as a Soviet victory or an American defeat. The indigenous people are being manipulated by "agitators and plotters" supported by outside force. A reputation for military toughness and a capacity to intervene militarily are considered absolutely necessary to prevent "internal irresponsibility."

In recent years the West Asian countries which export oil have become the focus of attention. Within this area, the Gulf countries and Saudi Arabia are considered vital to the security of the industrialised Western countries. A Rapid Deployment Force is being assembled consisting of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force and the Marines under the command of Lt-Gen. Robert Kingston of the United States. It has a large armada of ships, helicopters and aircraft, with 200,000 troops under the protective of the Strategic Air Command projection force. Almost a billion barrels of petrol (and 45,000 tons of amunition) along with the pre-positioning of the necessary weapons and supplies are ready for any eventuality not only in West Asia but in any part of the world. It is the most powerful front-line force that the United States has assembled so far. General Maxwell Taylor, former Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, has looked forward to a force designed to deal in the next decade with threats "arising from continued Soviet malevolence supported by growing military power, the dependence of the United States and allies on Mid-East oil and the turbulence of the developing world". There have been joint exercises conducted by the Force in West Asian countries. The intention is to have the ability of conduct "supportive intervention within a permissive environment". A British General, Sir John Hackett, has conducted a study which shows that in case of domestic unrest or revolution in Saudi Arabia, a capacity to militarily capture 10,000 sq. miles of Saudi territory consisting of all the major oilfields would safeguerd Western interests. This is what is called "the Saudi Core". When such a Rapid Deployment Force was proposed by President Johnson in 1967, Senator Richard Russel opposed it saying that "if our involvement in foreign conflicts can be made quicker, there is the temptation to intervene in many situations". Thus, we can see that there are increasing possibilities of military intervention and use of force in the developing countries.

While the capabilities for military intervention are being refined, the cost of intervention has also been going up because of the awakening of the peoples of the developing world. A few decades ago small groups of foreign adventurers and military forces could subjugate vast territories and maintain their dominance for long periods. For instance, in January 1938, 11,000 French soldiers and 292 police officers controlled the 30 million inhabitants of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. This is unthinkable now. It has been calculated that it cost the United States half a million dollars to kill one Viet Cong soldier.

WHAT are the prospects for any disarmament measure in this world of diffusion of power and increasing grievances and insecurities? There are preparations for limited nuclear war, interventions, and punitive actions, increasing allocations of resources for more weapons, and new missions for existing weapons. The record of arms control and disarmament negotiations has been a dismal one. The most substantial measure of arms control on which the super-powers agreed was the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. This treaty legitimised nuclear weapons so far as the existing weapons powers are concerned and attempted to freeze the processes of history. The elaborate inspection and control regime established under the treaty has collapsed under the weight of commercial competition and collusive proliferation. Nuclear developments in Israel, South Africa and Pakistan represent this trend towards collusive proliferation. The Israeli raid on the Iraqi nuclear reactor subject to international safeguards represents an extraordinary adoption of superior moral posture by a country which has its own clandestine nuclear weapons programme.

The non-aligned countries have been campaigning for a world Disarmament Conference for the last few years. Unable to persuade the Western powers to convene such a conference, they pressed for a special session of the UN General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The first special session was convened in 1978. The preparatory committee for the session prepared a draft of the final document which was to be released at the end of the session. This draft contained a "forest of brackets" representing the linguistic contortions of the countries which disagreed with any particular formulation. There were occasionally double and treble brackets after a particular sentence in the draft. Valiant efforts were made during the session to delete those brackets. A consensus was arrived at in the last stage of the session on the basis of the lowest common denominator. This facilitated agreement on the final draft; all the brackets were removed but the document was diluted in the process. Even this was not enough; 46 nations expressed their views and reservations on the final document. This may be considered a good example of "calculated ambiguity". The most tangible result of the session was the improvement of the machinery for disarmament negotiations. At the end of the session, Sir Derick Ashe of Britain, having contribed to the Dilutions of the Draft, pontificated: "I must confess that there were times when our discussions on it seemed to me more like the ritual death dance of dying elephants than the greatest and most hopeful gathering of the powers of the Earth united in a common search for disarmament and international security".

The second special session of the UN General Assembly devoted to disarmament is being held from June 7. Recent developments provide little encouragement to any thoughts of hopeful results. There are prospects of expanding megatonnage and a broader repertoire of war-fighting missions for nuclear armouries. Unthinkable levels of human incineration are being considered thinkable. There are, however, voices of protest and mass movements in favour of some measure of disarmament. Economic troubles with double-digit inflation and high rates of unemployment in the West may also contribute towards second thoughts about increasing military expenditure. If saving the world is not a sufficiently attractive proposition, saving money may serve the purpose.□

War Options—Conventional or Nuclear?

NILIMA MITRA

It is true that unlike conventional arms, nuclear arms are weapons of mass destruction and therefore it is no exaggeration to say that the future of mankind is hostage to the nuclear arms race of the two super-powers as they possess, to an overwhelming degree, the nuclear arsenal. But the oft-expressed plea that nuclear disarmament should take place as part of a general process of disarmament, involving conventional armaments and armed forces in their entirety — as otherwise serious military and political destabilisation would result — assumes greater significance today, because of late there has been even greater emphasis on the further development of conventional capability in different quarters in the USA.

Senator Sam Nunn (Democrat), an important defence expert in the US Congress, recently advocated that Western defence policy should encompass the building up of a viable NATO conventional capability. The idea that 96 divisions and 9,000 aircraft are needed in Europe to match the Soviets, is outdated because of advanced technology in conventional weapons and the development of electromagnetic sensors which makes possible "air-land battle 2000" — which simply means that NATO forces could go for second and third echelon Soviet forces before the latter get to a forward area. The advantage of a US conventional build-up is supposedly to intimidate the Russians so that they would not be tempted to wage a war in Central Europe where world wars had begun twice before.

US emphasis on the revitalisation of conventional capabilities has been underlined by Defence Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger: out of an approximately $ 180 billion defence budget for fiscal year 1983, 85 per cent has been reserved for the build-up of non-nuclear forces. US paranoia about so-called Soviet conventional superiority is reflected in the following figures appearing in a recent NATO study:

Warsaw Pact	Forces 5.7 million (worldwide)	Tanks (world-wide)	Anti-tank weapons (worldwide)	Guns (world-wide)
	4 million (Europe)	60,000	12,650	30,000
European and American	4.4 mil. (worldwide) 2.6 mil. (Europe)	22,670	7,000	10,750

The attempt to emphasise the disparity in conventional forces overlooks the fact that the Soviet Union has to maintain balance of forces along 67,000 km of its state frontiers, of which 20,000 km is land frontier. The Soviet Union has to defend its eastern frontiers from China which has built up a formidable nuclear potential. China's most powerful nuclear missile CSS-4 carries a four megaton warhead and has a range of 12,800 km. The missile CSS-3 developed in the seventies could carry a 3 megaton nuclear warhead. In addition, China has the largest army in the world, aspersions on its combat-worthiness notwithstanding.

The Soviets brought out a Ministry of Defence publication in January 1982, *Whence the Threat to Peace*, to counter the Pentagon pamphlet *Soviet Military Power*, as well as to give an objective picture of the strategic situation. The Soviet publication claims that the NATO countries' armed forces and the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact countries have approximately equal combat capabilities. The US however has constantly trumpeted disparity in the field to justify a further build-up.

On April 7, Robert McNamara (former US Defence Secretary and President of the World Bank from 1968 till mid-1981) at a press conference startled the US and its allies by calling on the NATO alliance *to renounce unilaterally its policy of first use of nuclear weapons and focus on building up its conventional forces*. Though this is calling for a radical change in NATO policy one cannot overlook the fact that a "conventional forces build-up" has been recommended. In the Spring 1982 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, journal of the New York Council of Foreign Relation Inc, McNamara co-authored an article on Nuclear Weapons and the Atlantic Alliance with McGeorge Bundy, Gerard Smith, and George F. Kennan (see Mainstream, May 29, 1982). This article has been the subject of heated discussions in the West because these eminent personalities state that the adoption of the "no first use" doctrine would prevent the "hideous possibility of a third great twentieth century conflict in Europe — conventional or nuclear" which casts a shadows on the lives of peoples in every country.

According to the Americans, the Soviet orchestration of "no first use" ever since NATO's inception, is due to Soviet superiority in conventional forces. The Committee on Disarmament, the multilateral negotiating forum entrusted with the task of promoting general and complete disarmament under effective international control, has submitted a special report on Disarmament to the Second Special session of the UN General Assembly (commencing June 7, 1982), which takes note of the proposal of a group of socialist states, including "one nuclear-weapons state", regarding an undertaking by the nuclear-weapon states not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. The Reagan Administration believes that a declaratory policy of "no first use" would have the effect of withdrawing the American nuclear umbrella which has protected Western Europe for over three decades and would be tantamount to making Europe vulnerable to conventional aggression. Paul H. Nitze, chief US negotiator at the Geneva talks on reducing intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe, has said that a no-first-use policy would reduce deterrence—a doctrine which in reality has only contributed to instability and insecurity in international relations. Further, the flexible response doctrine adopted by NATO in 1967 has been defended by the US Administration on the ground that it does not mean automatic use of US nuclear weapons but only makes a potential aggressor reckon with that prospect.

The "gang of four" authors of the *Foreign Affairs* article have also advocated that the 'no first use' pledge should be backed up by an effective conventional defence. They are of the view that an effective policy of no-first-use will also reduce the risk of conventional aggression in Europe — a risk which has been overplayed by the prophets of doom in America.

In Europe, understandably, there has been concern about the advocacy of a "no first use" of nuclear weapons policy with a simultaneous stress on a conventional capability build-up. Many Europeans are coming to the conclusion that the "gang of four" is prescribing a conventional war in Europe in lieu of a nuclear war. More so because the US propaganda about the advantage the Soviets enjoy in the sphere of conventional forces, has remained unabated. The US says that this advantage would tempt the Soviets to engage in a risk-free military aggression against Western Europe, once the US adopts the 'no first use' policy. The European fear is further compounded by the fact that the US is trying to press its NATO allies for freedom to move troops from Europe in an emergency — citing the parallel of the British sending forces to the Falklands.

The NATO allies are also worried that the impending modernisation of NATO Theatre Nuclear Forces by the development of 464 Ground Launched Cruise Missiles (GLCM) and 108 Pershing II missiles, as a response to Soviet deployment of SS-20 IRBMs in Europe, may not finally go through (scheduled to start next year). This is because the US may ultimately be forced to promise the non-deployment of the proposed IRBMs in return for a Soviet commitment not to base similar missiles in Cuba or Nicaragua. In March this year Brezhnev had "threatened to take retaliatory steps" that would put the US in an "analogous position" to the Soviet Union, if Pershing II and Cruise Missiles were deployed in West Europe. Some quarters interpret Brezhnev's threat to mean introduction of intermediate missiles within range of the US land mass and the ideal place for this would naturally be Cuba, 145 km from Florida, Achilles' heel in Western hemispheric defence. The Soviet threat arises out of the fact that they realise that to counter the introduction of the Cruise missiles deployment the Russians would have to vastly improve their air defence systems along their western border. The GLCM, though it cruises at subsonic speed, has a high probability of penetration, as it is capable of flying at very low altitudes The Pershing II, which is a modernised version of the currently deployed Pershing I a, has a very accurate terminal guidance system with a range of about 1500-1800 km, sufficient to reach a significant distance into the Soviet Union, and the flight time is extremely short, about 7 minutes, thus giving virtually no warning against a surprise attack. On the other hand, the Soviet multiple warheads SS-20 missiles can only be targeted on Europe, and as de Gaulle had said twenty years earlier the United States would never exchange New York for Bonn or Paris; naturally the credibility of the nuclear umbrella has been increasingly questioned by the Europeans.

Compounding the issue is the cold water the US has been throwing on veiled Cuban overtures for reconciliation. The adoption of such a posture by the US may lead to the Cubans feeling claustrophobic enough to accept Soviet missiles to ensure their own security, and this would put the Russians in a strong bargaining position with respect to the IRBMs at the continuing Geneva Arms Control Talks. Probably to prevent matters coming to a head, Brezhnev, speaking at the 19th Young Communist League Congress in Moscow on May 18 1982, announced the Soviet decision to discontinue further deployment of medium-range missiles in the European part of the Soviet Union. This decision to "unilaterally freeze" the Soviet IRBMs may be a move to seek a possible trade off with the proposed US deployment of Pershing II and Cruise missiles. It is important to note here that Dr. Joseph Luns, NATO's Secretary-General, has said that the Soviet Union has already built up its SS-20s force too close to the maximum number they had planned, the implication being that the Soviets are not making concessions by their offer.

During the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, though Kennedy had been in a position of unparallelled strength, the US still had to withdraw their liquid fuelled, intermediate range Thors and Jupiter missiles based in Turkey directed against the Soviet Union. This part of the agreement was never publicised, but there have been certain indications that the withdrawal of IRBMs from Europe was an implicit and integral part of the US-Soviet 1962 agreement. Now with the "Correlation of Forces" on the Soviet side the Russians have been hinting that the introduction of IRBMs in Europe would be a violation of the understandings reached in 1962. The 'zero option' preferred by Reagan last year was not acceptable to the Soviets for obvious reasons.

However, Brezhnev has suggested in response to Reagan's Eureka speech of May 9 outlining Strategic Arms Reduction (START) that the strategic armaments of the US and the USSR should be frozen 'quantitatively' and that their modernisation should be limited to the utmost as soon as negotiations for reductions begin.

Ignoring this William C. Clark, Reagan's National Security Adviser, announced in a speech the US Administration's decision to modernise strategic nuclear weapons and conventional armed forces to be able to respond to crises in various parts of the world. As part of the $ 1.6 trillion defence build-up the modernisation programme for the US strategic Triad (ICBMs, SLBMs and Bombers) continues unabated. Reagan has approved the "dense pack" basing system for the MX missiles, to enable missile "fratricide" to take place. The mobile MX would ensure that the USA has the ability to make a retaliatory strike in the event of a Soviet nuclear attack against the fixed Minuteman and Titan ICBM fields in North America. The multiple protective shelter (MPS) envisaged for the MX provides for targeting problems for potential opponents. The proposed Trident II missile would have the ability to operate beyond the areas possible with the Trident I's 7000-km range without any reduction in payload. The Stealth bomber is a strategic bomber under development for the USAF which is invisible to radar, making interdiction impossible. And the development of the long-range Cruise missiles to be carried by the proposed B-1B bomber would continue to ensure US strategic superiority. Haig is reported to have said that strategic bombers and long-range Cruise missiles might be included in the next proposal for strategic arms reduction, though no time-limit has been set. Therefore the Soviets view the Eureka speech as a ploy to carry out US rearmament plans as the START proposal as aimed at securing for the US unilateral military advantages by weakening the backbone of the Soviet strategic arsenal.

On the other hand, there are at least overtly positive noises on both sides. Reagan has watered down his hard-line stand and stopped talking of 'linkages' before any resumption of negotiations with the Soviets. His earlier preconditions were that the Russians would have to withdraw from Afghanistan and 'assist' in lifting the Martial Law prevailing in Poland. He has also moderated his anti-Soviet rhetoric.

On the Soviet side, even though Haig has declared that SALT II is dead because it was "fatally flawed" and has rejected the Soviet "freeze proposal" because "it would only codify existing Soviet advantages", Brezhnev is not insisting on US ratification of SALT II as a prerequisite for the resumption of a dialogue and indicated on May 26 that Moscow was ready to discuss the "limitation and reduction of any type of system of weapons".

Scepticism about the genuineness of these positive signals is not unwarranted. A report prepared by the Soviet leadership covering the period 1966-80 has stated that the ever-increasing dependence on food imports is a major strategic concern for the Soviets. Western calculations predict that Soviet grain imports in 1982 will touch 45 million tons and the current contract to sell US grain to the Russians expires on September 30 this year. The Soviet Union would certainly be calculating on the basis that the Americans will play tough in this field to

(*Continued on page 34*)

DISCUSSION

Press Commission Report

Discussion on the Report of the Second Press Commission — which is yet to be officially published — began in these columns *(Mainstream,* April 17, 1982) with a contribution from G.N. Acharya. This was followed by articles by S. Viswam, A. Raghavan, R.C. Dutt, M.K. Ramamurthi and L. Meenakshi Sundaram (*Mainstream*, April 24, May 1 and 15). This week we publish a contribution from J.P. Chaturvedi, former President, Indian Federation of Working Journalists. — *Editor*

Future of Language Newspapers

J.P. CHATURVEDI

THE recommendations of the second Press Commission are as much applicable to the Indian language press as they are to the English press. As a matter of fact the Indian press today is the Indian language press. According to the report of the Press Registrar of India for 1980, which has been relied upon by the Commission, the number of newspapers in India was 17,168, of which those published in English were 3288. The largest number was that of Hindi newspapers (4610). Then came Bengali 1259, Urdu 1100, Marathi 984, Tamil 705, Malayalam 697, Gujarati 674, Kannada 556, Telugu 503, Assamese 58, Sindhi 63, Sanskrit 29. Out of these, there were 1,087 dailies distributed as under: English 98, Hindi 333, Malayalam 94, Urdu 140, Marathi 110, Tamil 75, Bengali 32, Gujarati 38, Kannada 57, Telugu 28, Punjabi 22, Oriya 10, Sindhi 4, Assamese 3, Sanskrit 2, Bilingual 24, Multilingual 6, Others 27.

As far as circulation is concerned, the circulation of Hindi newspapers has exceeded that of any other language and the combined circulation of all language papers was much higher than that of English newspapers. Therefore, we should have treated the language press in India as the national press, but it is a tragedy that the minority press in English is referred to as the national press and the majority press is labelled as the language press — a term implying an inferior position.

However, the major observations of the Press Commission apply to all newspapers in all languages. I shall here deal with those which affect or refer to the Indian language press in particular. There is no chapter in the Press Commission Report dealing with Indian languages in particular. But in Chapter VIII, which deals with official agencies and the press, the provisions relating to newspaper finance, loans and development assistance take note of the situation of the Indian language papers, and the proposal to set up a Newspaper Development Commission is specially meant for them. The Press Commission's observations in paras VIII-75 to 79 of the Report are:

Newspaper Development Commission

There is need for a body which will promote the development of the press as a whole, as distinct from individual newspapers. The promotional effort we envisage will be in directions which will facilitate the growth in particular of Indian language newspapers of whatever circulation category, and of local interest and other publications of small and medium size in terms of circulations. We recommend the establishment, for the purpose, of a Newspaper Development Commission which will offer its assistance on a generalised, non-discriminatory and non-discretionary basis. The objects which we envisage for the Commission are:

(i) To promote R&D in the newspaper industry, particularly research in and development of teleprinters in Indian languages and of composing and printing technologies suitable for small and medium newspapers;
(ii) To promote the development of Indian language news agencies and to oversee the financial health of news agencies in respect of their domestic operations and the rates of subscription available to them from newspapers and Government subscribers such as AIR and Doordarshan;
(iii) To provide development assistance to the press, especially to small and medium newspapers, through such means as the provision of subsidised teleprinter services on a non-discriminatory basis:
(iv) To arrange supply of newsprint to newspapers, other than those belonging to newspaper chains, in interior or remote areas at prices comparable to those prevailing at port towns;
(v) To assist the emergence and growth of daily newspapers in remote and interior areas by subsidising the extension of the news agencies' teleprinter links;
(vi) To assist in obtaining for newspapers and news agencies reasonable tariffs for internal and external communication;
(vii) To appraise proposals for the publication of daily newspapers by the Government in areas without a daily press, and, if the Commission approves the proposal, to advise on the kind of newspaper that should be brought out;
(viii) To liaise with various Government departments concerned with the needs of the newspaper industry;
(ix) To promote and coordinate training in journalism (including of 'Katibs' for Urdu papers) in case the Press Council does not assume this function as recommended by us in Chapter VII;
(x) To provide financial assistance through grants to institutions engaged in R&D in newspaper publishing;
(xi) To commission studies relevant to the promotion of the above objects; and
(xii) To undertake such other functions as the Com-

> mission considers to be appropriate in pursuance of the above objectives.

The proposal for subsidy to newspapers through the Newspaper Development Commission seems to be a compromise between the practice of open subsidy resorted to by countries like Sweden, which has the highest per capita newspaper readership in the world, countries like West Germany, France and Holland, and the Anglo-Saxon concept that state subsidy infringes on freedom of the press. The Third Press Commission of Britain, whose Report was placed before the British Parliament in July 1977, made a comparative study of direct and indirect subsidies to the press. It referred to the scheme in the Netherlands, which was under consideration of Parliament at that time, which provided for giving assistance to newspapers attracting less than a specified ratio of advertising to sales, the ratio and amount of subsidy being subject to review as circumstances changed. It also referred to the proposal for a Press Foundation in the Federal Republic of Germany, which was to be an independent instrument for securing the stability of the press and preserving diversity by encouraging joint publishing ventures, undertaking management consultancy work, establishing cooperative printing works for smaller publishers, and giving direct assistance to newspapers in difficulty.

Then it scrutinised the Swedish system of subsidy. Its main contention can be seen in the following paragraphs of its Report:

> "The most fully developed public subsidies for the press are in Sweden. Some advocates of subsidies in Britain point to Sweden as an example of state policies which have been accepted by the press and the public as maintaining variety without impinging on the independence of the press."
>
> "The total value of state support for the press in 1976-77 was about 195 million Swedish crowns, about £ 26 million at today's exchange rate, in a country with about 15 per cent of the population of the United Kingdom. VAT exemption for newspaper sales adds a further 175 million crowns. A tax on advertising, mainly in periodicals, first introduced in 1971, brings in 130-175 million crowns, but it is not directly related to assistance to the press."
>
> "The principal feature of the support is a production subsidy tied to the consumption of newsprint. Its cost nearly trebled between 1971 and 1975, and is likely to be about 140 million crowns in 1976-77. By offsetting the inability of papers with low coverage in their markets to attract enough advertising to be profitable, the subsidy helps to keep them going. So far, it has almost halted the closure of competing newspapers: only one daily has closed since it was introduced. Daily and weekly newspapers qualify, and 32 daily and 32 weekly newspapers have already been assisted. On average the newspapers which receive subsidy now rely on the production subsidy for about 20 per cent of their total income. Papers supporting all the main political groups, among them the leading Conservative paper *Svenska Dagbladet* in Stockholm and the Social Democratic *Arbetet* in Malmo, are kept alive by this subsidy. Both qualify for the maximum subsidy, currently the equivalent of £ 2.6 million a year. More than half the subsidy so far paid out has been to Social Democratic papers."
>
> "We think that this subsidy has been approved chiefly because it offers advantages to the papers of all the main political parties. The Royal Commissions which recommended the schemes were constituted with representatives of all political parties and press interests. Broadly based political support for the overt objective of preserving competitive newspapers makes practicable a system which can operate automatically without the exercise of further discretion. It has recently been necessary to revise the criteria, though not in such a way as to change the beneficiaries."
>
> "In July 1976, a programme was introduced which included a loan fund to help with new investment, a fund to assist the launch of new 'complementary' newspapers (that is, weekly or bi-weekly papers with a different political standpoint from that of the monopoly daily), and development aid for monopoly newspapers in difficulty. This programme will be administered by a Press Subsidies Council consisting of a number of experts on the press and representatives of each of the five parliamentary parties. It will cost in total between £ 1½ million and £ 2 million a year, much less than the production grant. As the Council will apparently play a discretionary role it is too early to know whether the funds can be administered without controversy."

But the British Press Commission rejected all these on the following grounds:

> "Conditions here are very different. Competitive daily newspapers exist only in London, Glasgow and Belfast and special circumstances exist in these cities. Conditions at all comparable to those in Sweden apply only to those Fleet Street papers which run at a loss or make low profits. We are sure that there would be no consensus among the public and the political parties in this country about the desirability of maintaining all loss-making national newspapers or about which should be preserved by public subsidies. Indeed, some of our nine national newspapers could close and still leave greater choice to readers than that enjoyed by any town in Sweden. Even if the Swedish scheme is successful in terms of its own objectives, British circumstances are so dissimilar that it cannot serve as an example for us."

But it took just 17 months for the London *Times* to suspend publication. The day it declared that it was closing down, the Speaker of the House allowed a discussion on an adjournment motion on "the crisis in *Times* newspaper and its serious consequences" and the debate started as 4.12 pm on November 30, 1978 and lasted till 7.7. pm. I happened to be present in the gallery of the House of Commons that day and I heard 28 members lamenting the suspension of the *Times*. When the Australian press baron Rupert Murdoch purchased the London *Times* there was again a flutter London *Times* was in the news again when its newly-appointed Editor Harold Evans was sacked and replaced by Charles Douglas-Home after 830 employees had been thrown out. The crisis in the *Times* amply demonstrated that public opinion, even in London, was seriously concerned over the closure of newspapers due to financial loss and the premise of the British Press Commission was out of tune with the feelings of the British people.

I am happy that our Press Commission has taken a bold step in recommending subsidy for news papers that may need it to keep them alive and efficient and prevent them from falling a prey either to industrialists or politicians who may try to use them for purposes other than those for which the newspapers were established.

Of course much will depend on the composition and functioning of the bodies concerned. The first Press Commission had suggested the appointment of the Press Registrar to keep a watch over the trend towards concentration of owership and it wanted that the Press Council should keep a watch over these trends as reported by the Press Registrar and suggest remedies. Take any report of the Press Registrar and you will find the refrain "the predominant form of ownership in India was individual ownership". This myth has been perpetuated by combining all the journals under the name of newspapers whether they were dailies, weeklies, fortnightlies, monthlies, quarterlies or annuals. That gave an impressive figure and the number of newspapers published daily, which had caused so much concern to the Press Commission, paled into insignificance. The Second Press Commission has rightly advised its discontinuation. Much was done to help concentration of ownership by the organisation of the Press Registrar which took sadistic pleasure in enforcing the law in the case of small journals denying them newsprint and advertisement and prosecuting them in courts of Delhi where even the publisher of a newspaper published from Kanyakumari or Manipur had to come. But the same organisation never reported that it has been able to curtail the newsprint allotment of the top 20 common-ownership units which have been receiving an allotment of more than 2000 metric tonnes each, totalling about 70 per cent of all newsprint allotments. And in spite of a clear ban on allotting newsprint to newspapers started by a newspaper chain it became possible for the *Indian Express*, the *Times of India* and other chains to start new editions from new places and in new languages. The Press Council discussed the question of monopolies only once when it found that Nandini Satpathy, the then Minister for Information and Broadcasting, was bringing in a bill in Parliament, and its Chairman, Justice Rajagopala Ayyangar woke up to find that this subject belonged to the Press Council and lamented that the Government had brought in the measure without consulting the Council. When he found that bulk of the members were in favour of certain steps to prevent the growth of monopolies, he conveniently shelved the matter without bringing out a report or even a resolution of the Press Council. It is an old story, and since then the Press Council, of whatever complexion, has not bothered to devise any method of controlling or restraining the trend towards monopoly or oligopoly.

There is a loophole in the proposals of the Press Commission to enable big monopoly houses to avail of the benefits from the Newspaper Development Commission. This occurs in the very second sentence which says, "The promotional efforts we envisage will be in directions which will facilitate the growth in particular of Indian language newspapers of whatever circulation or category." Now, if you have a glance at daily newspapers which have large circulations, it will be clear that in Hindi, barring *Nai Duniya* of Indore, practically all newspapers with a circulation over 50,000 belong to one or other newspaper chain. The same can be said of Marathi where the papers with the largest circulations belong to Bennett Coleman and the *Express* chain, followed by the *Sakal* group. The same is true of Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam papers. Even Gujarati papers, which were free from chains, are now either under the reach of the Goenkas or are developing their own chains. Therefore, we have to be careful in seeing how the proposed Commission functions and this will require personnel really interested in helping the underdog.

There are some general recommendations in this chapter which have a bearing on the conditions of Indian newspapers. Unfortunately the Commission has given no thought to this aspect. The First Press Commission wanted a central Press Registrar and a Press Registrar in each State. It said in para 1181, "The Central Press Registrar should bring out an annual report on the working of the press on its organisational side, including working conditions in the industry, and giving such other details as may be prescribed. All newspapers should be called upon to file periodic returns regarding employees, consumption of raw material, changes in ownership and control, and changes in management so that the public can get, from one source, authentic statistics about the industry." It added, "It should also be made incumbent on the newspaper to file periodic statements regarding the circulation of the paper as well as to send one copy of each edition to the National Library of India." Perhaps the Commission had wanted these figures because it further recommended in para 1385, "We recommend that the Press Registrar should keep a close watch on the circulation of newspapers and if he comes to the conclusion that in a particular area or in a language a monopoly has developed, he should bring it to the attention of the Press Council, who should conduct an investigation into the existence of the monopoly, whether it has acted against public interest, whether undesirable practices have been resorted to to eliminate competition and what measures if any are necessary to deal with the situation. In our view an investigation of this character, besides helping the Council to come to definite conclusions on the subject, will serve to educate public opinion on monopoly. If a monopoly is to be discouraged, the public must realise the implications of monopoly."

Instead of drawing attention to the lapses of successive Press Registrars in this respect, or Government inaction in this matter, the Second Press Commission has focussed its attention on cases where claims of circulation certified by Chartered Accountants are found to be inflated and has even recommended action against Chartered Accountants; it has nowhere said what the Press Registrar should do when, due to the connivance of its inspectors with newspaper organisations, inflated figures find a place even in the annual report of the Registrar which is relied on by people as the most authentic record. The Commission has nowhere mentioned that the Press Registrar should provide the information asked for by the First Press Commission, but has suggested that "the annual reports of the Press Registrar should contain data on some important aspects of the press, for example the average page level of individual publications. He should keep himself informed of all significant developments in the field of newspaper publication, including development in printing technology. It will be useful for him to have statistical and economic cells; he should also have information on the proliferation of readership of newspapers."

It is unfortunate that important subjects have been generalised, and when such things are highlighted as the average page level of individual publications or a profile of readership as important aspects of the press, attention is diverted to immaterial details. When during the last 26 years the Press Registrar has not been able to give details of the number of journalists, correspondents, reporters and members of the editorial staff and at no time this information has been made available to the Registrar even by 500 dailies, and information about news content, average pages, page area, pricing pattern and space devoted to advertisements, reading matter, photographs and printing machinery has been supplied by an even lesser number of dailies, to expect that the Press Registrar will be able to keep a profile of readership of all newspapers do not possess, is absurd. It would have been better if the Commission had directed its attention to more important problems facing the Indian language press rather than irregularity in publication or inflated figures, especially when there are no norms prescribed for calculating commission for agents and hawkers and to check the expenditure incurred to boost circulation by big newspaper organisations to the detriment of smaller newspapers.

The recommendations regarding advertisement policy are also lopsided and contradictory. At one place the Commission thinks that average page level of individual publications is an important aspect, meaning thereby that the more the pages the more useful the newspaper would be. On the other hand, it wants the advertisement policy to be linked solely with circulation. It wants Central and State Governments to place a list of newspapers in which their advertisements appear on the table of Parliament and State legislatures, together with the value of advertisement in each paper along with its circulation figure. This gives the impression that circulation should be the only criterion for placing advertisements. It is overlooked that newspapers like London *Times* and *New York Times* which have a limited circulation (by the yardstick of British and American newspapers) get much more advertisements and at higher rates than other newspapers with huge circulations published in the same cities, because of their quality and performance. Papers like the *Economist* of London which is a weekly with limited circulation perhaps get much more advertisements than any general-purpose popular weekly of Britain.

The result is that these recommendations, if taken literally, will affect quality newspapers and journals especially in the Indian languages. It may not affect the *Economic Times* and the *Financial Express* which have a rich advertisement content compared to their meagre circulations because they are supposed to be prestige papers in business as well as Government circles, but will certainly affect Indian language newspapers which try to provide coverage of specific subjects and adopt higher standards; but there is one recommendation which will affect the Indian language newspapers adversely. The summary of the recommendations says, "Only daily newspapers which subscribe to a wire service or have some other properly organised news service should be entitled to receive Government advertisements and those of public sector undertakings" This rules out advertisements to weeklies and monthlies and other periodicals.

At another place it pleads for separate rates for dailies with wire services and for those without wire services. Indian newspapers are published in more than 75 languages. Some of them depend on Government advertisements even to receive other advertisements. Ruling out advertisements for journals other than dailies will affect the progress of the press in the Indian languages and should not be accepted. The mere fact that the Government may appoint a Development Commission does not justify the observations of the Press Commission that "advertisements should not be used as a means of financial support specially in the context of our recommendations for setting up of Newspaper Development Commission."

Similarly, the recommendations on accreditation of correspondents and facilities provided to them will injure the interests of Indian language newspapers. It has said, "We recommend that no further housing facility should be provided to journalists and that the existing allotment of Government accommodation in the national capital and the States should be charged for at non-subsidised rates and phased out as the present occupants leave." K.R. Ganesh and Girilal Jain, who have generally not agreed on many matters, are united in not supporting this recommendation and they are right. A look at the list of correspondents accredited at the Central and State headquarters will show that many correspondents of Indian language papers which are not very propserous will be affected. The accreditation rules provide for accreditation to correspondents of newspapers which have a circulation of 5000 copies or even less, if two or more newspapers combine to have a common correspondent. It will not be possible even for papers with larger circulations to keep a correspondent in Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore, Hyderabad or Lucknow, if the present facility of providing Government accommodation at concessional rates is not available. Many of the harshest critics of the Government have been living in Government accommodation. Thus, this recommendation is uncalled for, and is likely to dampen the enthusiasm of newspapers in locating correspondents at important seats of governments. It will also encourage correspondents to shift to more opulent newspapers to earn a living in spite of policy restraints they may have to face. The net result will be a lessening of press freedom rather than any enlargement of it.

It is surprising that on one hand the Commission commends sale of land to newspapers at concessional price, provided it is used for the benefit of newspapers only, and even supports rental of news agency teleprinter lines under subsidy from the Government, but has qualms of conscience when the question of renting out Government accommodation to working journalists is concerned. It has produced no evidence that journalists in Government accommodation have been favourable to the Governments. If it was really so, the Central Government during Emergency would not have given notices to correspondents in Delhi to quit their houses by the end of March, 1980.

The other proposals relating to the Indian language press relate to news agencies and training. It also proposes reorganisation of the Press Information Bureau for this end. It says: "There should be thorough reorganisation of the Press Information Bureau. It should be a news service functioning day and night, with its activities streamlined in such a way that district newspapers and the Indian language press get its news releases promptly. To ensure that PIB is responsive to the needs of those sections of the press which need its services most, we recommend the formation of an Advisory Committee comprising the users of PIB services."

As for news agencies, its recommendations in Chapter XI, paras 45 to 50, are: "Ideally an Indian language news agency or a federative system which brings several language news agencies together should develop through the pooling of resources by newspapers published in Indian languages. A co-operative enterprise launched by publishers of Indian language newspapers in the manner in which PTI and UNI were formed, but with more broadbased participation, would be commendable on several counts. If, however, neither the existing agencies nor the Indian language newspapers come up with a satisfactory scheme for the provision of an efficient news service in Indian languages, we recommend that a statutory corporation should be set up".

Girilal Jain, S.K. Mukherjee and H.K. Paranjape are opposed to the idea of a statutory corporation. None of them is connected with Indian languages journalism and their opposition to a statutory corporation seems to be based on fear of Government domination. The statutory corporation idea has the support of language journalists like Rajendra Mathur (editor, *Nai Duniya*) and Ishrat Ali Siddiqi (*Qaumi Awaz*), apart from others.

It may be noted here that the formation of PTI was made possible by the efforts of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the then Home and Information Minister of India, who forced Reuter to leave the country and sell their assets in India for a mere Rs 5 lakhs to the newly-formed Press Trust of India. The assets included a plot and building on Parliament Street where now the multi-storey building of the PTI has come up and is spinning money. UNI has also been allotted land by the Government. The massive building of the Indian and Eastern Newspapers Society on Rafi Marg stands on a Government plot first offered to the Press Association. The Press Commission has also agreed unanimously that assistance from the External Affairs Ministry to PTI for posting correspondents abroad should continue. The experience of *Samachar* proved that it was a boon to Indian language journals. If the corporation idea is not acceptable, then at least PTI should be persuaded to have a language service.

Regarding training of Indian language journalists the Commission says in Chapter XII: "In view of the growth in the language press which is to be expected in the coming decades, the need to train manpower for the Indian language newspapers has particularly to be borne in mind. Exceptions apart, practical training in journalism should be imparted in an Indian language besides journalism".

It has also observed: "Training institutions, organisations of publishers and editors and the Press Council should encourage preparation of text-books in the nature of model work books which will serve as practical guides to trainee journalists, specially in Indian languages".

"Ways should be found to attract trained women journalists in larger numbers to the press, particularly Indian language newspapers, by providing facilities such as transport to their homes after late duty or night shifts.

"The research in connection with the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment brought out the limitations of centralised communication and the need, if communication is to be effective, for decentralised preparation of messages addressed to specific rural communities in the dialects which they actually speak. The findings are of relevance to the growth of the Indian language press".

Dealing with printing and other technology the Press Commission says: "While updating the teleprinter technology, the needs of various languages should be kept in mind. Government should pay particular attention to this aspect as there is generally a resistance in bureaucratic circles to technological innovations.

"Litho printing machines are the only viable proposition for small and medium Urdu newspapers, which cannot affort to acquire offset machines. But litho machines are not manufactured in the world now and the facilities for upkeep of the existing machines are not adequate. We recommend that the Government should take measures to meet the requirements of Urdu newspapers. Government should take steps to provide facilities to train katibs.

"The proposed Newspaper Development Commission should pay special attention to the development of printing and other technologies suitable for Indian press, specially Indian language and small and medium newspapers.

"The new electronic technology appears to have a clear advantage so far as composition in Indian scripts is concerned. With photo composition, matter can be composed and printed in Indian scripts without tampering with their aesthetics and integrity. But while adopting it, its physical requirements like temperature control and assured power supply, etc., and the possible impact on employment opportunity should be kept in mind and provided for".

The Commission has pinned much hope on the Newspaper Development Commission as far as development of the Indian language press is concerned. It has even suggested that the proposed Commission may handle distribution of newspapers specially in hilly, and remote areas. Therefore, much will depend on the Government's attitude towards the setting up and functioning of such a Commission. If this body falls into the hands of those whose sympathies are not with development of the Indian language Press, all this will come to nought. □

Morchas Not the Way

Ravi-Beas Waters

SATYAPAL DANG

THE December 31, 1981 agreement regarding Ravi-Beas surplus water signed by the Congress-I Chief Ministers of Punjab, Rajasthan and Haryana did evoke a negative reaction from the leadership of the Akali Dal-L, but it was in a low key. When the Prime Minister-Akali leaders talks regarding the Akali charter of 45 demands broke down, the Akali Dal announced its decision to launch an agitation against the agreement, While it surprised many, the decision caused all-round concern..

The concern increased when it was announced that the main form of agitation would be to prevent digging of the proposed Sutlej-Yamuna Link Canal (SYLC) as this was bound to lead to a confrontation between sections of people of Punjab and people of Haryana. The possibility of its leading to a worsening of the communal situation in Punjab too could not be ruled out. Naturally, the decision of the Punjab CPI-M to join the Akali Morcha was a much bigger surprise.

The CPI M advanced more than one reason to justify its decision. One was that it had prevented the Akalis from launching a morcha for religious demands and had successfully persuaded them to go in for a morcha on a purely economic issue. Credit was sought to be claimed for this "achievement" though the resolution formally deciding to launch the morcha began by talking of religious discrimination against Sikhs. Moved by an Akali leader, it had been seconded by Jagjit Singh Lyallpuri of the CPI-M.

Soon after the adoption of this resolution, Akali Dal sources "clarified', that besides its demand for the reopening of the accord on the Ravi-Beas surplus waters, the movement would include nine other demands. Among these nine were listed such religious demands as broadcasting of Gurbani from the Golden Temple and enactment of an All-India Gurdwara Act. There was also the demand for more powers for States as sought in the Anandpur Sahib resolution (for a Sikh-dominated Punjab in an India with a very weak Centre). The CPI-M and the CPI had opposed this resolution very strongly.

There was no public reaction from the CPI-M to this "clarification". The CPI-M also chose to maintain discreet silence when a top Akali leader announced that the planned movement would in fact be their *Dharamyudh.* And also when Gurucharan Singh Tohra called it India-Punjab war.

On April 24, 1982, CPI-M volunteers joined the Akali jathas at village Kapuri to prevent the digging of the canal. For various reasons, the Akali Dal decided to postpone the morcha and did not continue it after April 24. It is not known whether the CPI-M was consulted about the postponment. In any case, the announcement was not a joint one. However, indications are that the CPI-M will continue to take part in the morcha, if and when the Akalis resume it. It is therefore necessary to examine the arguments which the Akalis and the CPI-M put forward.

To be able to do that properly, some relevant facts and the background have to be kept in view.

By "surplus water" is meant water over and above that which was already being used before India's partition.

In anticipation of a treaty with Pakistan and on the assumption that Pakistan would give up its claims regarding Ravi-Beas surplus waters, an accord was reached in 1955 for sharing the same as under: Punjab 7.2 million acre feet (MAF), Rajasthan 8.0 MAF, Jammu and Kashmir 0.65 MAF (Total 15.85 MAF), Availability was calculated on the basis of the flow series of 1921-45. Total of 15.82 MAF water represented average or mean availability and not actual surplus water in any single year. Thus the 1955 agreement in fact decided the proportionate shares, actuals in any particular year depending upon the total actual surplus water that year.

Under the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960, the waters of Sutlej, Ravi and Beas became available for unrestricted use by India after March 31, 1970. For this, India had to pay Rs 100 crores to Pakistan.

Punjab was reorganised in 1966 and the separate State of Haryana came into existence. It demanded its share of the surplus Ravi-Beas waters out of composite Punjab's share. (Waters of Sutlej had already been planned to be utilised fully). In March, 1976, the Government of India issued an order dividing old Punjab's share of 7.2 MAF as below: Haryana 3 5 MAF, Delhi 0.2 MAF, Punjab: balance not exceeding 3 5 MAF. In case of less availability, shortage was to be borne by Punjab. Haryana's share was not to be decreased. Arrived at under the influence of Bansilal, the decision caused widespread resentment in Punjab. All political parties of Punjab opposed it. Giani Zail Singh was at that time Punjab's Chief Minister. He informed the Punjab Vidhan Sabha that he had requested the Government of India to reconsider its order. However, his Government accepted rupees one crore from Haryana towards digging the Punjab portion of the SYLC.

After the 1977 elections, Parkash Singh Badal became Punjab's Chief Minister. His Government accepted another one crore rupees towards canal expenses. The preliminary notification to acquire land for the canal was also issued by his Government. Further, it was announced that construction work on the SYLC in Punjab territory would be inaugurated by Badal and the function would be presided over by Devi Lal, the then Chief Minister of Haryana. It seems there was strong opposition from within the ruling Akali Party and the construction work never started.

Badal requested the then Prime Minister to reopen the matter. Morarji Desai agreed to review the case but refused to make any change in the order. Surjeet Singh Barnala of the Akali Dal was Minister for Agriculture in his Government.

The Haryana Government went to the Supreme Court with the prayer that it should order the Punjab Government to implement the 1976 order. The Punjab Government headed by Badal filed a counter-case to get the 1976 order declared null and void. The Government of India brought about an out-of-court agreement on December 31, 1981, replacing the 1976 order. In view of this agreement, the Court dismissed all the cases before it, though the Akali leaders had made an application that the cases should not be allowed to be withdrawn.

The CPI-M-led Kisan Sabha has challenged the legal validity of the December 1981 agreement in the Punjab and Haryana High Court. The case is still pending.

The agreement states that according to flow series of 1921-60 (mean) surplus Ravi-Beas water is 17.17 MAF (as against 15.85 MAF according to 1921-45 flow series). Mean supply of 17.17 MAF has been allocated as under: Punjab 4.22 MAF, Haryana 3.50 MAF, Rajasthan 8.60 MAF; Delhi 0.2 MAF; Kashmir 0.65 MAF. Shares of Delhi and Kashmir are not variable. Shares of others would increase or decrease depending upon how much surplus water is actually available.

According to the 1976 order, distribution of water between Punjab and Haryana was at best in the ratio of 50:50. The new ratio is 55:45 permanently and 58:42 till such time as Rajasthan is able to make use of the extra water allotted to it. From the viewpoint of Punjab, the new agreement obviously is better than the 1976 order. The fact, however, remains that the opposition parties were not associated or consulted at any stage before the agreement was signed. The matter was treated as if it concerned only the Congress-I. One reason was the then pending elections in Haryana and the narrow partisan electoral interests of the Congress-I. If the (mean) share of Haryana was to be decreased even marginally from 3.5 MAF, the Congress-I might suffer in the elections.

Let us now examine the main arguments being advanced by the Akalis and the CPI-M in support of their contention that even the new agreement does gross injustice to Punjab (and, according to Akalis, particularly to Sikhs).

1. The Akali leaders have been asserting that Rajasthan is not entitled to any share because it is not a riparian State. In support of this, they cite international law and conventions. They forget the "small" fact that Punjab and Rajasthan are not different countries. They also overlook the following:(a) Even before partition, Rajasthan was getting water from Punjab through the Bikaner Canal. (b) Without taking into account the need of Rajasthan for water from Punjab rivers, India could not have justified its demand for all the surplus water during Indo-Pak negotiations. The not-so-small amount of Rs 100 crores was given to Pakistan out of the national exchequer. (c) Rajasthan has to bear 60 per cent of the expenditure on Pong Dam and 20 per cent of the Beas Sutlej Link. (d) The Akali leaders themselves did not raise any objection to Rajasthan's share till very recently.

The Akali leaders also make the point that Rajasthan should not have been allotted at least the additional 0.6 MAF water under the new agreement. This is not a very big quantity and in any case for many years it will be utilised by Punjab. Differences regarding this can and should be settled through negotiations. They do not justify a morcha which will divide the people.

It is true that the CPI-M has not come out against Rajasthan getting any share. But it is also true that it has not come out against the Akali stand. And the official organ of the Punjab CPI-M reproduced extracts from an article of Manjeit Singh Khera which supported the Akali stand though not in so many words (April 24, 1982).

2. Both the Akalis and the CPI-M argue that the ratio of shares of Punjab and Haryana should be 60:40. In this connection, they always refer to the Punjab Reorganisation Act of 1966. Actually this Act does not provide this ratio as far a surplus waters are concerned. This ratio was provided for division of some other types of assets which were not of very great value. As far as surplus waters are concerned, the Act does not lay down any ratio or even any criteria. It leaves the matter to be decided mutually by the States concerned and failing that by the Government of India.

Many argue that water is on a different footing from ordinary assets. Some would consider the geographical/cultivable area of the two States to be the correct basis. This ratio is 53:47. Some others would want population ratio to be the basis. According to the 1981 Census, this ratio is 56:44. Still others would argue that the need of the States concerned and the interests of the country as a whole should also be taken into consideration. It is pointed out that percentage of net area irrigated to net area sown is the highest in Punjab.

Differences in this regard can and must be resolved through negotiations.

3. Some Akali leaders have argued that Yamuna water should also be taken into account. In reply it is pointed out that if *total* shares of the two States from all the four rivers including Yamuna were taken into account, the ratio would be 55:45 for 1980-81.

4. The most important argument of Akali and CPI-M leaders runs as under: "When SYLC is constructed, Haryana will get 3.5 MAF water out of the water which in actual practice Punjab is at present utilising — whether its own share or someone else's share. No extra water will become available. Water which at present flows to Pakistan will continue to go to that country till the Thein Dam is constructed. It is therefore certain that lakhs of acres of Punjab land in parts of Faridkot, Bhatinda, Sangrur and Patiala districts will go dry".

The argument has many flaws: *Firstly*, if for any reason any of the States concerned has not been able to use its full share and the unutilised part of its share has been fully or partly used by Punjab, it would not be a justification to deny the former its full share in the future too. Of course, a way out should be found to ensure that Punjab's economy is not hit. This again should be a matter of discussions in a calm atmosphere. *Secondly*, the argument does not take into account the following: (i) The actual share of Haryana in any particular year from Ravi-Beas surplus water would depend on the total actual surplus. If the total is less than 17.17 MAF, Haryana's share would not be 3.5 MAF but less. (ii) Haryana is already getting water in excess of its entitlement from Sutlej waters. This excess would be counted towards Haryana's share under (i) and additional water to be given to Haryana would decrease to that extent. (iii) With the construction of the SYLC, we would be in a position to utilise a part of the water now going to Pakistan. (Of course, its full utilisation will be possible only after the Thein Dam is completed.)

Taking everything into consideration, Punjab is not likely to suffer to any great extent.

According to figures available with the Punjab Government, actual net surplus Ravi-Beas water (excluding pre-partition use and waste) for 1980-81 was 11.65 MAF. Out of this Punjab actually used 3.62 MAF. Haryana got a total of 4.87 MAF out of waters of three Punjab rivers. Its entitlement out of Sutlej waters was 3.17 MAF. Thus Haryana got 1.70 MAF against its share in Ravi-Beas surplus waters.

If the December 1981 agreement had come into force and if the SYLC had already been constructed, the picture would have been as follows: (i) Out of 11.65 MAF, Haryana's share would be 2.5 MAF. Having already got 1.7 MAF, it could claim only 0.8 MAF more. (ii) Out of 11.65 Punjab's own share would be 3.00 MAF. It would be entitled to use 0.44 MAF of Rajasthan's share. It would thus get 3.44 MAF as against 3.72 MAF it actually utilised, that is, a shortage of 0.18 MAF, even if no part of water gone waste was to become availabie for utilisation. It is claimed by the Government side that out of wastage, 1.47 MAF would have become available for utilisation while 1.2 MAF would have continued to flow to Pakistan. Out of this 1.47 MAF additional surplus water, Punjab's share would have been 0.37 MAF.

If these figures are correct, it becomes clear that the cry of lakhs of acres of Punjab land going dry is unwarranted. To say the least, it is grossly exaggerated. If the figures are doctored and are therefore challenged, the dispute has to be resolved through negotiations and with the help of impartial experts. Such matters cannot be resolved through confrontation between people of neighbouring States. Morchas on such issues can only complicate matters.

An effective morcha in Punjab on the Ravi-Beas waters issue would inevitably lead to counter-morchas in Haryana and Rajasthan. That would divide the common people, and State units of most parties will get ranged on opposite sides. In Punjab, separatist forces will exploit the agitation and it may result in worsening of the communal situation. It will weaken the growing struggles of the toilers against the anti-people policies of the Government of India and of the State Governments. It will harm the cause of national integration. Even in relation to the matter in dispute, the Central Government is likely to be in a stronger position to dictate as a result of the morchas and countermorchas.

It is painful that the CPI-M should have joined such a morcha. It is to be hoped that the CPI-M, instead of joining the morcha, will join hands with the CPI to mobilise public opinion to force the Government of India to call an all-parties meeting at all-India level but including the Akalis to thrash out differences in a calm atmosphere and also to force it to ensure early construction of the Thein Dam.

With the election battle in Haryana over, it should not be impossible to force the Congress-I leadership to treat the matter as a national issue and not as a party affair. The Akalis too have to be forced to give up chauvinist slogans and not to treat the matter as a handle for narrow partisan interests. (*May 21*).

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Rational Basis for a New Society

J.C. KAPUR

The author, Jagdish Chandra Kapur, is a versatile industrial manager and an innovative entrepreneur. He is known for his practical experiments in creating an integrated energy system for rural development at the Solar Farms he founded in the Union Territory of Delhi. He has also been connected with the Nuclear Energy Society, the Indian Standards Institution, the International Solar Energy Society and other organisations. His latest book, *India: An Uncommitted Society* (Vikas, Rs. 75), is a study of uncommitted societies in general and how they can evolve new modes of economic functioning, complementarity of economies and ways for peaceful transformation of human society. By "uncommitted" he means basically not-committed to the consumerist value system which has been the bane of the past. The book has just been released, and we here publish one chapter from it which is of immediate relevance to the ongoing discussion on India's development.—Editor

In absolute terms, India today possesses the world's ninth largest techno-industrial infrastructure. It has the third largest managerial cadre and trained manpower, one of the world's largest markets, fairly comfortable food reserves, a stable economy and adequate fossil fuel resources. It also possesses the world's highest availability and concentration of solar power and livestock population, which can enable it to build a decentralised energy and techno-economic system for its over half a million villages.

Far from using these opportunities for a massive thrust forward, many Indians have ignored the alarm signals and the inherent compulsions within its socio-economic system. In this process they have not only managed to confuse its objectives but have shaken the faith of the people in the system and those who run it.

But much that distorted our visions of the future all these years may soon pass into history. Something entirely new will have of necessity to emerge to replace the consumerist culture. What this will be is the greatest question mark of our times. Will it be based on justice, power or vested interests? Who will provide the moral leadership and have the dimension to transmit an integrated human vision of a new kind of progress to a tired and sick humankind?

At this juncture in time, India is among the few countries which stand at the threshold of a new kind of leap forward into the future. But she has first to extricate herself from the illusion that what is happening elsewhere is progress. She can neither go back to her past nor race towards a borrowed future. Her destiny will be determined by the continuity of her history and culture. Her wisdom will be just as important as knowledge. It will depend upon her traditional ability to synthesise material welfare with social obligations and psychic evolution. But before India can set out to provide such a leadership she has to disown the Caesars who have conditioned her thoughts over the recent centuries.

The usurpation or domination of every aspect of human endeavour and the forcible acquisition or transference of most of the fruits, privileges and patronage of all such activities by those who control the politico-economic processes is the greatest impediment in the path of organisation of a just and equitable society. When a minimum of discipline and qualifications permit acquiring maximum rewards, acquiring the qualities on which the foundation of a society rests declines.

Irrespective of how many people exercise their franchise, any system of social organisation wherein every segment of society cannot escape the dominant trends in consumption patterns, or wherein minorities are subjected to racial or religious hatred, ceases to be democratic.

Up to a point the consumerist modes of production broaden the base of welfare and professionalisation in a democratic structure, but when the last stage of consumerism, with inbuilt processes of waste and destruction of the environment, takes over these become contradictions in terms and a confrontation between the democratic processes and the imperatives of consumerism develops.

Also in these last stages of consumerism the controllers of the techno-economic processes determine the contours of a society, but for all others the will to life takes precedence over the will to power. The voice of those who think is drowned by that of those who do not. This leaves all classes alike at the mercy of unscrupulous political exploitation and covert operations, for all political effort lacking a philosophical basis becomes merely opportunistic.

We made a beginning when Mahatma Gandhi projected a vision of non-violent, self-contained rural republics in terms of his own reaction to the Indian ethos. This view is now accepted by many thinkers around the world as a possible framework for escape from the consumerist jungle. Nehru projected another vision of modern India as a society protected from the confrontations inherent in systems which through the acquisition of world-wide resources set out to achieve and sustain wide differentials between and within different techno-economic systems. But in the continuity that is India, Gandhi and Nehru, like many others before them, illumined the pathways in periods of discontinuity and change. And they, like the eras they represented, have passed into history.

We are today the ringside observers of receding civilisations built on greed, guilt and genocide. India is fortunate in that long before her irrevocable commitment to a way of life the paralysis of will of the consumerist society has begun, and its distorted face is there for all to see. Through constantly relating these visions to the changing realities of India and the world, through an unshakable commitment to the Indian ideal of the unity of all life, India could collect the scattered but still visible remnants of those ideals which from time to time her great thinkers endeavoured to relate to her problems and environment. This is the only hope to wean her away from the short-lived but blissfully mystifying influence of a dying culture.

In this lies India's opportunity and hope. The shattering dreams of a dying culture, the search for new visions of an integrated life, her infrastructure of modernity and unfulfilled Gandhian dream of rural republics, her roots in the past and, thanks to Nehru, over a half century of broad-based contact with the world of the late 20th Century. And above all her people, intelligent, sensitive.

Only a leadership that can conceptualise a new framework for India in the world environment and will in these trying times have political support and the will and capacity for total renunciation, can launch India on the chosen path of stability and welfare. Otherwise, she will move from one crisis of confidence and egoism to another.

The statistical signs of hopelessness and despair of the Indian condition only signify her freedom to act and are becoming the rays of hope for tomorrow. Only if the elite could cast aside the veil from its eyes and see that there is much more to life and to India than the statistic of poverty, and that there is much more to the world-wide crisis than energy.

In surveying the territory of her future, she has been looking at the distant mountain peaks of consumerism and has projected her helplessness, and now with the shifting sands they can see that this was all an illusion. But there are many who still have their eyes and minds set on the consumerist mirage and cannot see the urban dungheaps of the 20th Century the country is being swept into.

But in spite of all the negative factors India is one of the major countries with a potential to make a transformation to sanity. She has many options still open, but will she have the strength of will and agility to develop, in the words of Kirkegaard, "passion of the possible" in the universal sense against the illusions of a civilisation in rapid decay and retreat? The stability of India arose from the unbroken chain of continuity. Born out of a concern for eternity and indifference to time it kept her firmly wedded to major human concerns and relationships.

But to step out of a cooperative society in centuries of decay and to relate it to the symbols and values of a consumer society has been a painful and destabilising process. The voices of dreamers, thinkers and visionaries have been drowned by the purveyor of consumerist utopias. The chain of unbroken continuity is being corroded by the lack of total vision, long-term objective and a sense of direction. But as Coomaraswamy said: "He who knows not whither he saileth, knows not which is a fair or foul wind for him."

The task before India therefore is: ... to relate the continuity of centuries to orderly intensification of the developmental or modernisation processes. This would involve the integration of the basic human values, with the compulsions and the demands which the successful emergence of a techno-economic system impose on the human system. The maintenance of human identity in the midst of defacing and dehumanising pressures imposed by the concepts of duality will become a prerequisite for the emergence of a new social order. With irreversible and aggregating pressures the consumerist techno-economic systems are in a state of rapid decline. This points towards new designs for living. The existing assumptions, goals, strategies and tools are not just becoming obsolete but are disintegrating so rapidly that everybody is becoming disoriented.

Many frameworks have been presented and promoted as a basis for Indian development: The models are as far apart as outright nationalisation to the handing over of the industrial economy to multinationals. There are promoters of Japanese, North Korean, Signapore, Brazilian, Chinese approaches, and an entire variety of others. There are many others who recommend the Gandhian, the world order and zero growth models.

Limitless other possibilities are thrown in from within India and friendly or unfriendly proponents abroad. Each of the models may have risen from zero to considerable merit, but in terms of the totality of the Indian problem, and the environment and the realities within which such development has to take place, there are many consequential questions which need to be raised and answered before a total and irreversible commitment can be made to any particular techniques of development.

A mixed economy created a broad consensus within the system and for a time contributed considerably in enlarging the base of the basic as well as consumer industries and agriculture. When the system was laying its foundations and creating an infrastructure, there were relatively fewer contradictions to cope with. Even the low technology rural sector progressed because of the relatively lower level of cultural penetration in the rural areas.

As the effects of such development started penetrating the structure of society and communications improved, many contradictions became apparent and created widespread instabilities in the socio-politico-techno-economic system. These were the instabilities of rising expectations, widening income differentials, fast increasing unemployment, massive urbanisation and cultural penetration by consumerist ideas, emergence of new power centre to cope with. In recent years, the changing balance of world power, big-power confrontation and the armaments race, technological imperatives and the energy and resources crises have added another dimension to world-wide and Indian insecurities. And this has also exposed the vulnerability and raised questions about the validity of most techniques of development, particularly those in a state of aggregating crisis.

With minor shifts in emphasis from time to time, the country has continued on this path since Independence. Any attempt to bring about structural changes in any of the parameters to correct the imbalances, be it in the form of land reforms or population control, constitutional changes for minor political restructuring, protection of cottage or small-scale industries or limiting expansion of larger industries, devaluation of currency, holding the price line for agricultural produce or introduction of computers in inefficient services, disciplining of some sectors to achieve high-technology objectives, gave serious jolts to the system. The farther India moved on the path of development the more constrained became its ability to bring about radical changes in the patterns of development. It had to suffer the consequences of the path of development it had chosen and live with its limitation.

The system thus lost its forward thrust, and reached a state of chronic imbalance at the same time. It can no longer reorient itself with minor shifts in emphasis, and broad-ranging structural changes and a higher level of commitment are called for. But before the country can even begin to approach such issues and create a national consensus on its objectives and role in the new world it must attain conceptual clarity on the issues at stake such as:

India's position in the economic crisis and armed confrontation of the superpowers and other world powers. The widening cracks in the worldwide resource and energy infrastructure are leading to an armaments race, terrorism, covert operations and intervention in the affairs of others. How does India assure its safety and security in this environment?

Can India launch herself on the consumerist road, the root cause of such a crisis, when energywise and resourcewise it cannot even sustain the present levels of urbanisation and development? Are the needs of decentralisation compatible with the needs of modernity, growth and correct international posture?

All knowledge of sciences and techniques is the human heritage. It is as much a part of human culture as the arts, philosophy and religion. But the institutions the greed of man has created for their exploitation should be a cause of concern. Vested interests are now subconsciously manoeuvring these very institutions for a leap to death. Should we accept or bemoan those institutions or project our future towards new paths with new institutions?

In the concluding decades of the 20th Century can we disown all known techniques for the alleviation of human suffering and for human betterment and revert to less tried and less acceptable techniques in today's environment? Many such techniques are propagated as part of the Gandhian model, zero economic growth and return-to-the-village slogans. How do we relate India to the present environment and compulsions with such techniques?

In other words, can we survive as a low-energy, low-technology society? Can we aim at a high-energy, high-technology society for safety and security and meet the need for resources? Can India align herself or become a follower of declining power centres because a few people in this country advocate such a course?

Will it be in our interest to encourage the penetration of the multinationals at the structural levels of the economy? Can we contain the further acceleration of disparities and avoid political manipulation of the nation?

Can anybody see 60 to 80 per cent of India's expected population of about 950 million people by the year 2000 living in the culturally uprooted environment of a megalopolis in various stages of decay? Is the cultural disorientation of India the price to be paid for such development and, if so, where are the resources even to conceptualise such a possibility?

How do we propose to provide welfare if two-thirds of this population live in rural communities? To design a new socio-techno-economic system of this magnitude within a compulsive time scale will be a problem of colossal magnitude.

It will be necessary to project new visions, seek new directions and assess our advantages in creating a new socio-techno-economic environment more harmoniously related to the emerging realities. Only those who can retain their sanity in a world fast denuded of its energy and resources, caught in the cobwebs of duality, of mindless violence and purposeless life, can hope to attain such transformation.

If the imperatives of new sources of energy and the intricate web of Indian society are any indication, pressures towards decentralisation of the techno-economic infrastructure will mount. These will fit like hand and glove with the Indian ethos, with India's geographic and resource pattern and a strong chain of continuity in Indian society. In other words, the need is to build from the bottom, where the problems are, upward rather than export the problems to urban centres and try to solve them in reverse.

The new sources of energy — sun, wind, biomass and waste recycling — are all compulsively oriented towards decentralisation, which in terms of India and most other developing societies means relating them to an adaptive and friendly environment with a minimum of dislocation and social reorganisation, yet at the same time enlarging the productive, economic and welfare base of the community. Society will have to evolve its own social mechanism to establish a synthesis with an age-old culture to protect it from the corruptive, hypnotising and destructive influences of unrestrained consumerism. India is among the few countries in this category which can answer such a call.

In every conceivable term—psychic, emotional, intellectual and material — this could be expected or asked for from India, which though unbelievably old yet at the same time is incredibly young. The chasm between age and youth, the hallmark of a decadent, acquisitive society, has hardly touched the shores of the real India. This integrated wisdom and energy, relatively less disabled by the process of duality, can still stem the declining vision towards a sane future.

It is increasingly realised that the use-value production techniques Gandhi advocated, transformed in terms of today's realities, could make an important contribution to retreat from the final stages of consumerism. This would however only be possible if:

— Technical modernisation of use-value economies could take place involving creative decentralised energy and technology infrastructure for rural communities.

— Stable linkages to protect the use-value productive processes from being swamped by the aggressive postures of commodity-centred processes.

The consumerist, commodity-centred techniques of production build high wage incentives into the productive processes, thus starting an irreversible trend towards the enlargement of commodity-centred production at the cost of use-value-centred activity. This can only be reversed through the reversal of incentives and introduction of equitable linkages between the two systems, one largely rural-based and the other largely urban-based. This would perhaps be the most logical 21st Century approach to modernity.

Uncommitted societies like China and India, largely because of their social organisation, the rural concentration of their population and comparatively much lower level of commitment to the industrial or consumerist mode of production, and above all their size and over one-third of world population, can provide the obvious experimental ground for the success of such an endeavour.

The tragedy in the Indian context has been that Gandhi's followers did not translate Gandhian thought to cope with the challenges of the late 20th Century. They worked under the misconception that Gandhi represented a return to backwardness. But he was not averse to modern means so long as these did not destroy the content of use-value-centred productive processes and these were not merely a stepping stone towards consumerist modes of production, particularly as applicable to basic commodities.

According to Ivan Illich, one of the greatest hurdles in the stable organisation of use-value-productive processes is the growing influence of the specialists in the consumerist processes. "The specialists who now dominate the creation, adjudication and implementation of needs are a kind of cancer without a precedent. They are more deeply entrenched than a Byzantine bureaucracy, more international than a world church, more stable than any labour union, with a tighter hold than any Mafia. Professionals tell you what you need and claim the power to present it to you."

The use-value, non-consumerist technique of production can only take off when the consumer can exercise the autonomy to consume or not to consume and yet survive in socio-economic and psychic terms in the prevalent system of social organisation or else the change of the system will become a prerequisite for the organisation of a use-value-centred productive process. Identification of the thresholds beyond which tools become oriented towards consumerist production therefore becomes imperative.

India obviously requires many techno-economic processes, which by their very nature would need planning, centralisation and techniques of advanced management. Many individuals with a knowledge of special techniques are required to operate such a system. This does not mean that they should be placed on a high pedestal and given incentives quite out of proportion to the rest of the society, as if they are making a special sacrifice in acquiring new knowledge.

Massive profits to the owners of enterprises, inequitable incentives to managers and operators, and attaching special values and symbols to the processes of consumption, are important contributory factors in accelerating the processes of consumerism. One by one, the tools in use cross the point of social criticality and intervene in social arrangements within a community, thus affecting its culture and distribution of political power and always working and exerting pressures in favour of the industrial mode of production.

This is an important cut-off point, to be managed either through tools, new social arrangements or incentives. It has to be understood that when a society launches on accelerating the productive processes through new tools it is performing many functions: (1) Investing in capital-incentive tools. (2) Making obsolete existing skills and training operators to handle new tools. (3) Possibly throwing many operators out of work. (4) In all likelihood converting hard physical labour by many into machine-watching by a few. (5) Destroying the crafts of the community and making craftsmen an unnecessary appendage of the social organisation. When technologies cross the threshold of the use-value system of production in such an environment, if there is inadequate regulation of the incentives between the use-value and commodity-centred systems, regression of the use-value system and unrestrained growth of consumerism commences.

India's techno-economic and social development will have to follow many parallel streams, including the enlargement of the techno-economic base of rural communities with new and renewable sources of energy supplemented with fossil fuels, medium-energy agriculture, and an infrastructure for employment in agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry and craft-based industries.

An entire spectrum of technologies — high, medium and low in terms of appropriateness — will have to be adopted. But the social organisation will have to restrict the diversion of incentives towards high-energy, high-technology processes. The level of energy and technology used in a productive endeavour should be a social decision, and the multipliers and surpluses created in such a system should, instead of disturbing the balance and starting a trend towards higher and higher technologies, as is the case in most consumerist societies, create incentives for the use of appropriate technologies.

This would help balance the techno-economic system and contain the relentless pressures towards acquiring continously aggregating incentives within the system. This would also contain the trend towards socially irresponsible, economically counter productive, ecologically disastrous, high-energy, high-technology system leading up to the points of outright reversal in terms of socio-economic costs. These modern, integrated, self-contained rural communities will be the hallmark of the world of the 21st Century. And India has most of her options open to develop such communities without an outright reversal of the present techno-economic trends.

Development also includes a high-energy, high-technology centralised infrastructure of basic metals, energy, construction, chemical and other industries and research effort to support the decentralised sector of the economy, as also defence, transport and communication. This sector will have largely to be socially controlled though not necessarily socially owned. The incentive for those operating this sector, would have of necessity to compensate economic risk, long years of training, living in a centralised, ecologically hazardous and alienated environment. But the outer limits of the incentives will have to be restricted to contain the exodus of talents to the centralised urban sector. There are few parallels for such development elsewhere, and its success would rest on India's ability to establish adequate and viable linkages to synthesise the two parallel techno-economic streams into a mutually supporting, as against mutually destructive, whole. And the farther we are from the realities of today's world the more relevant can we be to the new world taking birth.

India has vast manpower resources, both in numbers and quality. The aggregating numbers have added to her problems, that is not permitting the processes of social welfare to overtake the demands made on the socio-economic system, thus creating an economy of shortages, inflation, pre-emption of the benefits or welfare by new, increasing disparities and social tensions. It is reinforcing deep-seated impressions of helplessness in dealing with problems of colossal magnitude and encouraging trends of self above society, thus further aggregating the very same processes.

To cope with the growing disorientation brought about by uncontrolled growth of population and its consequences, the bureaucratic system, while proliferating faster than the population or the economy, has become increasingly rigid, inefficient, unsympathetic and corrupt. Largely taking advantage of the socio-political trends and the opportunities inherent in the situation, everybody has got into the act to get his share of the spoils. Salary and perquisites are only a retainer fee, the real benefits accruing in the exercise of political or economic authority, howsoever minuscule. Even the humblest job in the structure of power and bureaucracy therefore provides both security and opportunity, a combination unknown in most other professions or areas of opportunity.

To meet the rising demands of this inflating bureaucracy, direct and indirect taxation is being forced beyond the point of counter productivity by transforming national resources into a fairly respectable parallel or untaxed money economy. This is bringing about profound changes in the socio-economic system. It is squeezing out the elements of idealism, honesty and integrity and thus any hope for orderly transformation within the framework of urban-based centralised social organisations. It is eliminating the middle classes, usually the bastion of stability in societies, particularly hierarchical societies. A few instances of upward mobility in this group are enough to push the rest on the downward path by generating centrifugal forces within it.

It has also shifted the emphasis from investment in productive enterprises to generate employment and wealth to properties and speculative activities. Uncontrolled and blatant generation of fictitious wealth of such magnitude is striking at the very foundations of the economic system. Large percentage of the urban population is being manoeuvred out of its security through these processes of manipulation. The rural-urban shift is acting as a conduit to transfer many of these trends, instabilities and unrest into the rural areas.

While many of these trends may explode as a consequence of market pressures, they will bring about in their wake irreversible changes in the system and psyche of the people. The power centres seeking redress will proliferate to a point that it will become impossible to neutralise them through local, regional or national action. Decentralisation of the socio-economic system will become compulsive even to begin to approach such large multiplicity and variety of issues and problems.

In this world-wide ferment of the late 20th Century there is no valid system of authority here or elsewhere which can control, direct or create new social organisations. Destruction of existing systems is possible, but creation of new ones outside the inherent compulsions is not.

The negative aspects of large and proliferating population are obvious. The social frame within which we have been endeavouring to bring about radical changes on such a scale have proved totally inadequate, and have in fact compounded the problems manifold and increased the uncertainty and risks in the situation.

The decentralised polycultural population linked through the hidden bonds of the Indian psyche, is one great asset for continuity, stability and orderly change. The capacity to absorb shocks displayed at regular intervals all through history is one of the great sources of strength and a protective veneer. All peripheral social delinquency ultimately gets sucked into the ocean of the Indian reality and loses its structure, form and movement. The metropolis of today will become the Angkor Wat of tomorrow, lost in the cycles of Indian eternity. The strength of India has always been her total indifference to time and her undying concern for eternity. Her subconscious, intuitive links with reality have ever been the foundation of the Indian psyche, rarely understood but always present.

On the other hand, the structure of affluence has its foundation built on the physical sciences and the duality between physical and psychic. After centuries of experimentation, search and transfer of this knowledge to material advancement, the message reaching the highest forums of science is that the search for the next stage of advance must return to man himself, because he in fact is that reality — "Thou art that", the lesson every Indian learns even as a child. This vast manpower subconsciously imbued with what the fraternity of science learns at the frontiers of new knowledge could be a major factor in assuring the continuity of what the Indian elite was ready to trade off with decaying consumerism.

On the material plane a wide variety of attributes, talents, markets and resources can be harnessed to further the objectives of welfare in a new, integrated framework more related to the path of continuity and stability and less to dynamism and explosion. The containment of infant mortality through the use of new medicines and techniques has contributed greatly to the increase of population in developing countries such as India.

Survival of the fittest also means the body's immunity from disease and reduced use of drugs. This has now been altered to an increased dependence on drugs and the disturbance of the natural balance in the human system. However, no acceptable and reliable system of reduction of births has yet been devised, nor the social consequences of uncontrolled permissiveness ascertained. Can a permissive society and orderliness go together? Permissiveness is all engulfing, it cannot be contained in narrow boundaries.

The net ecological and developmental effect of population increase is marginal compared with the proliferation of consumerist products. The resources, energy and environmental costs of adding 30 million new automobiles is at least ten times greater than the same number of new births. This is not a justification for uncontrolled population growth, but population control alone is not enough. We need new lifestyles.

Trained manpower has drawn its sustenance from the fountainhead of consumerism. As the Indian imperatives will not permit the unrestrained growth of consumerist institutions, the search for new directions has become compulsive. India has enough material resources to create a society without want, a welfare society forever dedicated to seeking the meaning and purpose of life. This indeed appears to be the only answer to centuries of aimless drift to a decline of vision, destruction and chaos.

India is well endowed with resources essential to human survival, even those which are becoming a cause for concern in affluent societies.

In spite of heavy pollution in the major urban centres, the quality of air in most of India remains relatively clear of lethal wastes.

The underdeveloped groundwater of the Indo-Gangetic plain is one of India's great resources. Her rivers cover vast areas and have for millenniums brought posperity to large sections of the country. But, above all, nature's great boon, the monsoon, which bestows on India a yearly blessing of hundreds of millions of cubic metres of water, washing her mountains, fields, deserts and shores, can be harnessed with known techniques.

After centuries of neglect, India's soil is being transformed to achieve enhanced productivity. The efforts of the last three decades, supported by natural factors, are reflected in increased productivity and reduced dependence on others. Many future transformations would still be necessary to reduce the impact of soil destroying and polluting remedies and to rebuild the soil in neglected areas with ecologically non-destructive techniques. Here again our marginal commitment to such techniques gives hope for ecological sanity and increased productivity at the same time.

While the prospects of achieving high levels of self-sufficiency in the production of oil and other non-renewable energy sources in the 1980s to sustain India's infrastructure of basic industries and to expand it to meet her projected requirements, appear to be bright, her greatest strength and hope lies in the new and renewable energy sources. With a minimum commitment to the high-energy infrastructure, with a decentralised population pattern, with the high intensity of solar radiation throughout the country most of the year makes, this is the most abundant and inexhaustible source of energy obvious for India.

There is no existing energy infrastructure in rural India of any consequence and she can therefore innovate appropriate technologies to build a new infrastructure to exercise the solar option to maximum advantage, at minimum cost. In creating a new infrastructure for the solar age, we shall elevate the already decentralised rural communities to the new status of integrated, self-contained, humane communities of the future. An unfulfilled dream of the visionaries of the future, a new energy source, a new socio-techno-economic infrastructure, a new blood-stream in the arteries of age-old continuity awaiting to be rejuvenated by the sun it has worshipped for millenniums. In this process, the innovative capabilities of hundreds of millions of people for constructive action will be released.

Recycling of animal, plant and human waste through scientifically devised systems for generating energy in the form of methane gas and soil-sustaining effluents is another area of considerable potential. There are large untapped resources to be brought into service in a decentralised rural society while affluent societies in an energy straitjacket are concerned largely with salvaging their own highly centralised oil-based energy infrastructures. India can move right on towards creating new energy links between sun and soil.

For integrated development of this type, tools have to be placed in focus. Energy and tools are twins. Tools only optimise use of energy. The energy of coal was optimised through the steam engine, and that of oil through the internal combustion engine. Appropriate technologies cannot be innovated without first placing the dominant source or combination of sources of energy in the correct perspective. In an agricultural community with a high incidence of solar radiation, the role of this source of energy for cooking — constituting some 50 per cent of the total energy used — and drying crops could be an important consideration. The availability of animal and plant waste will provide the basis for generating methane to operate machinery, lighting and some cooking and soil improvement with slurry from biogas plants.

Combination of the two sources could help meet a broad spectrum of needs of such a rural community. It would set energywise sustainable, technologically feasible limits on the entire socio-economic process and the extent and nature of the use of human and animal power and the range of extension of human capabilities.

It would help release the innovative capabilities of the entire community and give it ability and freedom to recognise the point beyond which tools would interfere with social arrangements and create compulsions for higher energy concentrations, thus disturbing the balance in the energy system and destroy the twin-sisterly relationship between the available sources of energy and tools in use. In the emerging societies of the future, choice of the dominant energy source and range of tools in use will become major social decisions, whether exercised at an individual, community, State or national level.

The areas of development requiring high energy concentrations will have to function under a different set of compulsions, a high level of social organisation and discipline. Apart from the complexities inherent in energy systems and matching technologies, the questions of international availability and social consequences, both intended and unintended, become an important factor in all such considerations. And if such a system is linked with the world trade and the defence system, which in other words means the consumerist orientation of the sector of the economy, the technological differentials and consequent disturbances between the international system and within the national system become difficult to contain. Realisation of a higher level of welfare, except within the framework of the existing institutions, now in rapid decline, becomes difficult even to conceptualise.

How to lay the foundations of the integrated rural communities of the future and save them from the approaching havoc brought about by the rapidly obsolescent energy, technology and human infrastructure, is perhaps the most important issue which should concern thinkers and leaders of uncommitted societies. Before we can even begin to approach this we must however build buffers between the international system and the national high-energy, high-technology infrastructures. At the same time we must retain objectivity in national terms, another important task facing the political processes.

Convergence of international corporate monopolies at the deep structural levels of the society without adequate and enforceable safeguards against their influence can be disastrous to attaining these objectives. To earn foreign exchange through international remittances, the floodgates of inflation have been opened and the orderly growth of the urban system barred. Once such intrusions take place there will be no retreat from the synthetic modernity of consumer societies. Any arrangement to achieve a balance between high-energy, high-technology centres and integrated rural communities will become unsustainable. And this will be to the detriment of the interests of the large mass of people and unplanned drift towards an uncertain and insecure future.

Whose future are we conjecturing? If only the elite would project an image of it and the power structure delivers it, the future would be like somebody else's, born out of somebody else's compulsions, transmitted through somebody else's instruments, geared for somebody's profit, and will project somebody else's insecurities. It may only meet goals of output and consumption.

The true future can however only emerge if people do not just consume but participate in the productive processes and develop capabilities to innovate improved tools and satisfy their creative urges. These decisions have moved away from the people in the rural areas in developing countries with the aggregation of concentrated high-energy, high-technology systems.

Wherever commitments to a dominant energy source reach a point of no return because of increasing pressures on the existing infrastructure, the regression of the socio-economic systems begins. There will now emerge a trend towards the use of decentralised renewable energy sources. Whatever may happen in the short term, the long-term consequences of an energy shift cannot be escaped. Compulsion for such a shift will provide the necessary psychological environment for change. The innovation of appropriate tools will be another consequence.

The highest socio-economic multipliers can only be achieved through:

— The optimisation of new decentralised energy systems through research and development. These new energy sources or combination of these sources may very widely on a regional or even community basis between solar, wind, biomass — all manifestations of the central source, the energy of the sun.

— Employment intensive but human and animal energy amplifying technologies and tools for agricultural operations.

— Investment in non-agricultural rural sector for a symbiotic interaction between a labour-intensive sector and energy-optimised agriculture. This would help create stable and sustainable linkages with high-energy centres.

— Basic infrastructural support will provide the greatest potential for creating integrated communities.

— Balancing rural and urban earnings and relating them to relative purchasing power. With runaway inflationary food costs, urban housing and industrial and social inputs, this balancing act is already moving into the realm of possibility.

—Sophisticated science and technologies can also be used in improving simple tools left in a state of neglect and disuse.

—The concept of equating high culture with high energy has reached the end of the road and is fast fading away because it has also meant graduating from coal smog to nuclear radiation, unemployment and alienation.

—The less privileged have been growing in numbers and the privileged in affluence. That is how compulsions for industrialisation and urbanisation begin. Only by placing tools in perspective will population regulation be possible.

—The cost of providing jobs with identical levels of welfare to the urban poor has been many times higher than in the rural areas, and these costs are escalating. Partial transfer of resources to integrated rural communities will provide much larger multipliers than in the urban metropolis.

In the context of India it will not be necessary to disrupt the present structure of basic industries but to integrate it in longrange plans for the future. Over a period of time a state of disequilibrium within the planned overall system will end, and it will reach a state of dynamic balance in terms of socio-techno-economic parameters. In the process not only could the foundations of high-energy, high-technology infrastructure be laid but an orderly and protected growth of integrated self-contained rural communities will become possible. Thus liberation will also be attained from the international consumerist, defence, foreign exchange and energy straitjacket. Compulsive and planned obsolescence of machines, materials and men, which in the name of progress and affluence have played havoc with world-wide human energy and material resources, can be avoided.

Through small communities, the choice of lifestyle and self-renewal would shift from the board rooms, the media-promoted value system, the psychology of envy and consumerist addiction, to the individual and the environment. The objective is to build a society, not a production system, establish norms of behaviour in harmony with the fundamental laws and not an externally promoted standard of living. Emphasis will have to shift to socially useful activities and not socially useless illusions of affluence. Housework, farming, handicrafts, home building, all subsistence related activities, will become noble professions and not symbols of backwardness.

A new post-industrial society will be born out of the crumbling structure of consumerism. The social organism, the people, energy resources and the will to live are all getting exhausted through physical, mental, aesthetic and spiritual excesses performed in the processes of assuring the continuity of a system in decline.

For about the last century the condition of social organisations have largely been determined by technological change around an established and dominant source of energy, that is oil. In recent decades there have been some minor, largely centralised, intrusions by nuclear and other sources of energy and matching technologies.

This is expected to change as the technological edifice becomes unsustainable. In the organisation of a new society we have to take care that we do not cross the threshold beyond which even new sources of energy, such as the sun, achieve social progress at the cost of equity. Beyond this point, social arrangement and the institution of participatory democracy begin to wither away. ⊛

Injustice in Bengal Jute Mills

NARENDRA SHARMA

EXACTLY a year ago the expert committee on changes in workload and work-pattern in the jute industry in West Bengal submitted its report to the State Government. The committee, headed by the then West Bengal Land Reforms Commissioner, D. Bandyopadhyay, and set up by the Left Front Government in September 1979 in pursuance of a tripartite settlement reached in February 1979, was required to go into two issues: (i) whether there has been any change in the workload and work-pattern including that arising out of introduction of pair broadloom operation in the jute industry since the tripartite industrywise settlement dated May 7, 1972; if so, in which categories/occupations the workmen have been affected and to what extent; and (ii) to what relief the workmen are entitled.

Thus, it will be seen that actually, the issue involved was the arbitrary changes in workload and work-pattern imposed by the jute millowners on the workmen in the period following the 1972 tripartite settlement. Through the setting up of the Bandyopadhyay Committee, the Left Front Government appeared to have set in motion the process of rectification of the injustice done to jute workers.

The Bandyopadhyay Committee's findings clearly establish that the net overall increase in workload at the industry level between 1972 and 1979 was of the order of 19.37 per cent and the reduction in worker complement corresponding to the employment and production levels of 1979 amounted to around 46,000 hands. Further studies by the committee showed that the overall increase could be around 20 per cent and the reduction in worker complement about 46/48 thousand hands.

Another important finding of the committee was that the West Bengal Labour Department had colluded with jute mill managements, to impose heavier workload, in some cases even more than what the mill managements had expected. What is more, the Labour Department records, when scrutinised by the expert committee, revealed that top State Labour Department officers sought the help of the police to forcibly impose the workload norms, recommended by the department, on the workers employed in various jute mills. This means that the Labour Department did not act as an agency for conciliation in disputes between jute workers and managements but unwarrantedly as a kind of penal authority.

In view of the expert committee's findings and the revelations made by it on a number of counts, the Left Front Government was expected to speedily initiate measures to rectify the wrong done to the jute workers by the predecessor Congress Government. This has not been done for a full year since the expert committee submitted its report on May 30, 1981.

Going through the committee report, it can be observed that the jute mill mangements had actually been cheating all concerned when they pleaded that the changes in workload were effected in the interest of establishing a uniform work-pattern for the industry as a whole. This plea was not borne out by the survey of a good number of mills, and the committee was constrained to observe on the basis of facts provided by the IJMA itself that the changes in workload "could not be justified on the ground that the changes in workload and man/machine ratios in individual mills were effected in order to conform to work-pattern in the industry."

It was found, for instance, that the changes were made by all the mills analysed and not by a few sick mills or marginally sick mills alone as claimed by the IJMA. The committee, in fact, found that some of the mills known to be healthy had a man/loom ratio higher than that of many mills which, the committee said, "suggests that the 'sickness' that had overtaken some of the mills was not necessarily connected with the size of the worker complement."

It is known that jute industry owners are no ordinary lot — and that applies to the IJMA as a whole. They failed to provide the necessary data about the mills in time and when at last data were provided, it was only by about 22 out of 74 mills; and what was provided was "complicated and indirect" besides being "incomplete, uncomparable and unusable" in the case of a number of mills. On the other hand, trade unions could only provide "scrappy" information, for all the relevant records and documents were with the managements. And, if some workers ventured to collect information on the spot, they were harassed by the managements. The committee had therefore to depend largely on whatever information was provided by the IJMA or what was available from the State and Central Labour Departments and of course on its own on-the-spot surveys of a few jute mills.

The committee also noted some peculiar features of the jute industry and its owners. This industry, it says, offers a classic example of Indian merchant capital transforming itself into industrial capital not through the hard process of building up industrial entrepreneurship but essentially through takeover of an already well-established large-scale industry almost in its entirety from the British owners. This process of acquisition of the industry by the trading houses had certain consequences for the subsequent orientation of the industry. Emphasis came to be laid more on the trading aspects in the hope of quick and large returns rather than on manufacturing, industrial and technological aspects, resulting often in the neglect of modernisation, renovation and maintenance of plant and machinery, indifference to R&D efforts to improve the processing technology, failure to develop the machinery industry to meet the requirements of expansion, renovation and replacement and almost complete dependence on imports for the purpose till recently; reluctance to make use of soft loan facilities provided by the financial institutions for fear, among other reasons, of the financial discipline likely to be imposed by such institutions, and generally adopting a short-term approach to the problems facing the industry.

Having made these observations, the committee exposes the jute industry's claim to being a major export-oriented industry on the basis of which even the various high-level committees constituted by the Union Commerce Ministry had been offering the industry all sorts of facilities and concessions. For instance, in 1961-65, the share of the jute industry's exports averaged 66.2 per cent of its total production, which dipped to as low a level as 35 per cent in 1975-80. The share of jute goods in the foreign exchange earnings of the country had also declined sharply during the same period from 21.7 per cent to 4.4 per cent.

The Bandhyopadhyay Committee, in this context, drew attention to the "altered character" of the jute industry, for the 'export-oriented' nature of the industry had been advanced as an argument not only for demanding or granting fiscal, financial and other concessions but "was also taken into account as an important factor in fixing minimum wages for jute workers and minimum prices payable to jute-growers to protect whom such minimum wages or minimum prices are supposed to be fixed." It is recalled that industrial tribunals as well as the Central wage Board for Jute Industry took note of the export-oriented nature of the industry while fixing or recommending minimum wages for jute workers. "Though the position had completely changed since then, the argument is still invoked and accepted", the committee sarcastically remarked. The entire industry is controlled by six big houses in West Bengal. This probably provides a clue to why the jute industry continues to enjoy the most-favoured treatment at the hands of the policy-makers.

The Megna Jute Mills was a classic case of how the State Labour Department went all out to favour the mill management in not only recommending higher norms of efficiency but also ignoring the interest of a large complement of 'badli' workers as desired by the mill management. The Labour Department's record itself was proof of collusion between the Department's officers and the management. To cap it all, the State Labour Secretary even asked the local police authorities to ensure that the workers of the mill were not able to flout the efficiency norms so fixed. The expert committee noted in its report that "the fact that police intervention was sought at the Government level as well as at the mill level to enforce the minimum productivity norms indicated a serious departure from the normal industrial relations law, usage and practices about securing an agreed level of work efficiency through collective bargaining."

In the context of its study and observations, the Bandyopadhyay Committee made a number of recommendations, requiring action to be initiated by the State Government. Now that the Left Front Government of Jyoti Basu has been returned with a thumping majority, it will be expected that it will not dither further on implementation of the Bandyopadhyay Committee's recommendations, one of which is to restore the work norms that existed before the work-load changes were effected. This certainly is a challenging task before the Left Front Government because the jute industry owners are known to be resourceful and influential. The way the jute mill managements have managed this industry warrants its nationalisation — and without any compensation, for the entire industry has been reduced more or less to junk.☐

Forests : Wrong Policies

SATISH JHA

PARTICIPANTS at a recent workshop under the auspices of the Indian Social Institute in Delhi were unanimous in their rejection of the Forest Bill, 1980, in its present form. It was agreed that if the Bill became law, it would only lead to further denudation of forests.

In fact, the whole idea of forest development (preserving available forests and covering a larger area of available land with trees) has got distorted by the nature of forest policy pursued since the Government Forests Act of 1865. That was the first Act relating to forests which declared all forests to be Government forests and tried to regulate them and to punish those violating prescribed rules. Earlier, there was only the customary regulation of people's rights over forests and forest produce; in those days forests were ample. Certain forests were protected by custom and those deriving their livelihood therefrom obtained what can be referred to as "income" from the forests. But once the commercial value of forests was realised, the need was felt to control them, and the Act of 1865 tried to achieve this objective. This Act was later replaced by the Indian Forest Act of 1878 which was more comprehensive and gave more powers to the state to regulate the forests and prosecute those violating regulations. The right to prosecute was vested in officials of the Forest Department. This Act was later modified by various Acts of local governments from time to time and was finally replaced by the Indian Forest Act of 1927. This went a step further in alienating the forest-dependent population by deleting whatever little was left of the community's rights over forests in the Act of 1865. The 1927 Act allowed for even seizure of property and arrest without warrant of offenders and completed the task of state control of all forests.

In 1935, forests were transferred to the provinces; they were transferred from the State List to the Concurrent List in 1976. It was during the period when the forests were on the State list that the process of unending deforestation started. Government estimates, however, continued to show some marginal improvement. It was not until B.B. Vohra, a former Secretary to the Government of India, stated in his Sardar Patel Memorial Lecture that out of 83 million hectares of forests in the country about 48 million hectares were totally devoid of vegetation, that the true picture became public. This means that, during the three decades of forest planning, against the objective of increasing the area under forest from 22 per cent of total land area to 33 per cent, forest area had in fact dwindled to barely 10 per cent of the land area. Not that the Government was unaware of the process of deforestation, but little was done to prevent it, partly due to lack of will and to a large extent due to the forest policies pursued while the subject was under States' jurisdiction; vested interests could exploit the situation with impunity. However, transfer of the subject to the Concurrent List did not have even a marginal impact on the situation. Finally, the Government introduced another Indian Forest Act in 1980. A more comprehensive Bill is due to come up before Parliament.

The loss in the intervening years due to shrinking forests has been incalculable. One estimate puts the loss around Rs 500 to 600 billion on the basis of 100 trees of four tonnes each per hectare — which is thought to be a gross under-estimation — priced at Rs 350 to 400 per tonne. The total loss may, however, have been much larger if actual market rates were taken into account. But social loss evidently has been far in excess of what can be gauged in financial terms. As the rate of depletion of forests in the past few years has been about one per cent of land area annually, evidently a corresponding proportion of population is being denied the basis for survival and pushed to the periphery of the current development process, swelling the ranks of the unemployed and workers in the unorganised sector. There has been increasing evidence of this section being driven to accept inhuman terms offered by, for example, quarries, brick kilns and construction companies. Besides, in terms of loss to development, the core sector of the economy is affected. Massive deforestation has led to a high rate of silting in hydel reservoirs, increasing frequency of landslides, loss of topsoil which has been estimated to result in an annual loss of 5-6 million tonnes of nutrients — more than is actually put in through fertiliser use — changes in climatic pattern, etc.

As all this has so far been seen as a result of the prejudices of tribals and other villagers living in an around forests, who are supposed to be felling trees for meeting their fuel requirements, the corrective sought has been to restrict the accessibility of forests to them. This is the main thrust of the new comprehensive Forest Bill. This is expected to be achieved by first leaving the definition of 'forest' itself rather vague. Thus under the new Bill, 'forest' includes "any land containing trees and shrubs, pasture lands *and any land whatsoever* which the State Government may by notification declare to be forest for the purpose of this Act" (emphasis added). This will enlarge the scope of the definition to include any land which may not even have a single tree. Similar looseness is found in other definitions including that of forest produce and in classification of forest for purposes of deciding proprietary rights. Particularly interesting is the clause relating to reserved forests which proposes stiff penalty for even entering a forest area with cattle. And penalty for such offences can range from imprisonment for a minimum of three months (and up to three years) and a fine of not less than Rs 500 and not more than Rs 5,000 in case of offences which the Government may notify from time to time, and imprisonment of up to one year and/or fine up to Rs 1,000 in the case of other offences.

These orders are meant for a population which is uneducated and has no access to Government notifications. While past experience has shown that reserved forests are precisely the areas which are chosen for legal and/or illegal exploitation, those with original customary rights are not only kept out but a penalty is sought to be imposed even for an act of commission in ignorance. The illegal physical torture they are subjected to has become part of their life-style and so is not to be counted.

The worst aspect of the Bill is that it has no provision to assign a portion of reserved forest to constitute village forest. Secondly, the Bill gives wide powers to State Governments to regulate forests and land which are not the property of the Government. This is a clear retrogression from the spirit of putting forests in the Concurrent List which was necessitated by mismanagement of forests by the State administrations. Now the Bill, apart from giving sweeping powers in respect of development of forests, also proposes to confer on the States practically unlimited powers to punish "offenders". Worse still, it is proposed to put all acts of omission and/or commission by Forest Department officers beyond the jurisdiction of courts.

In sum, the Bill proposes to continue the policies laid down over a hundred years ago during colonial rule, which were admittedly meant for earning more revenue (as distinct from commercial exploitation) albeit in a brazen and exploitative form. This only suggests that the Government has drawn no lesson from of policies pursued in the past.

The Gujarat experiment makes nonsense of the claim by the forest experts in the country that the bad health of our forests has been mainly due to the lack of finances. Almost doubling of the area under forests in Gujarat has been achieved at a cost of a mere Rs 3 crores. Gujarat has become a forest-rich State; it had been one of the poorest in forest wealth at the time of the State's formation in 1960. At that time only 10 per cent of land area in Gujarat was under forest.

A programme was initiated in 1971 on a pilot basis with the planting of trees on both sides of a State highway for a few kilometres and was gradually extended to all the State and national highways in the State. Next, it was tried alongside canals and railway track. Local people were involved in these programmes by giving incentives — for example, 50 per cent of the income from such forests was to go to the panchayats. Simultaneously, a massive extension service drive was started. Three years later, in 1974, the scheme was extended to cover about one-fifth of the total villages of Gujarat to plant about 8,000 hectares of fuelwood. In the meantime, the Government stopped awarding contracts for procuring minor forest produce as well. Procurement of major forest produce such as timber had already been banned. For marketing minor forest produce, workers' co-operatives were set-up. These steps led to the State Government realising its initial target of covering about 2,000 villages under forests in the five years beginning 1974.

Two main points critical to the Gujarat experiment have been the reliance of Government machinery on local people by offering them incentives while changing the structure of the forest department so as to make it more of a development and extension agency. Secondly, social forestry was conceived in more practical terms by making it commercially viable. While in respect of the first aspect, the initial incentive to the panchayat was later changed to offer of incentives to individual farmers, in respect of the latter a beginning was made by planting trees which matured fast and could be used as fuelwood. Where finance was found to be a hurdle, the scheme of voluntary labour, incentives in the form of smokeless stoves, etc., were adopted. The result has been so encouraging that the State is planning to bring in an additional five per cent of land area under forests.

As against this, the new Forest Bill still harbours age-old colonial ideas which have not only proved ineffective but have brought about a disaster.

It is nobody's case that depredation of forests should be allowed whether by contractors or by tribals, many of whom may indeed be guilty of unscientific and short-sighted practices. Development of forests, enlarging the economic, social and employment potential of the country, is a worthy and necessary objective. But the objection to the Forest Bill is that it seeks correctives that have already proved counter-productive and that its punitive features and wide sweep may prove detrimental to forest preservation and development.

The need is for a new forest policy to regain ground lost and then progress towards a genuine forest development policy. One hopes the Government to give fresh thought to the subject and come up with a more sensible and equitable draft. ☐

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J.C. GOSWAMI
Managing Director

Restructuring Education

M. HIDAYATULLAH

I am worried about the mass production of degree-holders of varied kinds who find no employment because there is little correlation between the avenues of employment and the kind of education we purvey. Under-employment is thus growing hand in hand with under-utilisation of the potential for employment. A nation exists by the efforts of satisfied citizenry. Our education results in dissatifaction because it serves no purpose in a large number of cases.

We cannot blame anyone except ourselves. We often hear that the British Rulers were only interested in education which provided the rulers with *babus* working under officers mostly from Britain. To a certain extent this charge is true. But what have we done to change the system? We have been apathetic towards the real problem. We all had thirty-five years to act. We set up several committees and got many suggestions to improve the system by changing it to meet the changed conditions in our society and the world.

We need men to run our offices, our industries, our public utility and social services. The need is not only in urban but also in rural communities. It is obvious that what serves the urban communities does not necessarily serve the rural communities. We have yet to devise different kinds of educational institutions, which will cater for offices, factories, industries, rural needs and many social services. At the moment our stereotyped education in universities is supposed to take care of all these diverse requirements. In our educational schemes we do not introduce variety, we do not estimate the employment potential and its variety and then provide for it. There are many handicrafts, and many varied jobs which need specialisation. But we do not create specialisation and training to that end. Most of our trades and professions are learned either at home, that is from father to son, or as apprentice in employment. No one knows why we cannot teach these crafts and skills to start with instead of arid subjects which never form part of professional aptitude. Take any trade whether of the cottage industry type or the highly sophisticated industry type. There is always room for education, training and specialisation in the skills needed. There is no attempt to teach these skills and no research done to find out the employment potential and the expertise required.

It is remarkable that foreign countries are luring away our highly educated and trained men and women. Why should they not? They stand to gain because they do not have to run institutions of their own to give this basic education and training. They get men and women trained by us at our cost and reap the fruits. We only bewail the brain drain. Should we not ask ourselves what is being done by us to counteract this? If the holder of special qualifications is offered lucrative employment abroad and has also excellent equipment and libraries, can be really blame him if he goes away? We have to overhaul our entire educational system from school to higher education. We should aim at the largest possible area of general education. This with languages and a modicum of general knowledge should be our aim for universal education. Thereafter we must not educate but train the next largest number. This training will cover all ordinary trades and professions, handicrafts and artisanships. Next, a smaller number with special aptitude must receive technical education to develop technical skills. Lastly, the most qualified ones will go in for the highest education, research etc. They should get the utmost assistance to do the best and vie with the greatest in any country. Therefore, pressures of numbers on our educational institutions must be removed.

I will give an example. Till now the legal education was imparted after graduation in some other subject. Therefore, the student had to undergo first 10+2 years of education, next +3 years of university graduation in subjects as diverse as physics and philosophy and then he had to do his law degree in another+3 years and then+2 for professional training.

Recently I fought for shortening this period and succeeded with the Bar Council of India and the University Grants Commission. Now after 10+2 one can take law as a subject for graduation and then take special courses for +2 years for professional purposes. A saving of 3 years thus results to parents, students and the institutions, and legal education will be better than that given in evening and morning classes. Similar measures will save time and money all round if our education is planned round employment potential and is not planned round some elected subjects.

Our country is passing through a sensitive and critical period of its growth as an independent nation. We should be sorry that we have let time slip by. But there is no need to be despondent. Even now we can educate our young in an appropriate and scientific manner that will not only satisfy the aspirations of the student world, but also help the needs of the developmental efforts of the Nation. The sooner we get down to reviewing the educational problem in this way, the better it will be for us. ☐

This contribution is part of the Special Convocation Address delivered by the Vice-President of India at the University of Calcutta, May 25, 1982.

BOOK REVIEW

Post-Mao China: What's New ?

MOHIT SEN

China, the Post-Mao View: Editor, V.P. Dutt; Allied Publishers Pvt Ltd; pp 196, Rs 50.

To try to know China after the death of Mao is one of our important national tasks. Not only in an academic sense but as a vital matter of current policy. It is good, therefore, that the Department of Chinese and Japanese Studies, Delhi University, organised a national seminar on the subject. Prof V.P. Dutt has edited the papers presented and given us an interesting book.

The material falls into two natural sections — foreign policy and the internal scene. The latter is by far the larger section, but it is the former which is better done and of greater use. What is good about both sections, however, is that Indian scholars have done their Chinese homework, gone through a great deal of original material and used their preferred analytical frameworks. It is not a derived study nor a pre-patterned one and that is its merit, though one might have preferred greater depth and, perhaps, debate.

V.P. Dutt's own contribution is expectedly lucid and stimulating, particularly the portion outlining the perspectives to be kept in mind in assessing the dynamics and direction of Chinese foreign policy. He correctly emphasises in that connection the aim of the restoration of China's place in the world; the completion of the process of national unification; the demands of development and the domestic balance of forces. His advice is also sound that "it would be unwise for us to accept Chinese perceptions as not only unchanging but also as unavoidably having to be accepted in order to do business with China ... it would be wiser ... to continue with our own perceptions and to strive for a harmonising of the fundamental interests of the Chinese people and the peoples of other countries."

Prof. Gargi Dutt's working out of the dual policy of China towards our country is studiously done. It is a polite way of saying that it is a traditional carrots-and-stick approach. It is interesting to recall, as she does, that the Chinese leaders were very pleased with the victory of the Janata Party in 1977 seeing Indira Gandhi's defeat as that of the Soviet "social imperialists" as well! What is very sound is the author's advice to proceed prudently in the sphere of India-China relations and not to ignore the broader international framework of our bilateral relations.

In the section dealing with the internal scene P.R. Chari's paper on the modernisation of China's defence stands out for its presentation of detail and its balanced appreciation of the threat from China to the security of her Asian neighbours.

Kashiram Sharma's study entitled "The Waning Maoism" is a refreshing piece of well founded and presented scepticism about the grandiose claims of the present Chinese leadership. He has also done well to point to the fact that the Maoist model about which so much fuss used to be made, in some Left circles, stands demolished today. Liu Shaoqi's "model" which really is that of "orthodox" Marxism-Leninism is correctly described as the only alternative model to that of Mao. But one cannot quite agree, however, that the present leadership is moving in that direction.

This is the crux of the matter — post-Mao China today is not de-Maoed China but remains a Maoist variant if anything even worse than that of the Cultural Revolution variety. This is the generalisation which a historical analysis would confirm but which, generally speaking, the internal section of the book fails to arrive at. Mao was not only a most outstanding revolutionary leader, he was also the maker of a most eclectic and anti-socialist ideology. He was a revolutionary democrat misunderstanding Marxism-Leninism, misusing it and eventually producing a caricatured, distorted and eventually inimical version of it. Mao was really a Maoist, the original one but not the only one. He was the product of the vast, backward, chauvinistic and dual-charactered Chinese petty bourgeoisie. He had his colleagues and he trained a large following basically acting as the agent of the specific evolution of the Chinese people's democratic revolution which has not yet succeeded in going on to construct socialism.

All that we see in China today was in the field of foreign policy worked out by Mao in the 1971-73 period and has its roots in the chauvinism which breaks through even in the 1945 report entitled *On Coalition Government*. As far as the present internal policy is concerned there are enough foreshadowings of it in *New Democracy*, *On Coalition Government* and *Correct Handling of Contradictions*.

This complex of a systemic Right orientation of collusion with US imperialism and opening the economy to private foreign capital as well as the forces of spontaneity are as much a part of the Mao heritage and outlook as the frenzy of the Cultural Revolution. Mao himself produced his own Trotsky in Lin Biao and his Sadat in Deng Xiaobing.

A state power such as China today can be coexisted with and will have to be coexisted with for quite some time, but it has also to be firmly confronted if we are, to remain ourselves.

UN Special Session

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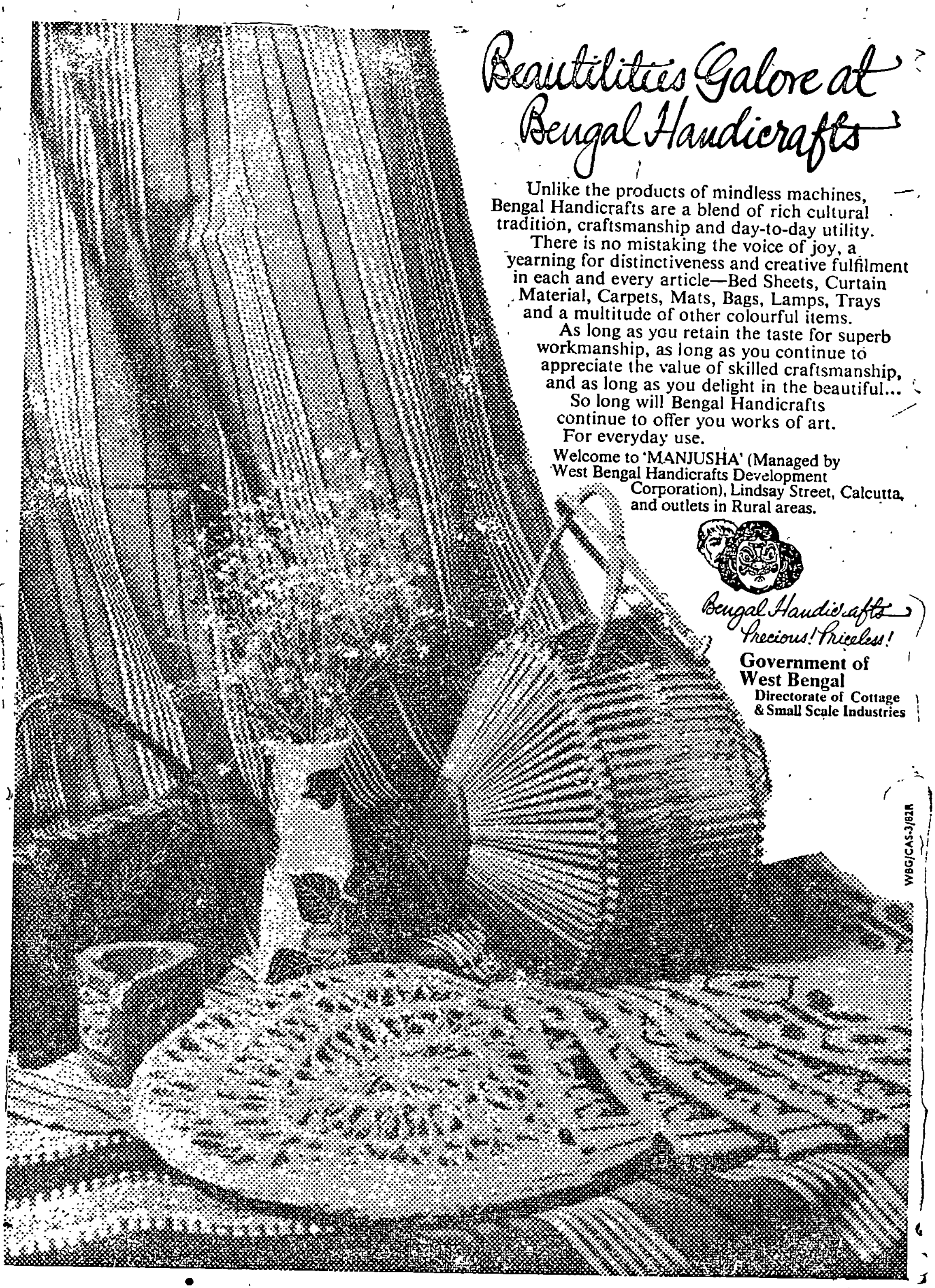
strengthen their bargaining position vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. Already the US is recommending very strongly to its NATO allies to restrict trade and economic relations with the socialist countries including transfer of technology. Reagan's START proposal may have been aimed at countering peace movements in the US and Europe brought about by the universal dimension of a possible nuclear incident. The emergence of doctrines of the credible possibility of a limited nuclear war and the illusory hypothesis of a nuclear victory have been powerful catalysts in initiating an 'anti-nuke' movement. The Soviet Union's "guarded welcome" of the START proposal could be because of the near-disaster agricultural position at home, the incipient peace movement with youths wearing peace emblems "swords into ploughshares" in East Germany, its strongest ally, as well as the imminent succession struggle.

Even liberals in the US who have been advocating the adoption of a "no first use" doctrine by the US recommend a build-up of conventional arms which could hardly act as a speed governor in the arms race. Certainly the "destructive fall-out" in a conventional war would be negligible when compared to a nuclear holocaust, but this does not justify the underscoring of the common denominator 'arms build-up' be it nuclear or conventional. ☐ (*May 30*)



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The Green March الزحف الأخضر

AL-ZAHF AL-AKHDAR

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Nuclear Debate • BJP Rethinking

Mainstream

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POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

Beyond Poll Politics

There is an increasingly alarming artificiality about politics in our country today. Electoral calculations, based on compromises on fundamentals, are steadily overshadowing the gut problems of the people crying out for immediate attention. After thirtyfive years of Independence, from the Left Front at one end to the communal-sectarian BJP at the other, it is the same story.

The recent "mini general election" and its aftermath, with all the bizarre permutations and combinations of parties and groups and the even more bizarre defector-dominant ministry-making as in Haryana, have underscored this truth. So does the pointless controversy over next month's Presidential election. Political parties' preoccupation with "strategies" and "tactics" for next year's Assembly elections in some States and for the general election due in early 1985 offers no indication of any incipient change in perceptions and goals, whatever the rhetoric or resolutions at national level and State level conclaves. It is all a question of how many seats to get through alliances, adjustments, overt and covert understandings and so on, not of a widely acceptable programme of action that can transform the lives of the people and make democracy real and meaningful.

We are all the time flooded with simplified statistics and esoteric theories to show what tremendous progress we have made, attested where possible by assistance-providing demi-gods abroad. The per capita income keeps rising — and so does the number of people below the Poverty Line, howsoever this imaginary line may be defined by our planning pundits. And so does the figure of the unemployed, educated as well as illiterate. Industrial production is good, so long as we do not look

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behind the figures to find out who are the beneficiaries of this phenomenon. Agricultural output goes up and up, while the level of living of those who work on land and produce that wealth goes downward ever. A Planning Commission study, just released, says that it will take up to fifty years in some States to bring the Scheduled Castes and Tribes at par with other communities in education. And that is clearly an extraordinarily optimistic assessment.

In our situation, radical posturings come naturally to power-seekers, for they know where the votes are and how best to get them. Indeed, there is quite a competition in this business, in which slogans and shibboleths take the place of constructive, farseeing thinking and planning. Again, the temptation to intensify caste contradictions is quite strong, for therein lies the road to power for the unscrupulous and the self-centred. From election to election, the one outstanding feature has been the growing appeal to caste feelings, at the cost of the common interest, to the detriment of our nationhood. In fairness it must be said that virtually no political party — not even the Left — has been able to eliminate the caste factor in its own approach to the electorate. It is sad to think this is true even of parties that should have by now mounted a massive campaign against the pernicious caste system itself.

Other divisive factors have also received due encouragement. With the fanning of communalism we are all too familiar. Language is another aspect, leaving aside the unthinking invocation of Akashvani by a Minister who is in a hurry to get into colour TV. The continuing tension in the North-eastern Region is not eased one bit by the Chief Election Commissioner's airy assurance that elections can be held in Assam once the situation is declared to be normal by the Union Government. The developments in Jammu and Kashmir on the one side and extremist mischief in Punjab, even if confined to a lunatic fringe, on the other, have also to be noted. The point is that everywhere problems are allowed to fester and no concerted attempt is made, even in the name of patriotism and national integration, to solve them.

There is no need to list the numerous problems facing different segments of our population: they are all well known, the more so to political leaders and the colourful spectrum of intellectuals occupying key positions in various walks of life. A recent report said that politics dominates media coverage in this country; one would rather think that political gossip relating to real or imaginary goings-on within and between political parties and between individuals or groups, has been made the compulsory diet of compulsive readers of newspapers and the new flood of smart magazines. But this is part of the value system or lack of it that has developed in the last two decades or so.

But why has this change come about? The generations that grew up during the freedom struggle, and even those who flowered into mental maturity in the late forties and the fifties, had a measure of idealism, a set of cherished values. Gradually these have been lost, giving place to a new kind of politics, in which power is seen, not as the instrument to fulfil the Constitutional injunction of establishing a society based on equality and social justice, but as a harlot-like profession in which one makes hay as fast as possible. Election expenses, not much three decades back but massive today, are seen as an investment to be got back with heavy interest from the public exchequer and from industrialists, businessmen and rich farmers on a quid pro quo basis. No party, no group is dedicated enough to function effectively outside the electoral process and the established structure in order to bring about radical transformation in thinking and action by the application of organised mass pressure on the rulers. The be-all and end-all of politics is to be on the bandwagon of power.

It is not surprising therefore that the required new kind of leadership simply refuses to emerge. It is ironic that in a country of poor people the vested interests and their agents should be able to consolidate themselves in one way or another, attracting younger elements, while the Left particularly, and even not-entirely-reactionary parties like the Congress-I find it impossible to build cadres even among students, youth and the unemployed and reach out to the farflung villages of India where today, as in Gandhi's time and earlier, India lives. The Sanjay Brigade has proved to be so much chaff gone with the wind. And the poison-peddling "Knickers Brigade" is a menace yet to be decisively fought and defeated.

Again, in most parties, one finds in the leadership a convergence of personal and class interest. And the Left, consciously or unconsciously, accepted the rules of the game laid down by the parties of the upper crust, instead of organising the people in mass movements for social and economic change. It is not easy for the electorate to see any distinction between parties, generally speaking and in most parts of the country. Naturally other factors come into play in deciding who shall wield state power.

Such circumstances lead the Opposition parties, most regrettably even the Left parties, to make artificial formulations, with Indira Gandhi as the focal point. One is either for Indira Gandhi or against her. It is strange politics that needs to base itself on one individual, whatever the supposed charisma. Even now it does not seem to be realised that such simplification of the facts of life has proved counterproductive. Indira Gandhi and her one-person party are the gainers.

So it is a crisis of leadership. And a new leadership can emerge only through mass movements, organised by the Left — or by the Left and democratic forces, if you like. This is the lesson of even recent world history. There cannot be a new leadership with a sense of purpose and direction on the basis of electoral adjustments and attainment of brief authority by individuals who pass for leaders.

If it is understood that today the administration, instead of being a tool for change, itself stands in need of change, and that such change can be brought about only by mobilising people cutting across caste, communal, linguistic, regional and other barriers — on social, economic, cultural and other broad and basic issues — this country has the potential to throw up the new leadership that is needed.

Beyond petty electoral politics lies the future of this great land of ours. It is a legacy and a promise. Neither the present nor the rising generation can afford to fail the country.

C.N. Chitta Ranjan

June 9

COMMENTARY

Helpless in Havana

Our Diplomatic
Correspondent

THE political committee of the non-aligned ministerial conference was discussing last week in Havana a routine formulation on the West Asian crisis for incorporation into the final political document when news of the Israeli bombing of Beirut reached it. The committee was presumably discussing modifications in the text with a view to strengthening the condemnation of Israel. Even as it was engaged in that task, Israeli war-planes were strafing Beirut. The grim irony of the situation would not have been lost on the participants. The conference adjourned on Saturday after adopting what has by now become a standard formulation critical of Israeli behaviour.

But a day later, Israel unleashed its full fury on Lebanon. It was a full-fledged invasion by air, land and sea; behind a screen of bombing jets and shelling gunships, Israel penetrated far deeper into Palestinian territory than it ventured to in 1978. First accounts said that 100 Israeli tanks and as many personnel carriers had ploughed through the lines held by the UN interim force in Lebanon. The cease-fire so arduously worked out by the US special envoy, Philip Habib, last July thus evaporated into thin air. The Palestine Liberation Organisation, which had been anticipating such a massive attack for some months now, promptly vowed "a fight unto death" to defend its power base.

As this is being written, the UN Security Council was hoping against hope that its call for an immediate cease-fire between Israel and the PLO volunteers would be implemented, while US President Reagan was confabulating once again with Habib in Versailles, again hoping against hope, as to whether his Israeli allies could be restrained from further perfidy. The prospects seemed as dim as the general West Asian situation.

There is about all this a familiar ring, a well-entrenched pattern, a sea-saw of nerves. One has seen and heard it all before. What the political committee was seeking to do at Havana was to reaffirm the collective will of the non-aligned against Israeli aggression and expansionism, an exercise it has been called upon to do on behalf of the non-bloc movement times out of number. It was only recently that the non-aligned bureau had issued a call at Kuwait to the rest of the world community to "isolate" Israel in every possible way so that the combined voice of the world would stir Tel Aviv's conscience. The latest Havana documents will go before the Baghdad summit — if and when it is held — and there too the collective will of the non-aligned against Israel will be articulated once again. But there will be no end to Israeli ambitions until and unless the United States and its Western allies oblige by restraining the hawks in Tel Aviv. And thereby hangs the fate of a mass of uprooted Palestinians, striving to regain their homeland, and temporarily and uncomfortably huddled in camps in Southern Lebanon, which are now the targets of Israeli bombs ....

Israel has cited reasons for its invasion, while proclaiming at the same time that it had no territorial designs against Lebanon with which it was seeking a peace treaty. The motivation for the Saturday bomb raid on Beirut was alleged PLO complicity in the attempted assassination of the Israeli Ambassador in London. The provocation for Sunday's massive raid was claimed to be the presence of Palestinian guerillas within artillery range of northern border towns (Palestinian artillery is concentrated around Tyre where currently street battles and hand-to-hand combats are raging). But the real reasons are different and stem from Israel's perceptions of West Asian realpolitik, its objective of keeping the Arabs permanently at bay, and its domestic compulsions in which one set of hawks tries to outwit the other. Israel launched its July 1981 aggression with American support and connivance. The current raid was also similarly preceded by a visit to Washington by the Israeli Defence Minister, Ariel Sharon. If Israel has permitted itself to act in a restrained manner, it has been at US behest, if it bares its fangs, it is again with US connivance. Seen in this light, the cease-fire call issued at Versailles by President Reagan and his six other colleagues borders on adding insult to injury.

The non-aligned movement has been persistently demanding the total withdrawal of Israel from occupied territories and the restoration of their homeland to the Palestinians. By the very nature of things, it will perhaps have to keep on raising the demand undaunted by failure to achieve results. This is perhaps an inbuilt element of tragedy in such movements. But failures need not and should not invalidate the legitimacy of the movement nor diminish its relevance in today's multi-polar world. When war erupted between the two non-aligned countries, Iraq and Iran, there was a fleeting hope that it might end one way or another well before the scheduled date of the non-aligned summit. But it has dragged on, and in the process has jeopardised the prospects of Baghdad serving as the summit venue. The Havana meeting was fully conscious of the perils inherent in the continuing stalemate situation, but it had no alternative but to renew the mandate to its four-member committee (India, PLO, Zambia and Cuba) to persist in its peace mission notwithstanding the fact that the Islamic Conference mediation committee and the Gulf Cooperation Council have also had no luck with their respective initiatives towards a cease-fire. The Islamic bloc team is currently in session in Jeddah determining how best to help Iraq throw back the Iranians who are knocking at its gates. The Gulf Cooperation Council has already met in Kuwait with an identical objective.

The Havana conference was attended by 43 ministers and 86 delegations; it eventually adopted two documents, one political with 136 clauses and the other economic with 106 clauses. The numbers denote the topics and global developments which exercise the minds of the non-aligned; by and large they find themselves helpless in reversing world trends in favour of the have-nots by persuading the haves to be more cooperative and realistic. The trends they seek to reverse are precisely those which have a bearing on global security and peace.

When the dates for the Havana meeting were fixed, the senseless conflagration in the South Atlantic had not erupted, but jets were zooming across the Atlantic skies and Exocet missiles were wreaking havoc on British sea vessels when the ministers went into conclave. Not surprisingly, the Falklands dispute dominated the Havana deliberations since the victim of the British assault, Argentina, also happens to be a non-aligned nation. The highlight was a persuasive speech by the Argentine Foreign Minister, Nicanor Costa Mendez, who accused the United States of giving moral and material support to Britain "in order to kill our nation". This might well be rhetoric impelled by the heat of the war, but his other statement, veritably a disclosure, that Britain, the US and South Africa planned a military alliance in the South Atlantic, carried an ominous warning. Such a military alliance, he noted, would seriously affect peace in the area. The Americans are adept at conceiving security systems as and when they feel their domination of world events is threatened. The developing military relations between the US and South Africa tend to confirm Argentinian fears. Not enough worldwide publicity has been given to the removal of certain vital restrictions on the sale of nuclear materials by the Washington Administration to South Africa. The US has already supplied a quantity of Helium 3, which can be used in make tritium for use in thermo-nuclear weapons.

Narasimha Rao called the strife and violence in the South Atlantic "wasteful". Quite so. After initial dilly-dallying, the Government of India now seems to have arrived at a policy formulation on the Atlantic war which satisfies all its compulsions arising from Indira

Gandhi's friendship with Margaret Thatcher and from its own non-aligned credentials. It is therefore worth taking due note of Rao's statement on the Falklands war made at Havana. "It shows the futility of applying 18th and 19th century doctrines to situations of today. The concept of sovereignty of the post-colonial era must be respected, as also the principle that all disputes must be resolved through peaceful means alone. We fervently hope that peace can be restored soon by a process of dialogue."

The final communique adopted by at Havana more or less reflected such sentiments, but it went one better than the Indian position by attacking both Britain and the US for their respective roles in the conflict, and additionally calling for freedom and peace for all Latin American countries still under colonial domination. How diametrically opposite to the Western position this thesis was, was effectively brought out by the near euphoric support which Britain received from her six industrialised comrades at Versailles!

(*June 8*)

BJP: Rethinking on Tactics

NARENDRA SHARMA

The BJP National Council met for three days from June 4 in the air-conditioned auditorium of Gandhi Smriti Bhavan in Surat. The many-pillared ground-floor hall was the lobby. On one side of the hall was the book-stall where *Surya* magazine was displayed prominently; words painted on a 2½ ft × 5 ft sheet of white cloth announced, "National magazine *Surya* sold here". Pamphlets on various aspects of the RSS as also of the BJP were available at the stall.

Two paintings of equal size adorned the foot of the stairs leading to the auditorium. On the right side was a painting showing Gandhiji leading Khadi-clad satyagrahis on the famous Dandi march, with the caption "Sabarmati to Dandi". The painting on the other side showed Atal Behari Vajpayee on his padayatra "from Deoli to Sadhupur" at the head of a group of men wearing only loin-cloth. No doubt the BJP version of Gandhian Socialism!

On the eve of the National Executive Committee meeting at Surat (June 2 and 3), Amar Zariwala, a businessman of Bombay and leader of the reception committee, told pressmen that Surat jewellers would welcome BJP chief Vajpayee at the railway station by showering pearls, just as they had done over forty years ago when Subhas Chandra Bose had come to Surat. Would they be real pearls, asked a flabbergasted newsman.

The National executive Committee for two days strove hard to evolve a common understanding on the outcome of the recent elections, on the basis of General Secretary L.K. Advani's report. Tension persisted on both days, so the committee could not devote itself to framing resolutions on the economic situation and the international situation as initially announced. For a while it was argued in private that Vajpayee in his presidential address had dealt with both questions adequately and therefore it would not make any difference if for once separate resolutions on these issues were not moved in the Council.

However, when the draft economic resolution was atleast moved in the Council by Bhai Mahavir, it appeared to be so lopsided and slip-shod that Vajpayee, who was presiding, readily accepted the objection of some important council members and announced that a paragraph dealing with issues related to agriculture would be added. But the delegates did not spare the leadership for this eloquent lapse, and one delegate sought to underline it by saying that agriculture and the peasantry should get a place in the resolution proportionate to their size in the economy and in the population.

An embarrassed Bhai Mahavir, while introducing the resolution, had himself said that for some time it appeared that the economy had lost its significance (for the party); and when finally a decision was taken, a sort of emergency operation was carried out to formulate the resolution and he was asked to move it. He himself appeared to be at odds with what he was pleading for. The economic resolution boils down to saying: "The Government seems to follow the old adage *rinam kritva ghritam pivet* (borrow and have a good time). Conclusion: "Far from achieving self-reliance, we are in danger of losing whatever economic independence we have". And the call: "Let the nation awake before it is too late".

In his presidential address Vajpayee talked about the induction of monopolies and multinationals into the public sector being brought about under external pressure. He quoted the US Embassy's positive assessment of economic trends in India, and commented that "in the formulation of our economic policy we are being influenced by foreign interests". He considered it to be a "dangerous situation" and asserted that the Indian economy must be brought back to Swadeshi and self-reliance, though this was not spelt out. In short, Vajpayee was at great pains to make the BJP seem a radical party. But the reality is the actual resolution. And the gap between many of the forthright observations on the economic situation in the presidential address and the toothless resolution adopted by the National Council under the chairmanship of Vajpayee was too obvious to be ignored.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the real issue before the BJP's National Council meeting at Surat was election strategy in retrospect and prospect. If one mini general election had just ended, another equally if not more important mini general election is due early next year. Both Vajpayee in his presidential address and Advani in his report drew the conclusion from the recent elections that the Congress-I's popularity had suffered a "steep decline", Indira Gandhi's charisma was wearing off and Rajiv Gandhi had proved a non-starter. Another feature of importance from the BJP's point of view was the "massive rebellion of unprecedented dimensions" inside the Congress-I. It is assumed that the manner in which victorious Congress-I rebels in Haryana were wooed back into the party and installed in ministerial chairs, would unleash a bigger rebel phenomenon inside the Congress-I in the States where elections are due next year. The BJP would naturally take note of this "message" while formulating its strategy for the Karnataka and Andhra elections.

But this appeared to be of little consolation to the delegates at Surat, who were more concerned about the why and wherefore of the depressing outcome of the electoral policy pursued in the recent elections. Advani's assertion in his report that even though the party's achievement fell short of objectives, the results by and large "vindicate the strategy the National Executive had formulated" (on April 13, 1982), did not appear to have carried conviction with most of the participants in the Surat deliberations. The sharp decline of the party in Haryana, its failure to open its account in the Kerala Assembly and the loss of whatever it had in the West Bengal Assembly seemed to negative its achievements in the Himachal Assembly poll or in the Jabalpur and Thane Lok Sabha by elections. That the setback was weighing on everybody's mind, not excluding the leaders, came into focus when Haryana leader Mangal Sein asked — loudly enough for everybody to hear — that his successful BJP candidates from Haryana, too, should be introduced to the audience. The Himachal BJP legislators had been earlier introduced to the Council with much fanfare, and so also the winning candidates from the Jabalpur and Thane Lok Sabha constituencies. One delegate from the floor asked that even the party MP from Sagar, who had won in a byelection last year, should be introduced. Mangal Sein's words were an embarrassment for the leaders on the dais and the laughter in the hall added punch to the debate on the success or otherwise of the BJP's policy of alliance with the Lok Dal in Haryana. It was Mangal Sein himself who in justification of the alliance had disclosed that the BJP would have got only two instead of six seats in Haryana if the Charan Singh faction of Lok Dal had not given support to the BJP. The Devi Lal faction was considered to be the villain of the piece, for this faction was said to have gone all out to get the BJP candidates defeated.

The alliance policy, however, came under attack to start with from none other than Shanta Kumar, leader of the Himachal BJP unit. Even delegates from West Bengal thought the BJP talk of value-based politics carried little conviction when it was seen in alliance with Charan Singh who had been described by many others as "arch defector" and "opportunist". For a day and a half the leadership appeared to be on the mat. The Janata Party was being written off as of no consequence. And one delegate even wanted the party to carefully analyse whether any alliance with ex-Congress groups with different names was at all useful and whether they divide the Congress vote or only seek to share the Opposition vote. This apparently was in reply to pro-alliance groups who pointed to the mutually advantageous understanding between the BJP and the Congress-S in Lok Sabha byelections.

The leadership did not allow itself to be carried away by the emotions unleashed by the setback in Kerala and West Bengal, where it had contested on its own, or in Haryana where the alliance with Lok Dal had proved counter-productive as a large number of traditional BJP followers had admittedly deserted the party. The leadership was more bothered about the future, and that made it bring forward the resolution on "Approach for Forthcoming Elections". This resolution explains away the setback in West Bengal and Kerala as being the result of 'difficulties inherent in the situation' and in Haryana the outcome of "organisational shortcomings rather than the approach adopted".

In the period ahead, the BJP will follow a dual policy — going it alone where it can and having electoral adjustments with other "democratic" parties wherever they have 'appreciable support". It has also been made clear that if such parties refused to see the "realities on the ground" the so-called electoral understanding would be meaningless for the BJP. This has been emphasised because in States like Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka the BJP only commands small pockets while in Assam it has yet to show its electoral strength. Delhi is the only area where it hopes to challenge the Congress-I on its own, while in the Jammu part of Jammu and Kashmir State it will strive to hold its own. It is this spectrum which made the National Council call for concentrating "all our attention" on gearing up the organisational machinery and expanding the BJP's support base.

In the game of building an alternative to the Congress-I, the BJP has added Himachal to its assets along with Delhi and probably Madhya Pradesh. But these are all in the North. South and North-East still remain beyond its reach. The BJP's dream of barging into the South with a bang through Kerala, so sedulously nourished at the Cochin Council meeting in April last year, still remains a dream. From Surat onwards, the BJP's eyes will be fixed on Karnataka and Andhra.□

(June 8)

Falklands : What Kind of Conflict?

JOHAN GALTUNG

The author is a distinguished Norwegian specialist on international affairs with wide experience of teaching and research in many countries including India (at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, 1971). He was the founder-Director of International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, and is a consultant to many United Nations agencies. This contribution, written during the military operations in the South Atlantic, takes a long-range view of the Anglo-Argentine conflict and its significance against the background of the present North-South relationship. —*Editor*

As these lines are written young men are killing each other down there in the South Atlantic. *For what* — what is this conflict about, how should one try to conceive of it, what is the significance? To this there are many answers: here is one effort.

(1) *To see the conflict only as the projection of the problems of two governments is not very helpful.* Obviously both the Thatcher and Galtieri regimes have internal problems to face and these have been intensified — so far — through the conflict. More importantly, neither of them can risk losing it without also losing power: that explains some of the intransigence. But the conflict has much deeper roots and significance independently of these two governments even if the way it is handled is coloured by those two regimes.

(2) *To see the conflict as being between democracy and dictatorship is not very helpful.* The percentage of people supporting government action has been high on both sides and would have been so regardless of the regime. A more democratic Argentina would have mobilised the same support — the victims of Galtieri's dirty war also favour the military actions. Malvinas has been an issue for a long time in Argentina and only very badly informed Westerners could possibly have been surprised. At the same time, the "my-country-right-or wrong" spirit of jingoism that surfaced, at least in the initial stage, in England has nothing to do with the spirit of dialogue that is the strength of a democracy. The threats against Tony Benn are not the type of material a democracy is made of — and yet he may well be the one who emerges out of this crisis with a brighter political future. Incidentally, Thatcher's view of the Argentinian junta was quite favourable as long as it was only fighting their own people.

(3) *"Argentina is the aggressor (as of April 2)" and "by the principle of self-determination the islands belong to England" are both true, but not very helpful.* England got the islands by force in 1833; from when should one start counting the "first" act of aggression? How valid is the principle of self-determination when one's own kind is exported into an area which either is empty or is emptied, or one exports so many that a majority is guaranteed? Against these principles Argentina may mobilise historical rights — as a successor of the Spanish Empire — and geographical rights, obvious to anyone with a map. Like the First two principles the latter two also lead to strange results when applied around the world. Which principles are stronger depends on the relative power of those who believe in them — and mainly believe in them because they find them compatible with their own interests. But it is hardly through the study of such abstract principles that we can understand much of the conflict.

(4) *To see the conflict as an East-West conflict is not very helpful.* That the Soviet Union exploits the situation should be to the surprise of nobody. That the current US Administration has not only political but also intellectual problems in trying to understand how Galtieri, Castro, Brezhnev and Deng Xiaoping suddenly became lined up on the same side is not surprising either. The Argentinian junta is anti-Communist in the sense of fighting "communists" [meaning mainly *Peronistas*] at home because they are protecting class privileges. But that is neither necessary nor sufficient reason to side with the US in the East-West conflict. Reasons of state may be stronger than reasons of class.

(5) *The conflict is a North-South-conflict of a new type, and the first of its kind.* The classical North-South conflicts have centered around civil and political rights in the struggle against colonialism, and around economic, social and cultural rights in the struggle against neo-colonialism. This conflict is about territory as such because of historical and geographical rights. But more importantly, *it is a country in the South against a country in the North.* And that serves to align the forces. Argentina at first gets support from some, and then increasingly many Latin American countries; this spreads to the Third World, the South in general. England gets the support of the US and Canada, this spreads to NATO and the European Community — with the rather obvious exceptions of Spain and Ireland. The Falkland/Malvinas serves magnificently to crystallise the tensions that are there all the time. Because they line up like this, one side talks about the principles of aggression and of self-determination, and the other side of historical/geographical rights; because they talk about these principles they line up the way they do. Of course East lines up with South as it has always done in Nort-South conflicts, motivated both by values and by interests. Very quickly Thatcher-Reagan-Haig managed to make allies out of Argentina-Cuba-Soviet Union and China — a quite remarkable achievement that

ARMS BAZAAR

... British arms exports, at around £ 1200 million a year, represent between 20 and 30 per cent of total military production ... The consequences of this trade are horrendous. Many people (in Britain) were shocked to learn from the television that the man from Vickers is supervising operations aboard the Argentinian Type 42 destroyer. But the real significance of this fact goes far deeper than the immediate danger to the lives of British servicemen. It has to do with the very nature of political and economic development in Argentina ... Although the United States has been the largest supplier of arms, Argentina has also purchased large quantities of European equipment for their arms industry ... Britain has been important in developing Argentina's shipbuilding industry — a second Type 42 destroyer was assembled in Argentina ...

Mary Kaldor in **The Guardian** *London*
(May 17, 1982).

one. Which also tells something about the political wisdom with which the West is governed for the time being.

(6) *The disproportionate use of resources in the conflict is because they fight on behalf of North and on behalf of South, respectively.* I am convinced Thatcher feels she is engaged in a crusade, but not against aggressors as such (where did her party stand on Suez in 1956?) or for self-determination (where did her party stand in the early phases of the struggle against colonialism?). She feels it is high time North teaches South a lesson. Anti-colonialism, OPEC, the New International Economic Order ever-increasing economic demands on strained economies in the North, political blackmail ("if you do not pay us more we go to the other side") — all this has worn the political nerves pretty thin. Somewhere there is a line, beyond which we go no further, we shall yield no more, we are still an Empire! And she gets support from the others in the North because they feel she is fighting on behalf of them. That Galtieri feels he is fighting for the South in general is beyond doubt, not only for South America. If he is clever he might even use the occasion to become a decent person — a latter-day Peron with democratic overtones and an end to *the dirty war* inside the country in the name of national consensus. If he is not that clever he may have to yield to somebody who is.

(7) *When the South dares do this it is because power relations have changed.* The wind still blows from the South in the world — certainly not from the East or the West. And the South has arms because of the endless greed of the West in search of profits and jobs. If Galtieri had waited a little, much of the British Fleet would have been sold to Australia and the Vulcans would have been scrapped, leaving Thatcher with little but the Trident. Not even she would have used it. Or, would she?

(8) *The significance of Falkland/Malvinas is due to the precedent it sets for other conflicts of the same type.* Northern Ireland, Ulster, was settled by thousands of Lowland Scots Presbyterians after 1607; Gibraltar by all kinds of people but Spanish. England got the majority they wanted. Historical/geographical rights are clear, Dublin and Madrid are waiting and let Argentina fight for them. Rabat is waiting, for the same reason, for the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla to fall in its hands (while at the same time trying to establish its own rule in West Sahara). Of these three cases Morocco has a tremendous advantage in its relation to Spain: it can be seen as a part of the North-South conflict.

(9) *The type of solution that comes out of Falkland/Malvinas will be important for the other conflicts of the same type.* If all these North-South conflicts are to be fought as zero-sum conflicts to let military might decide whether it is "ours" or "theirs" we shall have many bloodbaths of larger order of magnitude in the future. Of course, there are two other solutions: the population in the disputed territories establish their own state; or, some type of multinational rule is established. Condominium by the two contestants will hardly work out. Together with regional or international organisations it might be possible. And this is what Haig tried to prevent when he took to shuttle diplomacy between London and Argentina: he was flying back and forth because he was afraid this would give a chance for the UN (with a solid majority commanded by the Third World and Socialist countries) to penetrate into the Western hemisphere. That England already had the Falklands against any resonable interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine did not worry Haig as much as it should have; because of England being a "faithful ally" with "special relation" and all that. But the UN? Never! — very soon this may turn out to become a US-UN conflict of which there are already many, with increasing isolation of the US.

(10) *The loser in this conflict will be England and those who side with her.* It is impossible today to be in favour of colonialism; it is almost equally impossible to be in favour of lasting British rule of the Falklands. That does not mean one has to accept Argentine action or government. But even if England wins militarily she will, politically speaking, sit on top of a volcano. This will become increasingly clear to England's allies who will defect one by one, and together in ever more reserved resolutions and actions. Japan is not putting on sanctions; she has only promised not to pick up the extra trade. If the war drags out the resistance will grow more quickly inside Britain than the losses of young men killed. At the same time Latin America may come closer to making its own organisation without the alien states, the US and Canada. And the Soviet Union may be able to break the quarantine it is suffering under in Latin America.

In short, Falkland/Malvinas may well prove to be an important road-sign in history. So was Sarajevo June 28, 1914 when the resistance movement against the Austro-Hungarian Empire fired the deadly shot against Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Let us hope the present crisis will not be followed by a major war — it probably will not. In case it does, the price for British neglect of Argentine demands for decades, would be some-what too high.□

(May 31, 1982)

The Second Special Session on Disarmament of the United Nations General Assembly is on from June 7. *Mainstream* has been publishing a series of articles focussing attention on the crucial issues involved. We here publish two special contributions, one from M. Shankar, Research Fellow, Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, and the other from Hans A. Bethe, Professor Emeritus of Physics, Cornell University, and Nobel Prize winner.

—Editor

Nuclear Disarmament: A Critical Phase

M. SHANKAR

MAN's yearning for a world of peace and harmony is as old as civilisation itself, whether expressed through the archetypes of an idyllic paradise before Man's "fall" from "grace" or through his vision of the "hereafter". The harsh reality of existence, however, has involved Man in a constant battle to impose sovereignty over his environment. In the process the tools and means of war have been constantly refined and put to use, military power replacing brute physical strength as a means to success in the contest for supremacy between men and among nations. The discovery of the bow and arrow, gunpowder and, later, dynamite, revolutionised the concepts of warfare in their time. Today this dichotomy between Man's aspiration for peace and preparation for war can be seen at its most glaring in the simultaneous platitudinising on the need for disarmament and the pursuit of military superiority.

It is no doubt tempting in the light of this gap between profession and practice and of historical experience (no dominant nation has voluntarily given up the instruments of its power) to dismiss disarmament as a Utopian concept which has only created another entrenched bureaucracy. However, given the fact that mankind now lives under a self-induced threat of annihilation, there appears to be no alternative to attempting (no matter how tortuously) to reduce the dimension of that threat.

The point to be borne in mind is that the advent of the nuclear era has confronted Man with a situation which is without historical parallel. Thus the very meaning of the word "disarmament" has undergone a metamorphosis. In the not-so-distant past "disarmament" was synonymous with defeat in the sense that a vanquished nation was disarmed and subjected to arms control measures by the victors. Today, disarmament signifies arms limitation and reduction agreements freely arrived at as a result of negotiations among states.

The second point that needs to be emphasised in assessing the utility and possibility of disarmament is that for the first time there are two dominant powers who have near strategic parity which neither will easily allow to be undermined. New technologies on one side will be matched by the development of counter-technologies, on the other, leading to a margin of diminishing strategic returns in their attempts to establish superiority. Besides, there is a vast area between the extremes of complete disarmament and unrestricted proliferation where there is scope for agreement.

Having said this, however, it must be acknowledged that the world, so far, has failed to make any significant progress towards disarmament despite the fact that, from its very inception, this has been one of the main subjects on the agenda of the UN. The "arms race" (a term not quite apposite as it invests the phenomenon of a competitive military build-up with an autonomy of its own divesting nations of subjective responsibility) continues at an accelerated pace, the proclamations on the desirability of total disarmament notwithstanding. Even a cursory glance at statistics compiled by the UN and the Stockholm Peace Research Institute would bear this out. In 1932 the average annual military expenditure, world-wide, was of the order of $ 4 billion. Today is has reached the staggering figure of almost $ 600 billion or 6 per cent of the total output of the world. The strength of the armed forces maintained by the community of nations is estimated to have increased by 30 per cent since 1960, while the number of nuclear weapons stands today at almost 40,000. Between 1970 and 1980 alone, the number of strategic warheads almost tripled, jumping from 5,800 to 16,000.

At the same time, an objective assessment of the disarmament measures so far agreed upon reveals that they have concerned themselves either with peripheral issues or have touched upon armaments which have not been technologically viable and whose cost-effectiveness in terms of military advantage has been perceived to be dubious. The Protocol prohibiting Bacteriological and Toxic Warfare, the Antarctic Treaty, the Outer Space Treaty, the Sea Bed Arms Control Treaty, the Biological Weapons Convention and the Environmental Modification Convention, can be counted in this category. Others have had the more invidious purpose of "disarming the unarmed" and preserving the global stratification of power, particularly in the nuclear realm. The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty is the clearest example.

Given the fact that the heart of the arms race lies in the post-war division of the Western world into two ideological-cum-military blocs — NATO and Warsaw Pact — and their attempts to acquire influence in the newly-liberated countries, meaningful steps towards disarmament can only begin with them. The defence preparations in Europe and

North America alone account for 70 per cent of global defence expenditure. The share of the developing world has now gone up to 16.1 per cent in 1980 and almost half of this is accounted for by one area alone — West Asia (excluding Israel) and the Gulf. The rest of the countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia have a share of barely 7 per cent of global defence spending. Much of this expenditure has stemmed from the sheer increase in the number of countries in the wake of decolonisation, with the newly-independent countries acquiring their own armed forces as a guarantee for their security and as a symbol of national prestige. Nevertheless the capacity of these countries to equip themselves with weaponry is severely limited.

The most important constraint is, of course, the economic one. Confronted with the task of acting as catalysts for development and of overcoming acute poverty, most Third World countries have precious little they can spend on defence. Even in the case of unrepresentative regimes and tin-pot dictatorships in many of these countries, unrestrained defence expenditure becomes self-defeating — to stretch the economy to breaking point is to risk their own survival. It is only the newly-rich countries — in particular the OPEC nations — that have financial surpluses which can be spent on acquiring the latest weapons.

The other factor which acts as an equally important limitation on the arming of the Third World is the fact that it possesses neither the infrastructure nor the technology to produce its own arms. All Third World countries are dependent for their arms procurement on the major weapons producers from the two blocs who have a near-monopoly over defence industry. Thus the industrialised world does possess what may be termed a "veto" over the militarisation of the developing countries. It is a different matter that in their competition for influence among these countries the supply of arms becomes an important lever. At the same time the sale of arms has its impact on recycling petro-dollars and reducing the cost of production of new weapons systems by increasing the production lines.

This is not to suggest that regional rivalries, the problems of undemarcated borders and territorial and ethnic disputes have not been a factor influencing the militarisation of many a developing country. Nevertheless, an examination of the pattern of their defence expenditure reveals that it is in precisely these areas where regional animosities and conflicts have become interlinked with the rivalry between the two super-powers that the heaviest concentration of expenditure has occurred—West Asia and South-East Asia being prominent examples.

Despite the marginal impact that decreases in defence spending in the Third World would have on global disarmament, there is, nevertheless, a feeling —and one resulting very often from an interiorisation of Western attitudes imbibed at second and third hand—that it is somehow more "immoral" for these countries to arm themselves. While the industrialised world possesses an enormous 'overkill' capacity, enough to destroy the world several times over, and constantly refines the instruments of death through new technology, it preaches the virtues of non-militarisation to the Third World. "We who live with this burden," the argument goes, "know how awesome and onerous it is. It is our concern which makes us spare you the agonies of such terrifying responsibility". Nevertheless it cannot be gainsaid that the arms acquired by Iran, Zambia or Burundi do not pose a threat of extinction to mankind. They undoubtedly have an impact on the lives of individual citizens in the country concerned, particularly if large portions of the national budget are devoted to defence. But that is a matter which should rightly concern the citizens of that country, or, at best, its neighbours. It cannot be given priority in any meaningful programme for global disarmament.

Despite the fact that the Third World can have only marginal impact on disarmament, this issue has been one of its major preoccupations. The non-aligned movement, in particular, has laid great stress on the need for reduction of tension and on disarmament from the beginning. This concern is understandable. Not only would a reduction of tension between the super-powers and their agreement to undertake substantial disarmament measures increase the security of developing nations and make it possible for them to reduce their military expenditure, but it might also release global resources which could be used for their development.

Today there is urgent need to reassess the tactics that should be adopted in pursuit of disarmament. The history of disarmament, particularly in the nuclear field, has been the history of missed opportunities. In the forties and fifties the USA and, later, the USA and the Soviet Union had it within their power to rid the world of nuclear weapons. The pursuit of superiority and the attempt to achieve parity in any case, ensured that this option was never seriously explored. If sufficient efforts are not made at this juncture to exploit the possibilities that are open, it may prove to be another addition to the list of missed opportunities.

Let us see what new developments since the First Special Session on Disarmament (1978) have made the present time uniquely propitious for nuclear disarmament.

The most abvious is the groundswell of anti-nuclear feeling in both Western Europe and America. For the first time the ordinary, middle-of-the-road citizen is examining the validity of the nuclearisation of his country, and is not convinced that nuclear weapons do indeed have a deterrent value and promote peace. Unlike the strategists he sees nuclear weapons not in terms of *Mutual Assured Destruction, First Strike Capability or Flexible Response*, but in terms of how it lowers the odds of his survival. Hundreds and thousands of people have marched in favour of nuclear disarmament. In Europe the movement for nuclear disarmament has concentrated on preventing the deployment of the 572 new Pershing and Cruise missiles planned by NATO in 1979. In America it has concentrated on a "nuclear freeze". So

(*Continued on page 33*)

The Nuclear Inferiority Complex

HANS A. BETHE

The author is Professor Emeritus of Physics at Cornell University and was awarded Nobel Prize in Physics in 1967. On May 13, 1982, he appeared before the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee Here is the text of Professor Bethe's testimony before the Committee, which is being reproduced here with due acknowledgement to *The New York Review of Books* (June 10, 1982). It marks an important contribution to the current world-wide discussion on live issues of war and peace in the background of the Special Session of UN General Assembly on Disarmament and the resumption of talks between USA and USSR on strategic arms limitation in Geneva on June 29. —*Editor*

I have been a Professor of Physics at Cornell University since 1935. In 1967 I was awarded the Nobel Prize for studies of nuclear reactions in the stars. I was leader of the Theoretical Division of the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory from 1943 to 1945 when that laboratory developed the first atomic bomb. I have been consulted for the Los Alamos Laboratory at least once a year. I was a member of the President's Science Advisory Committee from 1957 to 1960, and remained a member of its Strategic Military Panel until 1969 when the panel was dissolved. In 1958 I participated in the Experts Conference in Geneva which discussed the verification of a ban on nuclear weapons tests, and led to the Partial Test Ban Treaty in 1963. I am testifying on behalf of the Union of Concerned Scientists of Cambridge, Massachusetts, but the ideas expressed in my testimony are my own.

SEVERAL members of the Government have stated repeatedly that we are inferior to the Soviet Union in strategic weapons, and that we need to build up our weapons. In my opinion there is no such inferiority. We have more nuclear warheads than the Russians, and I consider this to be the most important measure of relative strength. In addition, as Dr. Kissinger stressed many years ago, at the present level of strategic armaments, superiority in numbers or megatons has no meaning.

We are told that there is a window of vulnerability because the Russians might use their large ICBMs to destroy our land-based ICBMs. It is generally agreed that this is not possible *now*, but with the improving accuracy of Russian missiles it might become possible in a few years. Leaving the question of the technical feasibility aside, I claim that such a first strike would give no significant military advantage to the Russians.

The reason is that ICBMs make up only one-fourth of our strategic nuclear forces, as measured by the number of warheads. One-half of our force is on invulnerable nuclear-powered submarines, and another one-fourth is on bombers, many of which can take off from their widely dispersed airfields in case of an alert. We would therefore have ample striking force left even if *all* our ICBMs were destroyed.

An attack on our ICMBs would surely arouse the will to fight in the American people. The fallout from such an attack would kill millions of Americans. This would have an even more profound psychological effect than Pearl Harbor, but would have fewer military consequences than Pearl Harbor did.

It is sometimes argued that our submarine-based nuclear missiles do not have sufficient accuracy. However, if a Russian attack on our ICMBs is to make any sense at all, it would be accompanied by a massive invasion of Western Europe. The military installations for such an attack (airfields, munitions, and fuel storage depots), and the staging areas for an invasion, are all soft targets for which our submarine-based missiles would have plenty of accuracy. Therefore, a hypothetical first-strike against our ICBMs would have practically no effect on our war-fighting ability. Therefore, the window of vulnerability does not exist.

It is also often claimed that the Russians have introduced many new weapons of great power, such as the SS-18, SS-19, and SS-20, while we have done nothing. The latter statement is not true. While the outer envelope of our Minuteman ICBM has remained the same, we have progressed from Minuteman 1 to 2 to 3, and in the latter we have introduced MIRV, a development which the Russians imitated, and which led them to their great striking capability. More important, on our submarines we have progressed from the Polaris warhead to the Poseidon, and then to Trident I. The latter represents very significant progress. The range of Trident I is 4,000 miles, compared to about 2,000 for Poseidon. This permits our submarines to operate over most of the North Atlantic, and to still hit Russia. Submarines at sea are very difficult to find. Now that they can roam over such a vast area of ocean, they are far more elusive. This greatly enhances their invulnerability. The US has not stood still in nuclear weapons deployment.

The most important addition to our arsenal is the cruise missile, which is being deployed on our B-52 bombers. The cruise missile can penetrate into the Soviet Union. No defense system against it exists. The elaborate and costly Russian air defense system has been made obsolete by the cruise missile, 3,000 of which are to be installed on our bombers. In short we have, and will continue to have into the foreseeable future, two completely independent and essentially invulnerable strategic forces.

Because the cruise missile can penetrate the

Soviet Union as no bomber can, and because it has extreme accuracy, we do not need a new bomber, the B-1, and even less its follow-up, the STEALTH. Perhaps the B-52 will eventually have to be replaced, but I cannot see why this replacement should have elaborate electronic equipment to penetrate into Russia, equipment which accounts for the enormous cost of the B-1 and the STEALTH. Penetration can be achieved much more effectively and cheaply by the cruise missile.

THE government has stated that we need parity in strategic forces in every category. If this means that we need parity also in ICBMs, I disagree. With the increasing accuracy of missiles, on both sides, all land-based weapons will become vulnerable. I cannot think of any deployment on land that will be secure, and in my opinion the deployment of MX is a futile expenditure of money. We should maintain the emphasis on submarine and bomber forces; this makes our forces largely invulnerable, and thereby superior to those of the Soviets. If anyone has a window of vulnerability, it is the Soviet Union.

As I have said, several of our weapons programes are unnecessary: the B-1, the STEALTH, and the MX. But the submarine programme deserves our full support, especially the further improvement of secure communication links to our submarines, as has been rightly emphasised by this Administration. Also, if we wish to decrease our dependence on nuclear weapons in Europe, a goal which I strongly support, our conventional forces must be built up, especially by exploiting our available high-technology in anti-tank weapons.

We are not inferior to the Russians in strategic armaments. But we, the Russians, and Western Europe are severely threatened by the possibility that the enormous arsenal of nuclear weapons on both sides may some day be used. Our only hope lies in substantial reduction of these armaments. A good first step would be the ratification of the SALT II agreement by the Senate. The advantages of doing so have been persuasively demonstrated by Senator Gary Hart in *The New York Times* of May 2. Among other things, if SALT II had been ratified in 1980, the Russians would now have 250 fewer strategic missiles than they actually have, and they could not continue their buildup.

Obviously we must do more. I was happy to see that President Reagan has now proposed a plan for negotiating arms reduction with the Soviet Union. The first phase of this plan calls for a reduction of the nuclear warheads on each side from about 7,500 to about 5,000, and a significant (but apparently not specified) reduction in the number of missiles. This seems to me a reasonable and equitable plan. The proposed second phase, to equalise the throw-weight of the missiles, may be very difficult to negotiate because it requires greater sacrifices from the Soviet Union than from the US. It will be vitally important to choose an American negotiator who combines flexibility with firmness and is devoted to the goals of arms reduction and reaching an agreement with the Soviets.

NEGOTIATIONS with the Russians are difficult and lengthy in any case. The SALT II treaty took six years to negotiate. We cannot wait that long. We must stop the arms race by measures which are not subject to such long delay. I find most attractive the proposal by George Kennan, the famous expert on the Soviet Union, which has recently been revived by Admiral Noel Gayler in *The New York Times Magazine* of April 25. (*Mainstream*, May 29, 1982). The plan calls for similar reductions by both superpowers, let's assume by 5 per cent of the existing force per year. Each side would choose the weapons it wants to retire, and compliance could easily be verified by our satellites. This plan is so simple that it might be agreed on with very brief negotiation, like the Limited Test Ban in 1963. But it would, in fact, not require any agreement; we could make such a reduction, and challenge the Russians to do the same. If they do so, we would make another similar reduction the following year, and so on. This would not require any treaty, and it would enhance our security.

Such mutual reductions could not replace a negotiated treaty, which has a permanence far beyond the bilateral reductions that I just proposed. Furthermore, a treaty could optimise the balance and invulnerability of the two strategic forces. This would remove the threat of pre-emptive strikes, and the current hair-trigger readiness that could lead to nuclear war by accident or miscalculation.

To summarize:

— our strategic forces are, if anything superior to the Soviets';

— Our national security, and that of our allies, is most threatened by the grotesque size and continuing growth of both nuclear arsenals.

These are the basic facts. Once they are recognised, the essential features of a sound national security policy become apparent. ☐

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France : Mitterrand's First Year

SCHOFIELD CORYELL

THE "State of grace" — the short-lived period of euphoria that prevailed in Left circles and among class-conscious working people in the months following the electoral victory of the Socialist Party last May and June — has come to an end as the Mitterrand Government finds itself face to face with the unsolved problems of unemployment and inflation that plagued its conservative predecessors.

The first year of the Socialist Government was undoubtedly one of the more eventful years of recent French history in terms of Parliamentary activity, although it was uneventful in terms of extra-parliamentary mass action.

Quite a few much-needed and long-overdue laws were passed favouring those at the bottom of the social ladder and some significant reforms were enacted in the all-important field of civil rights and liberties.

At the same time, two basic structural reforms — intended to pave the way for some genuine shifts of power from those who formerly monopolised it to broader strata of the population — were promulgated in the course of the year.[1] These were the nationalisation law, affecting a series of vital industries, and the law on decentralisation designed to strengthen regional and local decision-making centres at the expense of Paris.

But such wide-sweeping measures can have an effect only in the middle-range future and do not by themselves solve the immediate problems or answer the anxieties of unemployed youths looking for their first jobs, of working-class households trying to make ends meet, or of shopkeepers facing bankruptcy.

France's small but active ecologists' movement has expressed bitter disappointment at the Government's emphasis on nuclear weapon development and its determination to go forward with the whole nuclear energy programme. Police repression against anti-nuclear demonstrations around the country has been as virulent as under the previous administration.

The Left-wing peace forces, for their part, are uneasy about Mitterrand's loudly-proclaimed commitment to NATO and his denunciation of the new anti-war movement which — with its neutralist and pacifist rather than pro-Soviet overtones — has been sweeping Western Europe. But they appreciate the new French Government's stand against United States support for Latin American dictators and against Washington's efforts to destabilise the few Left-wing regimes of the Western Hemisphere.

The contradictory and paradoxical performance of the Socialist Government seems to stamp it as one more Social-Democratic experience, with the same mixture of negative and positive features characteristic of every attempt to reform capitalism while operating through the mechanisms and institutions of the existing society.

After a year of real reforms, and equally real disappointments for the Left, the Mitterrand administration has been running into serious trouble. In several byelections, the newly-united conservative parties — that in their disunited state ingloriously lost last year's Presidential and legislative elections — won out over the Socialist-Communist coalition, and the important local elections throughout the country this March gave the conservatives control over a majority of regional and cantonal councils.

In the past few weeks. the Government has given definite signs of an intention to slow down the pace of reform and to pull its punches in its attack on the various fortresses of entrenched privilege and power. In the past few weeks, the tendency has been in the direction of substantial concessions to business interests, big and small. The idea is to stimulate investment and so promote the economic recovery that stubbornly refuses to materialise, with unemployment remaining "stabilised" at around two million and the inflation rate hovering around 14 per cent — a performance no better, but also no worse, than that of the previous administration. Government officials now regularly talk about "rigour", "effort" and the necessity of "encouraging business initiative" — expressions that contrast with, their original emphasis on "change" and the importance of "bolstering mass purchasing power."

Back in mid-April, following a meeting between the head of the National Centre of French Employers (the equivalent of the National Association of Manufacturers) and the Prime Minister, the Government announced a series of measures that the Communist Party and the Communist-led trade unions described as outright "gifts to the bosses". These included a substantial reduction of business taxes, the promise not to further reduce the work-week until 1984, the freezing of employers' contributions to Social Security until 1983. The employers' leader pretended that these measures were "inadequate" but — as the independent Leftist daily, *Liberation*, pointed out — he was only concealing the glee he felt at having won concessions that a more conservative regime might not have dared to make.

In a recent interview with the slick mass-circulation social-democratic weekly, *Nouvel Observateur*, the Prime Minister, Pierre Mauroy, insisted that nothing could be further from the Government's intentions than to reverse the direction of its efforts or abandon its socialist commitment, but that local circumstances and the world situation imposed a "change of pace" in the reform process. This is precisely the formulation he flatly repudiated last November when his Finance Minister, Jacques Delors, one of the more conservative members of Mitterrand's Cabinet, spoke of the necessity of a "pause" in the pace of change.

What do the militants of the far Left, or the New Left, think about the current situation and the danger of seeing the Mitterrand Government — the source of so much hope and enthusiasm a year ago — take a right turn? Huguette Bouchardeau — forty-year-old President of the small but dynamic United Socialist Party — told the *Guardian:*

> "Yes, the Government is sliding dangerously to the Right, making concession after concession to the employers and to the conservative part of the electorate. But, unfortunately, that type of behaviour could almost have been predicted under the present circumstances. The pressures from the Right are insistent and multiform and there is no strong democratic pressure to push the Government in the opposite direction, to the Left. That is the big weakness at the present time. There is a dismal lack of any vast, mass upsurge not against the Government, but in support of it, for the purpose of making it fulfil the people's demands for a more secure, freer and more meaningful life."

But all is not lost. The first significant sign of just the kind of mass activity that Bouchardeau was talking about took place in Paris in the last week of May in the form of a march of tens of thousands of trade unionists of every category and from a wide variety of factories to demonstrate their support for the embattled workers of the big privately-owned Citroen automobile plants.

Citroen is notorious for its goon squads, its brutal treatment of Left-wing militants, its racism against the immigrant workers who constitute the bulk of its semi-skilled labour force, the maintenance of a company union to which the workers are forced to belong and the ruthless exclusion of bona fide trade unions from its plants. In the generally freer atmosphere created by the presence of a Socialist Government, the Citroen workers, with the backing of the country's two main trade union federations, staged a courageous five-week strike for wage increases, improved working conditions — and the right to belong to unions of their choice. The strike was marked by numerous clashes pitting scabs and goons against the immigrant workers, but finally the mass mobilisation of support in the streets of Paris — under the auspices of both the Communist-led CGT and the Socialist-oriented CFDT, with the participation of the Communist and Socialist Parties — helped persuade the Citroen management to capitulate.

The long battle came to an end in the first days of June when Citroen agreed to accept a Government mediator's plan involving the setting up inside the plant of a supervisory "liberties commission" and a "wages commission" to help promote progress with respect to organising rights and wage improvements. The "breakthrough" at Citroen should be an encouraging sign for the entire labour movement in the country.

But will the kind of mass mobilisation that materialised in the Citroen case be repeated and multiplied? The fact is that without the accompaniment of a massive and influential people's movement, the Socialist Government may sink into the swamp of immobilism and partial capitulation to the pressure of the Right-wing opposition forces. The present situation is a paradoxical one where political power is in the hands of elected reformers with good intentions and high intelligence ("the best and the brightest"), while the bulk of the nation's productive apparatus — except for the now substantial public sector—is still under the control of Neanderthal industrialists and multinational executives who will do everything they can to obstruct the Government's efforts to cope with the recession by redistributing some of the country's concentrated wealth and power. The split personality of France's body politic explains the strange mixture of achievement and weaknesses so characteristic of the Mitterrand Government in its first year of power.

In the field of economic and social reform, the record is not unimpressive. The sweeping nationalisation measures — affecting five big industrial trusts, two holding companies and eighteen banks — were supplemented by the conversion of two major steel monopolies into state property, giving the Government a formidable instrument of economic policy. It remains to be seen how the Socialist power-structure will use this instrument to solve the gnawing problems of stagflation.

In order to reduce unemployment somewhat, the Government has announced its intention of creating some 90,000 jobs in the expanded public sector in the course of 1982. At the same time, a job-training programme for youths between sixteen and eighteen has been inaugurated with the intention of giving them some hope and possibilities for the immediate future, while enabling the economy to benefit from their energy and ability. As for the thousands of immigrant workers — mainly from Africa and Southern Europe — they are no longer threatened by sudden deportation as under Giscard's repressive and xenophobic rule. Some 100,000 such workers previously "undocumented", have been able to obtain work-cards and get their situation "regularised", which entitles them to be covered by social security.

A basic concept of the Socialist Government is that of coping with the unemployment problem by sharing the available work among a larger number of people. Thus, the Government decreed in January that the work-week would be reduced immediately to 39 hours "without loss of pay", with the perspective of bringing it down to 35 hours by 1985. These decisions (later modified in response to employer pressure) were accompanied by others along the same lines, such as a decision to increase the legally obligatory vacation period from four to five weeks and another fixing the retirement age at 60 rather than 65.

Such reforms were accompanied by measures increasing the minimum wage by 25 per cent and substantially raising old-age pensions, measures officially justified as being both humanitarian and economically sound since they should contribute to recovery by increasing purchasing power at the base of the social pyramid.

In the field of fiscal reform, a moderate new tax was imposed on huge fortunes — a measure touching only a tiny proportion of the tax-payers — while people in the very lowest income-brackets were excempted from taxation.

(*Continued on page 34*)

Beyond English

Getting Out of a Socio-political Mess

PEGGY MOHAN

SHOULD India dispense with English altogether? When this radical suggestion surfaces, it is almost predictably met by two sincere, bewildered questions. First: How, without English, do we keep in touch with the world of science outside India? Then: How, without English, do modern Indians from different States communicate with one another?

Our anguish is real: it is becoming clearer and clearer how deeply we have committed ourselves to English as our access to the modern world, yet we are gradually learning how difficult it is to teach a new language like English throughout a poor country like ours, and how much our own standards seem to be slipping even as the number of English-medium schools increases. Alongside our helplessness in finding a solution to these concerns, and our fear of the insensitivity of local language chauvinists, we cannot help seeing what English has come to mean in our society. Can we even hope to sustain its pre-eminent position against the populist tide of the future? Is it even in our own interest to try? Do we lose more than we gain by clinging to English?

English is very clearly difficult for all Indian children. Indian English, despite demands that it be regarded as another "legitimate" variety of English, differs sharply from American, Canadian, Irish, Australian and New Zealand English in that it really is not a native language at all. Indian pre-schoolers, even in very elite families, have an Indian native language which they speak very well. Even elite parents generally speak to their children in their Indian language, whether they use this language otherwise or not, and often their children's speech is more fluent and more natural than theirs.

However, when by the age of six these children do begin to use English, their English is usually markedly different from their parents': instead they use all the "convent school" stereotypes typical of their age group. Their word-order is more Indian, the grammar and pronunciation show signs of Indian language interference, theire store of sentence-models is more limited — in sharp contrast with the English of Indian children who have lived abroad in English-speaking countries, which is comfortable, fluent and native-like.

This was not the "Indian English" parents here were clamouring to "legitimise", but a medley of stigmatised forms which these children will slowly unlearn over the next ten or so years. Long, wasteful years. They will learn English adjusting to the speech of the age group (and social class) directly above them, one stage at a time, in a continuous process. There are no short-cuts to their parents' level of proficiency — short of leaving the country.

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This would certainly not be the case if these six-year-olds were confronted with another local language instead of English. The Indian child's exposure to English is not as total or as constant as an American child's, or as complete an exposure as he could have to another local Indian language, which he could hear used in a full range of human situations, and by ideal speakers. English is different, because it exists in a strange complementary relationship with the Indian native language, each language having its own set of functions — a phenomenon known in linguistics as *diglossia.*

The role of English in India is not primarily academic, as we pretend, but has traditionally been social. English is the language which demarcates India's elites, the language of their more sophisticated social discourse, and children are only ready to be initiated into this charmed circle at the polite age of five or six.

If English were primarily a key to science and learning, smart Indian children would learn it more efficiently. Then we wouldn't have to see obviously bright "English-speaking" children struggling to understand absurdly elementary English language text-books on science, history and geography. Then we would not have the paradox of teenagers, articulate with trivial conversation in English, falling miserably to pieces when asked to express their original thoughts in English, making grammatical mistakes and using simplistic sentences one would never have expected. English, in other words, is part of a thin class veneer. Its academic role is simply an extension of its social role, and a cheap excuse for its persistence.

It is in this light that we must consider the rhetoric about our own local languages being unequal to the task of educating and developing our society. Akhileshwar Jha, in this tradition published (*The Times of India,* July 9, 10, 11, 1981) a graceless eulogy to our colonial language, in three parts, whose aim was to hammer home the point, repetitiously, that our own Indian languages are hopelessly under-developed, almost inherently inferior, and that were it not for the example of English, they would not have grown at all.

This argument is essentially a synchronic class argument. Synchronic in that it holds a static view of society, it does not depict our present circumstances as the outcome of our own peculiar history, or as a situation itself capable of change, but as something we must take for granted as a perpetual reality, and something supremely normal.

The subliminal message in this class argument is, plainly, that English must be "better" than

Indian languages since the people who speak and prefer English are "better" than other Indians — even if only in terms of social comfort — and more "modern" since they are westernised.

True: our present social, economic and academic leadership is overwhelmingly English-oriented. True: this elite group overwhelmingly prefers literature in English. True: this group is not, as a rule, terribly receptive to literature in Indian languages, and hence does not patronise or encourage it. But this is simply a statement of prevailing social tastes. None of this is a valid argument against any Indian language per se.

That a modern healthy language may lack vocabulary to express certain new concepts is only a reflection on the *uses* to which this language has been put, and not on the language's inherent capabilities. Most of the words we "lack" in our Indian languages are new to English as well. Vocabulary is by far the most dynamic aspect of a language, with new words being coined all the time as others fall into disuse. If we used our Indian languages in all spheres of our lives we would not "lack" these words for long — unless we never really needed them at all!

The English lobby generally presents English as contending with Hindi, and Hindi alone, for the linguistic leadership of India. To dismiss English, they feel, is to force Hindi as it now stands on to our entire population — an instant threat outside the Hindi belt. This is precisely the sort of binary perspective offered by monolingual, English-speaking West — switch to another *single* language. But India is not so simple, and language is one arena where the West is too inexperienced to offer us solutions. Any viable solution to our "language problem" will have to do more than simply replace English with just *one* of our Indian languages. Fortunately, more imaginative, satisfactory solutions are well within our capabilities, and will emerge for themselves when we don't have English to retard us.

The point, however, is that the elite, with all superiority English has afforded them, have failed to develop this country into a modern, prosperous society, and, in turn, have failed to develop their own full potential. This failure is the most telling comment on the status quo they take for granted as permanent and desirable. It is not to improve the country that the English lobby wants English to persist: it is concerned with the fortunes of a much smaller group, the "nearly two and a half per cent", as Jha puts it, who have English now as a sinecure.

To remove English is to abolish this quasi-feudal privilege and open up opportunities more evenly to the wider society. And this may be the best argument yet in favour of dismissing English once and for all.

What of the others, who at present must enter this elite world in order to be educated? It is totally unrealistic to try to equip them all with a top-quality English education from the very start. We simply do not have the teachers or the resources to do so. In fact, to stress English is to ensure that these students learn woefully sub-standard English, since they will learn it from teachers who themselves know very little English, and communicate their insecurity better than the actual language structure. The smaller provincial schools cannot hope to draw on the leisured elite for English faculty, since large hotels, airlines and big business offer more glossy elite careers. So these intelligent students are doomed to face problems in understanding their college lectures and, even more, in participating in classes and expressing their own ideas, and will waste valuable time picking up and correcting their English, when they ought to be concentrating on their own academic interests.

The most stupid waste of all is all the time spent absorbing the language system of a foreign society in order to study universal truths and ultimately our own society and its problems.

To pose our original questions differently: Could it be a sign of the failure of our present system that we automatically associate science and modernity with an alien society we could never belong to? Do we regard our own culture, our own language, as inherently inimical to science and modernity? The truth is that we have, by associating concepts like science and modernity with the English language, turned a universal human quest for science and modernity into a class-bound activity, effectively confined to India's elites. And when science itself is regarded as intrinsically Western, India's own scientific and developmental goals are automatically redefined towards "keeping abreast of the West", despite our stated social objectives.

Students, even in our most elite schools and universities, with all their linguistic access to the modern scientific West, have generally not developed into the thinkers, innovators and scientists we had anticipated. Instead, our brightest students overwhelmingly opt for more routine careers in the IAS, management or the bureaucracy, and spend their lives conservatively and uncritically in societal "housekeeping". It seems we made a fundamental mistake in assuming that our best English speakers would automatically make our best intellectuals and scientists, when elites are normally more concerned with preserving the social order than with academic speculation and social reform. One could well say that since the academic and research world does not appeal to these English-speakers, this in itself calls into question the honesty of their claim that we need English primarily to keep up in education and science.

Worst of all, however, by making scientific participation conditional on English proficiency, we have straightaway excluded our traditional artisans and craftsmen from the process of science and development. They cannot even become our technicians and research assistants, since they lack the official credentials for the job. Even our truly exceptional artisans cannot succeed within out present system, since language presents one more problem to their already disadvantaged state. But these are the technical perfectionists and the genuinely curious and inventive people within our culture. These are the people with something original and uniquely Indian to offer. English and its culture has failed them most of all.

Without English do we lose our links with the modern Western world?

If we accept that our communication with the outside world, at a technical level, is essentially one-way, India being the audience, then we have little to lose by not exporting our ideas in English to the West. Moreover, not writing in English does not necessarily mean that one must not understand written English, perhaps well enough to make out whether a publication is worth having translated.

This is the level of proficiency the Soviets, Chinese, Japanese, Scandinavians and Europeans have in mind when we read in the press that they are trying to "promote English". *They are not proposing to do away with their own languages in favour of English, or even to write their academic papers in English.* They simply hope that some of their scholars with spare time and a flair for languages would be able to pick up English and read English-language publications useful in their own work.

This level of proficiency we could easily and far more economically achieve by ignoring English until it is needed, and then grasping it quickly and correctly through efficient, well-focussed crash courses. It may even be that we would read more foreign articles and understand their argumentation better if we had our fundamentals clear in our own languages. This might also open our minds to scientific output and ideas in other foreign languages. We would also generate more literature in our own languages, on more topical issues, which more of us could read comfortably.

We are not, however, totally unimportant to the West. Western scholars have often shown interest in our raw data and the results of our more routine factual studies. In general, however, they do not turn to us for theoretical analysis or new insights. *We are instead primary producers in their scentific process.* If we sustain this relationship, and do research purely on the basis of encouragement and applause from the West, in the form of conference trips, fellowships, grants and potential journal publications, we condemn ourselves to an unequal partnership which only outwardly looks like a full and active science. As primary researchers we are not even required to think about the data we collect, and which we alone can fully understand. We even delude ourselves that this neutral stance is a sign of our scientific objectivity! If instead we concentrated simply on interesting research, regardless of its importance outside India, we would probably end up with something new and major to offer.

It is also simply not true that a modern scientific language has to be an 'international' language. Japan, the quintessential technical society, functions entirely in Japanese, a language exclusive to Japan, and which the Japanese are convinced is too difficult for everyone else! Israel, a modern scientific society, originally a multilingual society, has even resurrected its dead ethnic language, Hebrew, and modernised it to unify a country of Jewish immigrants. This language has grown into a natural language, and Israel's language of science. Russian, Chinese, German, Swedish, Norwegian, Czech and Polish are also scientific, but not international, languages. *It is the quality of our output, and not its linguistic medium, which will determine our contribution to the outside world.*

When India detonated its nuclear device in 1974, almost overnight the US Department of Defence established National Defence Foreign Language Fellowships for American University students willing to study a major Indian language. It wasn't really necessary. But this shows so clearly that when our "output", scientific or otherwise, is of international importance, the West is willing and prepared to cross the language barrier itself.

There is also no inherent reason why a modern scientific society has to be a monolingual society. If India is dominantly multilingual, with no single majority language, imposing any one Indian language throughout the system may be a serious mistake. Besides favouring one group in the short run, such a policy ignores what may be a major and fundamental difference between our society and those in the West, and perhaps, ultimately a source of strength and not a weakness. We are neither an immigrant society nor a homogenised culture, as are most Western countries, but something far less artificial. Our older diversity has not been wiped out in a standardisation process. It is new for us to be working together as we do now. *It is natural and legitimate for us to be as polyglot as we are.* Perhaps our own inherent diversity might give us a less parochial view of the world than most homogeneous societies are capable of.

Is there a workable alternative to English, which could ensure a fuller participation in scientific activity, a more effective system of education and an honest confrontation of our own problems, without sacrificing communication within this country?

Yes: the only feasible option is to conduct all education in our own regional languages. Shifting the emphasis in this way from the present "horizontal" axis of communication among English-speaking "equals" all over the country (and their peers abroad) to a more "vertical" axis of communication, spanning India's large social spectrum within each State, will probably do little to disturb already existing relationships. But it will certainly help a much larger number of intelligent Indians who are cut off from participating in scientific activity at present.

We may have to decide, then, what constitutes a regional language, and whether tribal and other minority languages within a State qualify for this status. What is important here, however, is that education be in a language students know well and have full and continuous access to, irrespective of their class background, and a language the teacher knows well enough to take for granted. It may even do teachers and students some good, and make lessons clearer, if neither party could take refuge in old outdated "text-books" while new, up-to-date books are being written in the local languages!

How, in such a system, does one achieve communication between the States? Passive competence, adequate for reading journals and research reports, is not a particularly difficult proposition, especially with languages related and similar to one's own. Most linguists agree that Indian languages, with the exception of the tribal languages, are strikingly similar in their *internal* structures: their word-orders are very similar, their grammatical categories are very similar, and their store of concepts is very similar. They more or less share the same world-view, and differ in much the same ways from non-Indian languages. Their major areas of difference are their vocabularies and their writings system. *The script is the most recent and least intrinsic part of a language: most people in India do not even know the writing systems of the languages they obviously know very well and speak most comfortably.* And particularly since the scripts of most Indian languages are based on the same principle, it may be worth considering the possibility of a single national script more convenient for typists and printers, with invariant whole-letter symbols arranged in a linear order. Like the West and the Soviet Union, we could even consider using a separate orthography for printing and typing, keeping our own beautiful scripts for handwriting. In any case our half-letters do seem to pose a spelling problem to our semi-literates.

Reading technical literature in another Indian language, in a national script, ought to be even easier than reading a totally foreign language like English or German. For one thing, scientific writing is generally devoid of the slang, the nuances, the local colour, and the slurred accent characteristic of, for example, a regional film. The language is usually clear, precise and explicit. Technical terms, too, are often common among related languages, and since these terms will probably be brought into the various Indian languages simultaneously, we should aim at a standarised terminology for all Indian languages. New concepts or inventions developed later on could then be named in the institutions or laboratories from which they originate. This would give onr scientists interest in focussing on important topics from their local environment, and to discuss them in the language they and their readers know best.

A passive competence of this type is only adequate for skimming through the published literature. For inter-group discussion, at a national level, we may ultimately need a single link language. *Link languages, however, cannot be planned out on a drawing board and unleashed on a captive population.* These attempts at language planning invariably fail when populations stubbornly reject these languages. The job of a realistic language planner is rather to *discover* the spontaneous developments of wide-appeal languages within mixed groups and to encourage them by giving them official sanction, by treating them as important. Fortunately, developments of this sort are bound to take place, usually within a very short space of time. Any mixed population which is suddenly made to see itself as a coherent group, but with no shared language, will quickly evolve its own linguistic identity whether these be recruits in an army camp, migrant labourers on a tea estate, or an assortment of tribals in the North-East.

People in daily contact simply do not ever remain without a wider group language for very long, and the languages they create are simple and compatible with the languages of all the groups in the wider community. This has to be so, since *large groups* of people do not have the skill of well-motivated individuals in mastering new languages, and tend to simplify other languages, or use their old intuitions in speaking them, rather than wasting time on unimportant details. Perhaps the English lobby is too rigid in its linguistic habits to participate in this process: typically speakers of high-prestige languages tend to have lost the nebulous, wide-ranging capacity for language which we see in speakers of less "important" languages. The latter don't see language boundaries in quite the same way, and can "tune in" to the speech of a wider geographical area. *These are the people who could evolve an optimal alternative to English,* and the next generation of Indian children would expand and shape this national language, and impart a "natural" logic to it. Historically it has always been *children,* below the age of five, who have consolidated and expanded new link languages. The hypothesis is that they use their *genetic language logic,* with which they "discover" their native language, to impart natural discipline to a new unformed native language.

In this new vernacular system English would ultimately become a genuinely foreign language, like French or Russian, studied by individuals simply interested in learning a new language for work or pleasure. This may even bring a greater professionalism and perfectionism to our English, and remove the social and psychological strain we now face in mastering what is still primarily an elite language in India.

None of these changes are easy, nor are they a question of individual will. Removing a few children from English-medium schools, and placing them in vernacular schools with less facilities, will not make any difference. *The problem is at a societal level. As in an epidemic, the solution has to be a global solution if it is to help each and every individual.* The changes needed to bring in a new system beyond English can only be possible together with other fundamental social changes, after a period of intense social examination. *English as a language system is only a tiny part of the problem.* It is in its relationship to our other mistakes in orientation and our other mistaken assumptions that it has its full negative impact. The moment when we finally let go of English will only come when we are fully convinced that our present relationship with English has failed us.

At moments of social euphoria, when creative elements within the society sense chinks in the old intellectual orthodoxy, there is often a rush of intellectual and scientific endeavour. India saw this at the start of the Buddhist period, again at the start of the Moghul period, and most recently in the wake of Independence. When we finally dismiss English and allow a fuller participation in the modern society we want, we can probably expect a blossoming of initiative in response. That will be the time to set down roots for the new system, beyond English. □

Harijans : Time for New Approach

GHULAM RABBANI TABAN

"And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying E-lo'-i, E-lo'-i, La-ma sa-bach'-thani? Which is, being interpreted, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (St Mark, 15, 34)

THE fact whether God did or did not forsake Christ has no relevance to the present article. The quotation from the Bible is only meant to illustrate that at times it does seem that some people have been virtually forsaken by Him. For instance, take the case of Harijans who for all practical purposes have not only been forsaken by God but, one might say, thrown to the wolves. Over the centuries they have been barbarously oppressed, exploited and humiliated by the higher castes, which prompted Macaulay to refer to us as "a race debased by three thousand years of despotism and priestcraft and sunk in slavery and superstition". The legend that their present plight is a divine retribution for sins committed in previous lives can hardly convince anyone or console the victims.

He must be a very unjust and vicious God under whose fostering dispensation black-marketers, profiteers, smugglers, tax-evaders, exploiters and other unscrupulous beneficiaries of the present power structure continue to flourish and thrive, but millions and millions of Harijans are condemned to life-long misery for some obscure acts of omission and commission for which no legal system of the world will hold them responsible.

More interesting is the case of the Muslim rural *elite* who do not believe in previous lives and cannot take recourse to this pretext. I know from personal experience that they are second to none in the nefarious game of Harijan-baiting. I was born in a village and spent my early life there. I have seen those unfortunate people being exploited and humiliated both by high-caste Hindus and Muslims. Vivid memories of inhuman treatment meted out to them are still fresh in my mind.

This is a dreadful phenomenon. The caste system is firmly entrenched and social inequality is considered divinely ordained. Despite efforts made by people of goodwill right from Mahatma Buddha down to Mahatma Gandhi, the situation remains unchanged. In the words of the Chairman of the Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Bhola Paswan Shastri, "You cannot really stop atrocities against Harijans unless the system itself is changed". According to him, "The basic weakness of the struggle to protect these people from oppression and humiliation is that while sympathy has been expressed for those poor people, nobody has launched an attack on the system which sanctions their treatment as inferior beings".

The problem has grown in intensity as is evident from blood-curdling stories of massacres of Harijans. Politicians, with a few noble exceptions, are not bothered about anything beyond their narrow self-interest. Our Constitution provides for equal rights for all and reservations for Harijans in education, services and legislatures. But, as we have seen in the recent past, even this is frowned upon by the higher castes. All this has made some people question whether equality can at all be achieved in a society ridden with caste hierarchy and consequent exploitation of the weaker sections.

Probably it was this feeling of frustration which drove Dr. Ambedkar to repudiate the faith and society which treated him as unequal. When he said "I was born a Hindu but I will not die a Hindu", it was the anguished cry of a tormented soul trying to get back his own after centuries. The same frustration is driving Harijans to opt for Christianity and Islam. But the communalists led by the RSS refuse to see the facts as they are and, instead of getting at the heart of the matter, use this tragic human problem as a pretext to whip up hatred against Muslims and Christians. The Meenakshipuram incident was blown out of all proportion. No person in his senses will believe that Muslims, who could not become a majority in the course of eight hundred years of autocratic rule, will become so by converting a few hundred or, for the matter of that, a few thousand Harijans.

Some progressive writers, including the author of the present article, addressed an open letter to Hans Raj Gupta, one of the conveners of the Virat Hindu Sammelan held in Delhi (*Secular Democracy*, December 1981). While appreciating his sympathetic attitude towards Harijans, we pointed out that they would have to wage a relentless struggle against vested interests for their emancipation and observed, "This struggle is not confined to Harijans alone. High class Hindus like you, who are sympathetic to their cause, have a vital role to play. They must search their hearts. Are they prepared to abjure *Varnashram?* Are they prepared to repudiate all the derogatory references to *Sudras* in the scriptures? Are they prepared to allow Harijans to enter the temples and, if and when necessary, perform the duties of *pujaris?* Are they prepared to permit inter-caste marriages? These questions must be categorically answered. Unless they are answered firmly in the affirmative and supported by practical proof, all talk about Harijans being an integral part of Hindu society is pure bunkum".

Of course our letter remains unanswered. Gupta and his compatriots are currently engaged in the strenuous exercise of inflammatory rhetoric against illusory enemies of Hindu Dharma, meaning thereby all those who do not agree with them, but are not prepared to grapple with the basic problem. It is futile to expect an organisation to oppose the caste system whose choice of leadership is virtually limited to Brahmins.

It is my firm conviction that conversion is no solution to this vexed problem. I know some Harijans who have embraced Islam as also a few converted to Christianity. Conversion does not help to change their social status. They are still looked down upon. The social stigma still remains. At the time when much dust was raised about the so-called Islamisation of Meenakshipuram, I wrote an article entitled "Conversion No Way to Emancipation". I quote its concluding para: "The path to the goal of emancipation of the untouchables lies through revolutionary process of relentless struggle against social vested interests and *not* through conversion to other faiths". This was endorsed by Bhola Paswan Shastri. He points out, "If the Gandhian method of appeal to individual conscience does not work, the Communist method of bringing about social change is bound to attract people, particularly the poorer sections."

But the million dollar question is, how to organise them? Who is going to lead these poor wretches steeped in ignorance and poverty? Where will the dedicated cadre come from? The most unfortunate part of it is that those Harijans who somehow get education and attain social status shun their own people. Although they are not treated by higher castes as equals and are constantly remained of their "lowbirth", nevertheless they endeavour to gain pseudorespectability by disowning their communities.

One could reasonably expect the Left parties to take up their cause and give them a lead, but their current pre-occupation with parliamentary politics leaves no time for work among the masses. They know full well that atrocities on Harijans cannot be stopped without drastic agrarian reforms and an all-out frontal attack on the caste system. But this awareness is limited only to a few political resolutions and lip sympathy. I am sorry to admit that like the rest of the political parties they also have only one object in view, and that is to get a few seats in Parliament or State Legislatures. While no one is against parliamentary activities, the Left leadership must also give serious thought to the daily worsening communal and caste situation, launch a crusade against it and live up to the hopes and expectations of the weaker sections who have always reposed confidence in them. Defence of cherished values is at least as important as getting a few seats in Parliament. Is it not time for Left initiative in this direction? Palliative efforts are not going to be of much help and may even accentuate the malady.

Sporadic *Dalit* movements surfacing in various parts of the country are still in embryonic stage. But they are fraught with latent potentialities. Emergence of *Dalit* literature is a welcome sign of a new awareness among the downtrodden. This consciousness and rural resurgence can be channelised into a powerful movement against caste highhandedness, by the Left parties who have plenty of experience as well as devoted workers. But the crucial question is whether the Left will prove equal to the challenge; whether they will opt for cozy air-conditioned legislatures or stinking dirty hovels devoid of not only all comforts but even the bare necessities of life. □

Tackling UP's Backwardness

KRIPA SHANKAR

THE problem of poverty and backwardness is stupendous in Uttar Pradesh. About eighty per cent of the population is dependent on agriculture and the per capita net sown area is less than 0.2 hectare and per capita agricultural produce is about Rs 562. Average size of holding has now come down to 1 hectare and 70 per cent of holdings are below 1 hectare. About 20 per cent of the population consists of agricultural labourers who do not find work for more than 200 days in the year and their daily wage rate ranges between Rs 4 and Rs 6. About half the population of the State is below the poverty line, and their number is increasing by nearly 10 lakhs annually in this State.

Only 4 per cent of the workers are employed in manufacturing and employment in the private organised sector is now stagnating round 5 5 lakhs. The backlog of unemployed has been estimated at 13.4 lakhs and another 48 lakh persons will be added to the labour force during the Sixth Plan period during which period not more than 23 lakh jobs may be created, thereby increasing the backlog to about 40 lakhs by the close of the Sixth Plan in 1985.

UP is not only nearly at the bottom among the States in terms of per capita income, but in education and medical facilities also it has a similar position. UP's per capita income was slightly higher than the national per capita income but on account of slower growth of the economy it has been losing ground and at present the per capita income is only two-thirds of the national per capita income.

With the introduction of high-yielding varieties of seed, chemical fertiliser and extension of irrigation facilities, etc, agricultural production increased rapidly from the mid-sixties, but the tempo of growth could not be maintained. The growth rate in agricultural production has declined since the early seventies, and in terms of per capita production of foodgrains the situation is no better than it was a decade back. Per capita production of foodgrains was 186 kg in 1950-51, which increased to 211 kg in 1971, but since then it has remained at a lower level. The population of the State is growing annually by 26 lakhs, and even if the targets of foodgrains production fixed under the Sixth Plan at

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the end of 1985 are achieved, per capita production of foodgrain may be only marginally higher than the level achieved in 1970-71.

It is only by increasing agricultural production in the first instance that foundations for rapid growth of the economy of the State can be laid. The State has very fertile land and potential for growth of irrigation is also large but, by and large, it is inability to develop the irrigation potential at a much faster rate that explains the relatively poorer performance of the State economy.

Thus, if the State is to develop faster, every nerve should be strained to increase irrigation facilities rapidly. When irrigation is provided other things follow of their own accord. Cultivators take to the new agricultural technology and cropping intensity increases. In conditions of assured irrigation multiple-cropping is practised, leading to better utilisation of the existing rural labour force and consequent increase in their income. States like Punjab and Haryana now occupy the top position in terms of per capita income only because they have the largest irrigation facility.

Half of the cultivated area in the State is still unirrigated and all resources should be directed to the development of irrigation and power if better performance is to be achieved. It is by raising the quantum of investment in various productive activities that the State can hope to march at an accelerated rate. This calls for more resource mobilisation on the part of the Government, but it is even more important that the resources so mobilised should as far as possible be utilised in such way that they go directly to improve the productive base. Utmost economy should be made in Government expenditure, and insofar as it is possible all non-developmental expenditure should be brought to the minimum. Effort should be made to ensure that in future non-developmental expenditure is not allowed to escalate — or if that is not possible, is allowed to escalate very moderately. If resources are eaten away on account of escalation of such expenditure, the very purpose of additional resource mobilisation will be defeated. Such expenditure is growing inordinately in the State. Administrative expenditure in the State amounted to Rs 195 crores in 1981-82 but for the current year it is slated at Rs 364 crores out of which expenditure on the police is put at Rs 146 crores. During the last seven years expenditure on the police has gone up by three times and it is increasing by Rs 25 crores annually. The Finance Minister of UP lamented the other day that whereas the total revenue from the State's own sources is Rs 650 crores the salary bill is Rs. 850 crores and that a part of the Central assistance is utilised to meet establishment expenses. The salary bill has nearly doubled in a couple of years.

Apart from the fact that a very large part of the revenue goes to meet non-development items, a more distressing aspect is that outlay even under developmental heads is highly establishment-oriented. The budget expenditure on agriculture, industries, etc., has very little provision for directly assisting the producers who have to depend on cooperative societies and banks for meeting their investment requirements. The bulk of the budget of such departments goes to meet establishment charges and very little goes to strengthen the productive apparatus.

While formulating the Draft Sixth Plan the State Government envisaged that an outlay of Rs. 9,661 crores would be the minimum if the State was not to be left further behind. But as regards resources, the State expressed its inability to mobilise more than Rs. 3,921 crores and wanted the Centre to finance the rest to the extent of Rs. 5,740 crores. The latter was not willing to shoulder any burden beyond Rs. 2,279 crores, hence the State had no alternative but to agree to slashing of the outlay to Rs. 6,200 crores. If the State could mobilise another Rs. 3,461 crores the targets of the Draft Plan could be adhered to, but in its absence the targets were reduced considerably.

While reducing the total Plan outlay by about one-third it was open to the Government to reduce the outlay on such items which were not directly related to improvement of the production base and as far as possible maintain the original outlay figures at least in respect of irrigation and power. But the outlay on irrigation and power was reduced by 30 per cent, involving a reduction of Rs. 1,475 crores. It is not denied that expenditure on social and community services and several welfare measures are also important, but under the compulsions of the situation what is of overriding importance is the fact that the production base, particularly irrigation and power, should be strengthened first, and if production and employment grow, it will enhance the welfare of the community. It is certainly a difficult choice, but planners have to take a long-term view of the developmental process. The plan outlay should be strictly confined to making direct investments in agriculture, industries, and building the infrastructure, whereas expenditure on social and community services should be made from the non-plan portion of the Budget. Inclusion of expenditure on social and community services which, as mentioned earlier, is heavily establishment-oriented no doubt inflates the total outlay, but in terms of improving the production base its role may be minimal. This is why, despite the fact that annual Plan outlay per head of population in the State is now more than Rs. 100, yet this is not reflected in the growth in per capita income.

But the obvious course of mobilising more resources is always open to the Government, and all those who stand above the average level should not grudge it if their incomes are further taxed. The large cultivators, persons in the upper echelons of industry, trade, commerce, services and professions should be subjected to more rigorous taxation as income and asset distribution in the State is highly inequitous and the income recipients in the higher brackets are indulging in unbridled and wasteful consumption.

The State can also take recourse to bank funds as the credit-deposit ratio is very low in the State. Nearly 55 per cent of the bank deposits in amounting to Rs. 1600 crores is currently being diverted to other more developed States, and as private entrepreneurs are unable to utilise this fund, the state can well borrow this amount from the banking system to finance various developmental schemes.

Unless the non-productive pattern of Government expenditure is changed and further resources are mobilised in a drastic manner and used primarily in strengthening the productive base, there appears no hope for UP, either for accelerating the growth rate or for meeting the challenge of poverty. ◻

Nuclear Nightmare

Some Less Known Aspects

VIMAL BALASUBRAHMANYAN

> "*The atom bomb has changed everything except our mode of thinking.*" — Albert Einstein.
>
> "*If present trends continue, the air we breathe, the food we eat, and the water we drink will soon be contaminated with enough radioactive pollutants to pose a potential health hazard far greater than any plague humanity has ever experienced.*"
> — Dr Helen Caldicott in *Nuclear Madness.*

THESE are the opening quotes in two nuclear bulletins compiled recently by the Health and Society Group to raise public consciousness, from sources which include publications like: *From Hiroshima to Harrisburg, Nuclear Madness, Atomic Bombs and Human Beings, The Big Risk: Nuclear Power,* and *Radiation: Your Health at Risk.* The information thus capsuled is timely in the context of the nuclear question which is invariably being debated only in terms of cost, need and expertise, studiously ignoring the very pertinent dimension of health. It is, however, this fourth, less publicised aspect which is at the heart of the growing anti-nuclear movement in the West: nuclear technology, by its very existence, whether for defence, deterrence or development, poses the "greatest public health threat of all time."

In February this year, at a seminar in New Delhi, two scientists from the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research called for an honest assessment of the country's nuclear technology instead of the "cover-up attempts of incomplete successes". Their questions were raised in the context of the usual three dimensions. It is time the public became more conscious af the fourth nuclear dimension of health and also became aware of the lessons that have stirred the West to awareness of the invisible, invidious and long-term dangers of nuclear technology. The sobering facts quoted in the bulletins place the issue in perspective:

*In St George, the Utah (USA), child leukemia deaths rose by 250 per cent following the 1951 Nevada tests.

*Film star John Wayne died of cancer last year. He was one of a film team that had shot a film in the Nevada desert. Since then members of the team are one by one dying of cancer.

*In 1969, Dr Sternglass, Professor of Radiation Physics at the University of Pittsburgh, said that according to his studies, some 40,000 infants less than one year old had probably died as a result of nuclear fall-out between 1950 and 1965.

*Around the Big Rock Point reactor on Lake Michigan, child leukemia rates were found to be four times greater than in the rest of Michigan state.

*A study by the Bremen Institute for Biological Safety on the population around the Linger reactor in West Germany found that ten years prior to the operation of the plant there were 30 leukemia deaths. In the ten years after nuclear operations began (1968-78), the same population suffered 230 deaths from leukemia and 170 of the children were less than 15 years old.

*In 1958, there was a huge explosion at a plant in the South Urals (USSR). Hundreds of square miles of land were so heavily contaminated that entire villages were wiped out by death and evacuation. It is now a waste land devoid of life.

Equally pertinent are some of the facts highlighted in *Biological Effects of Radiation* (Wykeham Science Series):

"In 1954, 239 Marshallese Islanders, 28 US military personnel and 23 Japanese fishermen were exposed to radiation in mid-Pacific as a result of fall-out from a thermonuclear device. One Japanese fisherman died.

"There is a high incidence of tumours of the thyroid in the Japanese atomic bomb survivors as well as in the children of the Marshall Islands in the Pacific. An unprecedented change in the wind blew radio-active ash over the islands in 1954 after the test explosion. Radioactive iodine in the fall-out induced thyroid tumours in 50 per cent of the children over ten years of age. No previous thyroid tumours had been reported in Marshallese children of this age."

The ill effects of radiation cannot be immediately perceived, quantified or proved — which makes it easy to ignore, play down or suppress these facts. The bulletins point out that besides Hiroshima, other fatalities from high-dose radiation have taken place within the confines of nuclear power stations or nuclear weapons factories. "The relatives of the thousands of people around the world who have died of the long-term effects of lower doses of radiation or the parents of deformed babies are not usually able to trace the cause of their grief to a source of radiation." The Atomic Age began only 37 years ago. The latency period of cancer is 12 to 40 years and genetic mutations may manifest themselves only after some generations. We have therefore only just begun to perceive some of the delayed effects of radiation. One reaction to the horror is that this is a complicated subject and is the domain of 'experts'. Side by side is the misplaced faith in the ability of science to come up with a solution. But the fact is that *there is neither protection nor treatment once radiation is let loose.* The only difference between nuclear weapons and nuclear reactors is that one goes off with a huge blast while the other releases its radioactivity slowly and quietly over time. The effects are the same: environmental damage, human death and mutation.

The bulletins explain how nuclear authorities suppress studies relating to the health effects of radiation: "They do this by cutting off funding as in the case of Dr Thomas Mancuso, physician and professor in the Public Health Department of the University of Pittsburgh, and Dr Irwin Bross and Dr E.J. Sternglass. They also engage in personal attacks on these scientists quite out of keeping with the objective assessment of evidence that should be the basis of scientific judgements. Information about accidents is suppressed and the damage done is disregarded."

And accidents are not at all as infrequent or unlikely as the authorities try to make out. "By the late 1960s, nuclear plants in Britain, USA, USSR and Canada had all experienced major accidents." Repairs are hazardous and some workers have died in the process. Sometimes repairs are impossible and the whole plant is filled with concrete and entombed as in Windscale (UK) in 1957. What will happen if there is an earthquake? At Harrisburg (USA) in March 1979, a melt-down was only narrowly avoided and the dangers are not over yet. The plant now contains thousands of gallons of contaminated water and radioactive gas which no one knows how to deal with.

Falsifying records containing the radiation exposure of workers is common practice: "We had these film badges we wore to indicate exposure. Every few days they'd take up the badges and send them off to the Oak Ridge National Laboratory for analysis. One day a few of us men laid our badges on a smoking chunk of uranium for eight hours and turned them in. We never heard from them. They took urine samples from us every ten days. Once somebody dropped a small chunk of uranium in the urine sample. Nothing was ever said about it." This worker from Oak Ridge, Tennessee, died in March 1980. His official death certificate asserts death from heart failure. But he had a 30-pound cancerous tumour spread around his spinal column.

The April 1980 issue of *The Forum*, published by the Officers' Association of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), questions the propriety of Dr H.N. Sethna, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission, claiming that "there has not been a single case of radiation induced fatality anywhere in the world since the inception of the nuclear power industry." He had said this in the M.S. Memorial Lectures at Baroda in March 1980. The journal then asks: "How does one explain the well-documented cases of radiation induced fatalities at, among others, Idaho Falls on January 3, 1961, and at Wood River Junction on July 24, 1964?" The article, which has the heading, 'Tarapur: a question of credibility,' refers to an accident at the plant on March 14, 1980, and concludes with some disturbing questions: "Do even DAE (Department of Atomic Energy) employees have a way of knowing what actually happened? What were the doses received by the workers involved in the mishaps or the repairs? Is Tarapur power meant only for those managing the DAE or for people at large? Why cannot the people be told all the facts and then left to decide whether they need this power or not and whether they consider the risks involved acceptable or not?"

RADIATION: ESCALATING HAZARD

Body cells have their own specific electrical charge in order to function normally. Radiation causes harm by changing the normal electrical charge. Sometimes the cells are killed outright, sometimes their genetic content is damaged and they eventually become cancerous. A damaged sperm or egg cell can give rise to deformed offspring in the next or subsequent generations. Children are more susceptible than adults while infants and the unborn are the most susceptible of all. Until 1960 it was believed that there is a threshold dose of radiation below which no harm can result. *The truth is that there is no safe dose of radiation because it takes only one radioactive atom, one cell and one gene to initiate the cancer or mutation cycle.* The effects of radiation build up from one exposure to another. The cumulative effects of several small doses is equivalent to receiving one large dose all at once. There have been over 1,200 nuclear tests since 1945. It is pointed out that already as many people have probably been killed by the fallout around the globe from the testing of nuclear weapons as were killed by the two bombs dropped on Japan. Today there are 565 nuclear power stations in 39 countries. By 1985 it has been calculated that 40 countries will be in a position to manufacture atomic bombs given the political will. It is difficult to exaggerate the danger posed by radiation, because once it has leaked into the environment it is impossible to control. Radiation can persist in the environment for hundreds of thousands years. Once released into the air, waterways or the sea, radioactive elements do not disperse evenly but are taken up by living organisms. The radioactivity does not die with the death of the organism or the animal — it passes on to those consuming the contaminated product and accumulates there. — V.B.

It is relevant to add here that when some BARC employees chanced upon the nuclear bulletins which were being distributed by activist doctors at the Calcutta Book Fair in March this year, they were so appreciative of the issues raised that they have volunteered to provide more information for public consumption to be used in subsequent bulletins.

J.W. Gofman (medical physicist, co-discoverer of Uranium 233, first man to isolate plutonium and Manhattan project veteran) describes his *Radiation and Human Health* as "a book that demystifies a whole field of science, a field which is presently dominated around the world by a small circle of prominent experts." Reviewing the book in an April 1982 issue of *The Guardian Weekly*, Wayne Bidell writes: "During the 1950s and 60s the AEC steadfastly maintained that there was a threshold dose of radiation exposure below which no health hazard existed. This supposedly safe 'no-effect' dose meant that American servicemen could participate in atomic bomb tests without risk, that nuclear plant workers could receive 'yearly dose of radiation and that power plants could be designed to allow releases of radioactivity even during normal operation. Gofman gathered evidence that showed the AEC's

(*Continued on page 34*)

DISCUSSION

Indian Development

The perspective of Indian development is fast becoming a matter of crucial concern for the polity of the nation. Taking into account the need for serious discussion of the state of our political economy and the options before the country, *Mainstream* (March 20, 1982) published a contribution from a distinguished observer of the economic scene. This was followed by six thought-provoking contributions (*Mainstream*, April 10, April 24, May 1, May 8 and May 29). Here we publish a contribution from Biman Sen, Executive Director, International Consortium, New Delhi. —*Editor*

No Dilly-dallying Any More

BIMAN SEN

A Student of Political Economy has raised certain important issues concerning Indian development, the importance of politics in determining the course of economic development and the role of Left political groups (*Mainstream*, March 20, 1982). He has given a fair assessment of the overall development in India over last thirty years. In the process of analysing the achievements and failures of Indian development strategies, the author has pinpointed how vested interests that dominated the market forces proved too powerful for Government edicts to be effective. In spite of the dynamic leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi, development of the economy kept deviating from the path the leadership set for the country. According to the author, the reason for this is mainly that the alliance which supported Nehru's introduction of policies was not strong enough to withstand the pressure of the opponent vested interests, during implementation. The author has further emphasised that if the Left had played an effective role in consolidating the alliance which supported Nehru, thus strengthening Nehru's hands, the policies of planned development could have been more effectively implemented. This, indirectly, amounted to betrayal by the Left of the socialist cause propounded by Nehru.

The author has further argued that Indira Gandhi in a sense went much farther than Nehru in championing the causes that could be identified with the pressure groups constituting the Left. Her industrial policy, bank nationalisation, growth of indigenous technology, etc., are enough proof to support this view. He has emphasised that to the people's of the developing nations, Indira Gandhi's position today is much more unassailable than Nehru's position ever was. It will be a mistake for the Left to ignore this fact, whatever may be the factors that have contributed to this image of Indira Gandhi. According to the author, if the Left could strengthen the ruling coalition of Indira Gandhi, it would strengthen its own cause. In the context of the state of the Indian economy today, the ultimate interests of the Left and the compulsions of the ruling group represented by Indira Gandhi have largely converged.

These views have been fully endorsed by the eminent economist, Dr. C.H. Hanumantha Rao, now a Member of the Planning Commission (*Mainstream* April 10, 1982). Dr. Rao has also raised the question as to why the Left has time and again missed such opportunities in the course of the last thirty years and more, and he has emphasised that this is an extremely important question from the intellectual and practical points of view. Dr. Rao feels that unless there is a frank debate on this question, it would be difficult to understand the tragedy of missed opportunities, and in the absence of such understanding the appeals to the Left may have only sentimental value without any practical solution emerging. Dr. Rao's own diagnosis is that the Left has been groaning under the weight of its received doctrines, which do not permit it to see the realities of the Indian situation with a clear and open mind. He has also pointed out that the Indian Left has lagged very much behind other socialist movements around the world in moving toward ideological independence.

Dr Rao's conclusion is that in view of their declared policies, the ruling groups cannot afford to remain indifferent to the vast organisational potential that the Left can offer in large parts of the country for furtherance of the national objectives. Given the necessary imagination and initiatives on the part of both the progressive sections in the ruling groups and the Left, it should be possible to build a wide consensus in the country for achieving goals. In the ultimate analysis, Dr Rao has indirectly exonerated the Left for their failure to cooperate with either Nehru or Indira Gandhi and put the total burden of responsibility for cooperation on the ruling groups.

India is a land of paradoxes and full of complex problems. The diagnosis and treatment suggested by Dr Rao are not so simple as they appear. He has, himself admitted that the Indian situation is so complex and unique that received doctrine cannot provide ready-made answers and this is at the root of the so-called ideological crisis.

Mohit Sen has got lost in political doctrines (*Mainstream*, April 24). Politics, no doubt, plays an important part in development activities. The political will of the governing groups is vital for the implementation of any development plan and political stability is a sine qua non for meaningful development. However, no amount of political stability and political will can bring about development without scientific and pragmatic planning which needs a well-balanced inter-disciplinary approach by a group of dedicated, knowledgeable experts. Compulsions and constraints are vital factors affecting development strategy.

The views expressed by these three writers are the perceptions of students of social sciences. The aim of the present article is to present the views of a student of natural science and technology who has some practical experience in planning for development, its problems, implementation and monitoring in India and other developing countries.

Development is a natural and historical process. It can be accelerated or slowed down by proper planning or lack of political will or political stability. Development is a complex concept embracing all aspects of human activity and it cannot be viewed in isolation. The complexity of the concept of development has been dealt with by the present writer in his articles on "Perspective: India in 21st Century" and "Development, Technology and Education" (*Mainstream* March 6 and April 24, 1982). However, in India, there is a tendency to view development with myopic eyes and narrow vision looking at the problem from one angle, forgetting that development is an integrated system, to be looked into with a wider perspective.

To understand and appreciate 'Indian Development: Options and Choices', it is essential to understand certain basic issues, facts and national characteristics of Indians; whether Left or Right in political views and approach, their patterns behaviour, are highly influenced by these factors. Indian attitudes and characteristics have been excellently analysed by Prof. J.K. Galbraith in a recent interview to *India Today*. He said, making a comparison: "The Chinese have a greater capacity for praising their accomplishments which is matched by the Indian capacity for depreciating their accomplishments. And people listen and they always say how well things are going in China and how badly things are going in India and that's to be attributed to the genius of Indian propaganda for bringing out everything that is bad."

We must admit that in spite of India being one of ten most industrialised countries of the world and the third in producing scientific and technical manpower, Indian society is still far from the influence of the industrial and technological revolution. India is still living in a feudal atmosphere, highly traditional in character. Educational progress has done little to modify traditional concepts, and technology has had almost no impact. Even today, distinguished scientists go to godmen for blessings and some distinguished politicians believe that water of the Ganga cannot be polluted. The average Indian is self-centred and egoistic, and this in turn breeds hypocrisy, jealousy, distrust and doubt. These qualities are reflected in the attitudes and behaviour of politicians and other responsible groups of society. Only a few individuals have been able to outgrow traditional thinking and behaviour patterns.

If development is a natural process, tradition cannot be static. Love for tradition and heritage is good, so long it can inspire people for future advancement. If tradition is rigid, it acts against progress and does a lot of harm to society and ultimately brings about social decadence. By tradition, self-enlightenment and self-growth have become the aims of life for the average Indian. Therefore, be it in politics or other spheres, self-growth remains a prime goal of the individual, whether he belongs to Left or Right, business or trade, civil service or private industry.

If the Indian situation is compared with that in another Asian country, Japan, the contrast is clear. Whereas in Japan the objective of development is capital formation in the national interest, in India, personal gain or profit at the expense of national interest is the prime objective in the development process. If one is honest, one has to admit that in India, in most cases, political doctrines and ideology have been used as a facade for political gain of individuals rather than for the benefit of the masses. This attitude of the leadership of various parties has helped the fragmentation of parties, not their consolidate.

Indian development since Independence can be broadly divided into two periods: (1) Nehru era; (ii) post-Nehru era.

One should not forget that before Independence, the Indian National Congress was a platform rather than a party where all shades of political views were represented except the Communist segment. Just before Independence, it squeezed out people with extreme socialist views like M.N. Roy and others. After Independence, the Indian National Congress took the shape of a party composed of heterogeneous groups of people from extreme traditionalists to modernists like Jawaharlal Nehru. However, the balance was weighted towards the traditional forces. There were many contenders for the leadership but, because of Jawaharlal's charisma and his ability to articulate the aspirations of the Indian masses to get their support, he became the undisputed leader. However, there were under-currents of the dissatisfied group of traditionalists, looking for an opportunity to strike back.

To appreciate Indian development in totality during the Nehru era, one must keep in view the structure of the group of which Nehru was the leader and the fact that Nehru was an outstanding statesman and not a politician of the kind we find today. He was a socialist at heart but a democrat in action. These qualities were his handicap. He was a great admirer of Lenin and the USSR. Left to himself, he might have adopted a Lenin-type planning strategy. However, because of the environmental situation highly weighted in favour of traditional forces and because the Left groups did not extend any help to him, he had to adopt a middle path in development strategy, known as 'mixed economy'. If one examines recent developments in some of the socialist countries like China, Poland, etc., one cannot help praising Nehru's wisdom and foresight. Jawaharlal's Industrial Policy Resolution, Science Policy Resolution, land reforms, establishment of heavy industry, power development, etc., are testimony to his policy for Indian development. His policy for development brought the economy almost to the take-off point — but china's sudden attack intervened.

No doubt there was tremendous development of the Indian economy, but it kept on deviating from the socialistic path that Nehru's leadership sought to carve out. Who is to blame for it? If the Left forces had rallied round him, the story of Indian development would have been different. When Nehru goaded the State Governments to introduce land reform legislation, after zamindari abolition, the best course would have been to replace the zamindari system by co-operatives, instead of leaving it in a vacuum which has created kulaks, vitiating the very objective of land reform. The only worthwhile support Nehru got from a person having affiliation with Left political ideology was Krishna Menon, but the latter was squeezed out of his Cabinet by the traditional forces. Menon's exit made Nehru a most unhappy man. Due to lack of support from the Left, Nehru had to sacrifice Menon and compromise with the vested interests. Nehru's compulsion to compromise with such forces acted as the major constraint on economic development in the right direction.

On a critical analysis, it may be seen that the attitude and behaviour of the Left groups towards Nehru were due to the traditional characteristics of average Indians, as stated earlier. Because of such attitudes on the part of political leaders, the parties, irrespective of ideology, fragmented into smaller and smaller groups, and this process of fragmentation is continuing. In the process, the greatest losers have been the Left groups themselves.

The post-Nehru era can be sub-divided broadly into three phases: (1) from Nehru's death up to end of 1976, (ii) 1977-1979 (Janata regime), and (iii) from 1980 onwards (return of Indira Gandhi).

Just after Nehru, the leadership struggle was on and Lal Bahadur Shastri emerged as a compromise candidate. His regime was too short to have any impact on the development process. After the death of Shastri, the leadership struggle showed its ugly face. Again, Indira Gandhi came to power as a compromise candidate. This might have created an uncomfortable feeling in her mind which manifested itself in many ways. After the first split in the ruling group probably she felt more secure — but she was still not sure from where she derived her power, so she leaned heavily on trusted friends. Because of the peculiar political environment, every political leader started feeling that he had the potentiality to take over the Prime Ministership. Thus the struggle to grab the leadership intensified inside and outside the ruling group. This created confusion throughout the country, culminating in declaration of Emergency. Emergency was a product of this power struggle which forced an elected Government to take hasty action. In every democratic country, once a government is elected, it is allowed to work during its term of office. The fight is confined to the house of representatives and not taken to the streets or to educational institutions. No doubt in a democratic set-up, constructive criticism is healthy, but when it assumes destructive dimensions, it does more harm to the country than to the ruling party.

If one analyses the chain of events which led to Emergency dispassionately it will be clear that the Opposition was to blame more than the ruling group. Indira Gandhi's will to exercise the option to go to polls in 1977 was clear proof of her commitment to democratic principles.

Her commitment to socialism and acceptance of the path of mixed economy carved out by Nehru have been clear. This point has been brought out by the Student of Political Economy. As regards economic development, during Indira Gandhi's first phase of leadership, in spite of all the constraints and pressure from vested interests, economic development took a positive turn up to 1976.

The second phase of the post-Nehru era started with the defeat of Indira Gandhi and her party in 1977 and installation of the Janata Government, and ended with the exit of that Government. This period may perhaps be called a black period in the history of Indian development. The Janata Party was formed by a stage combination of organisations, from highly communal, traditional forces to so-called liberal and socialist groups. It was most strange that the Left groups supported such a party. Essentially the Janata Party was an anti-Indira Gandhi front or platform rather than a party, more or less parallel to the Indian National Congress before Independence. The party's sole objective was to harass Indira Gandhi and prevent her from coming back. The party had no other programme. Since development is a natural process, it went on during the Janata regime by itself, but got slowed down considerably. Power struggle in the Janata Party started from the beginning and went on till the party broke to pieces in 1979. And so the masses brought back Indira Gandhi in 1980.

The third phase of the post-Nehru era starts from the 1980 general election which brought Indira Gandhi back to power. She came back with a massive mandate. If took over a year to correct the imbalances created in the economic field and repair the overall damage done to the country. India has regained its prominence in international diplomacy. It has regained its prestige. The national economy is gradually coming back on the rails. It has to be admitted that our economy has now reached a stage at which it is quite capable of launching on a path of rapid growth, provided it obeys the rules and principles of planned economy.

If we examine what went wrong in our planning so far it would be clear that although we chose the path of planned economy, we failed to abide by the rules and principles of such economy, where determination of sequential priorities between the various sectors at every stage is important. One should not forget that in all national development there is a sequence depending on the stage that a country or people has reached in the process of development. Our development did not follow this rule. Due to pressure from traditionalists and, vested interests, we spread our capital too thin over a large area. Our planning has so far been project-planning and not integrated planning. In the process, we developed an economy of controls and shortages. It is only now that there is a realisation that the planning strategy needs drastic change to increase production through increased productivity, free of controls that prevent such growth. To make planned economy succeed, there is need for perspective planning or long-term planning.

Lenin, father of the concept of planned development, wrote: "Do not be afraid of long-term plans for without them you cannot achieve an economic revival. Let us devote all our energies in the localities to their fulfilment." He emphasised that to create and develop the new economic system, one must have a clear perspective. According to him, a long-term plan has to be given concrete expression in short-term plans. A long-term plan should be "amplified, elaborated, corrected and applied in the light of well-scrutinised practical experience."

Now we have started thinking of long-term planning. It should not be forgotten that without a stable industrial base, the development of infrastructure such as transport, energy, etc., or agriculture is completely out of question.

Moreover, limitation of land and the huge population with a high growth rate, the geo political situation of the world, defence requirements, etc., leave no choice but to go in for development of sophisticated high technology based industry and capitalised agricultural development. This will need rationalised land use and may also need collectivisation of land which should be permissible under the mixed-economy system. Our aim should be equitable distribution of wealth based on the contribution of labour rather than equality. It is to be noted that the Chinese have felt forced to change their policy in favour of equitable distribution and incentives for work in the process of development.

Planned development is possible only if there is internal peace and political stability to which Left political groups have much to contribute. They must accept the hard fact that at present there is no one but Indira Gandhi who can provide stable leadership to the country. As the Student of Political Economy stated in his article, it will be a mistake for the Left to ignore the fact that Indira Gandhi's position today is much more unassailable than Nehru's position ever was. They should also accept the reality that Indira Gandhi has become leader because of her charisma and ability to articulate the aspirations of the masses to get their support and votes. The Left must also accept the fact that she has the desire to see India become a prosperous and big nation.

It is unfortunate that since Independence, the Left forces have played the part of Hamlet in Indian politics. It is time they identify themselves with the objective for which both they and Indira Gandhi stand and rally round her.

As the Student of Political Economy has said, if the Left could strengthen the coalition of forces Indira Gandhi is trying to forge in her favour, it would strengthen its own cause. In the context of the state of the Indian economy today, the ultimate interest of the Left and the compulsions of the ruling group represented by Indira Gandhi have largely converged. The other option left for the Left forces is to disintegrate into small groups which will not be able to withstand the pressure of traditional forces and vested interests. Thus the very objective for which they are fighting will be lost.

It is time for the Left forces to think of the options and make the choice. □

Libya and U.S. Imperialism

SULTAN SHAHIN

HARDLY a week had passed after the launching of Phase II of its anti-Libyan campaign by initiating a boycott of Libyan oil when Washington escalated its onslaught by announcing that it would hold military 'manoeuvres' in the Gulf of Sirte within the next six months. A spokesman for the Pentagon, John Lehman, Navy Secretary, tried to explain why, of all places, the US Navy had to pick the Gulf of Sirte. He claimed that the Gulf of Sirte was the only region of the Mediterranean where the US Navy could conduct its missile practice. This is a preposterous statement: nearly two-thirds of the earth is covered by ocean, 99 per cent of which are international waters.

Why then choose the tiny Gulf of Sirte, which is clearly Libyan territorial waters? The answer is clear: Washington wants an excuse to invade Libya to destroy its revolutionary system and leadership. What is also clear is that the Americans, under Ronald Reagan, will not learn from history.

Does one need to remind them of the disastrous results of their wanton attack last August, when even the reactionary American press was unable to justify their brazen behaviour? And that world opinion roundly condemned the shooting down of two Libyan planes as a clear act of international terrorism?

If the Americans think they can intimidate the Jamahiriya with their threats and posturings, they are gravely mistaken. The Libyan Jamahiriya is not a puppet sultanate or sheikhdom that will kneel and kiss the Pentagon's boots whenever a US general waves the big stick. The Libyan people will resist any attempt against their sovereignty and their territorial integrity. The political editor of JANA summed up the feelings of the people of the Libyan Jamahiriya when he said in response to Lehman's threats: 'If the American announcement is confirmed, which we do not believe, no explanation can justify it, except that America has decided to invade Libya. In this case, Libya must get ready to confront a big state. This means a third world war is imminent and the American administration is held responsible. For, an aggression on the Gulf of Sirte is an aggression on Libyan territory and on the integrity of Libyan soil.'

In a statement the Libyan People's Bureau in New Deah has pointed out: "The Socialist People's Libyan Arbli

Jamahiriya has been facing from time to time many acts of provocation on its coasts and territorial waters from the manoeuvres conducted by the US Sixth Fleet deployed in the Mediterranean. With a view to avoiding any danger to the security of the Libyan coasts and gulfs due to the manoeuvres of the Sixth Fleet, the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya on October 9, 1973, issued a declaration which made it clear that the Gulf of Sirte with its land sides south and west as well as its northern side (32.20 degree latitude) constituted an integral part of Libyan territory and was within Libyan sovereignty...The Libyan claim to these waters is corroborated by the fact that they are deep inside Libyan territory and Libya has been enjoying and exercising sovereignty over them through the ages...Libya's claim is further substantiated by the geographical situation of the Gulf of Sirte as it goes inside to the heart of the country. This declaration was circulated in due time to the UN and to different countries. The U.N. Secretary-General was informed about the Libyan declaration on October 19, 1973...It was confirmed on September 20, 1981, as it was referred to in the Tripoli Declaration for international peace No. S. 14637."

American propagandists have been claiming that the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has designated the Gulf of Sirte "an inland lake". This is not true. In fact the Jamahiriya's claim as stated on October 9, 1973, is based on the recognition by the 1958 Convention of the UN conferences on the Law of the Sea of the concept of "historic bays", which have the same degree of sovereignty as internal waters and therefore no right of innocent passage. The Jamahiriya's 1973 declaration had also stated that Libyan sovereignty is essential for national security. Anyone conversant with the location of Libya's main oilfields close to the Gulf of Sirte will appreciate this argument.

The United States is, of course, entitled to challenge Libya's claim, but any government which respects international conventions would accept that such a dispute should be examined by the appropriate body, and not challenged by military intervention, as was the case last August, when the US staged military manoeuvres in the Gulf. In the case of two civilised countries, such disputes are referred to the International Court of Justice, which can adjudicate between the two parties by mutual consent. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has already stated its preparedness to take the matter to The Hague; and is committed to this course to settle the dispute by non-military means. The US, on the other hand, has not only failed to respond to Libya's proposal, but has added to existing tensions in the Middle East by declaring plans to stage further manoeuvres in the Gulf of Sirte. Interestingly, Long Island Sound is declared by the US as a "historic bay". Can one imagine Washington failing to respond if the Libyan Jamahiriya or any other foreign power moved warships into the Sound to stage military manoeuvrers?

But how can Washington think that an attack this year will be more successful than the one last year? Has it forgotten that last August Anwar Sadat was still alive and ready to back up a frontal attack against the Jamahiriya? Last year, Washington's 'triple squeeze' policy was still at least theoretically possible, but it is now clear that all its attempts to surround Libya with client regimes have failed.

This means that the US will be on her own when she launches her invasion against the Jamahiriya. Of course, the US is a nation of over 200 million people and with the most powerful army in the world, while the Jamahiriya has a mere three million people. But that does not scare the Libyan Arab people. In the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya not only do authority and wealth belong to the people, but so do the arms. Any invasion launched by the US Sixth Fleet via the Gulf of Sirte would therefore be confronted by two million armed and trained Libyan freedom fighters, who would rather die as martyrs than give up even one inch of their territory.

Complex problems demand complex solutions. This basic logical proposition is completely denied by the Reagan Administration which has decided that here is one simple solution that can be applied to the most diverse and most complex problems wherever they may arise: military intervention. Given the well-equipped armed forces of the United States, such a strategy does not seem to pose too many problems when the 'problem' to be solved is close by. But the problems becomes more complex when one considers the appetite of US imperialism for global interference. The most obvious example is the Arab world, where the United States has maintained for years that its vital interests are at stake and where any development likely to endanger those 'interests' would warrant full-scale military intervention.

To cut down on its reliance on bases located on foreign soil, the US decided to create veritable 'floating bases' that could be deployed strategically in such a way as to encircle the whole of the Middle East and that could back up any invasion with equipment, giving it an autonomy of at least two weeks. To achieve this, General P.X. Kelley, the head of the Rapid Deployment Force, ordered an accelerated programme involving the conversion of four existing ships, and the construction of eight new ones. These ships, equipped to new specifications labelled TAKX, will be the largest carriers of amphibious war material in existence. Their essential characteristics are: a very wide range of autonomy; complex systems of humidity control and air-conditioning enabling stored material to remain in prime condition with a minimum of maintenance (the generals remember the debacle of the Iran 'rescue mission'); huge disembarkation platforms and unloading cranes. On top of that, each vessel will be fitted out with an extremely sophisticated anti-sabotage system.

These floating bases will be stationed in the Red Sea, the Arab Gulf, the Mediterranean and close to other 'friendly' shores. They will enable the backing up of an amphibious invasion of massive proportions within a time span of a few hours. The invasion force itself, presently consisting of at least three amphibious brigades, makes up the core of the whole RDF.

But this does not mean the Americans have given up establishing military bases in pro-American countries in the region. They have sold 40 F-16s to Pakistan, which is but the first instalment of a military package totalling 3.5 billion dollars. Although President Zia has been careful to deny the setting up of bases, and thus hushed up the visit of three Pharris frigates to the port of Karachi, one of the generals let the cat out of the bag during a visit to Washington last December, when he said: 'In twelve months we will see the F-16 fly in the sky of Pakistan to defend not only our own borders but also those of the free world'. At the same time the United States is busy building four air bases, two naval bases, three army bases and a military academy in Saudi Arabia. Further south, Oman has handed over the islands of Massirah, Matrah, Salalah and Mascate to the Americans who are building similar bases and depots.

The 'Bright Star' manoeuvres of November-December 1981 indicate the trail of US infiltration in the Arab world: starting in Egypt the manoeuvres moved down to Sudan and Somalia (where the port of Berbera is being enlarged to suit the American Navy) and from there to Oman where more than 1,000 US Marines disembarked. Also, the US still has major military installations in Turkey (among those, 30 per cent of its radar 'ears' spying on the Soviet Union) and is trying to entice the Turkish Government to let it develop the naval construction sites at Golcuk, and the Smirna naval base.

The RDF is thus simply a colonialist expeditionary force whose duty is to keep the US surrogate rulers in power. Given that those rulers, emboldened by the very network of US military presence, while secretly knowing that their time is up, are accentuating their ruthless repression of their subjects, a rebellion of the masses cannot be far off.

Looking at US foreign policy since the birth of that nation, the most startling realisation is, in truth, its dogged adherence to the expansionist ideology. Its first and most famous formulation came in 1823 when President Monroe enunciated the doctrine named after him, and which claimed the whole of the continent, North and South, as America's 'sphere of influence'. In effect the basis of this claim had already been laid by George Washington is his farewell address on September 9, 1796, and reiterated by President Thomas Jefferson in his first address. The moral alibi underpinning these imperial claims also harks back to the earliest days of that country. Again it was Jefferson who had argued for American rights to a continental empire. But it was the desire of the American expansionists to extend the boundaries of the United States to the Pacific which, in the middle 1840s, gave rise to the concept of 'Manifest Destiny'. It was a product of the sudden technological changes of that era, the steamboat, the telegraph, the railroad. Although no longer used in such a blatant fashion, 'Manifest Destiny' has remained the moral justification for increased expansionism.

Although between the two world wars the isolationists tried to limit American interference abroad, economic and historical forces decidedly tilted the balance towards an ever wider interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine. After the Second World War, the British Government informed the US that it could no longer afford to supply military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey. President Truman immediately announced that the US would undertake responsibility and asked Congress to provide $ 400 million in military and economic aid for the two countries. This was the official inauguration of a global programme under which the United States took over the colonial 'burdens' the British empire had borne since the middle of the 18th century. By then the threadbare moral alibi of 'Manifest Destiny' had been replaced by the more pragmatic ideological concept of 'stopping the spread of Communism'.

Firmly entrenched in its role as 'Leader of the Free World' and policeman of the West, the US gradually took over from the other old European colonial powers as well. From the French, for example, after Dien Bien Phu in Vietnam, in the process plunging the US into its longest and most costly war ever. NATO had supplied equipment to Portugal and supported the fascist regime up to 1974. After the Portuguese revolution of that year the US backed Right-wing forces in Angola. Although the sixties and seventies were a period of debacle for US military interventions, the basic line of global interference wherever 'American interests were threatened' went on unabated.

This global strategy, of an essentially imperialist nature, is two-pronged: military and economic. The formidable expansion of the US economy, industrially and technologically, since World War II has incited the US to look for ever new and vaster markets for its wares. At the same time, the increased need for natural resources demanded the strengthening of American hegemony in the Third World. For political purposes, the economic weapon is used in two ways: Either to help the often failing economies of its client states by massive injections of economic and military aid, or as a threat. On the military front, the situation is similar. America is still the foremost power in the world, its nuclear capability is yet unmatched and its conventional armed forces primed for intervention anywhere on the planet. But, at least as far as its conventional forces are concerned, there is an inherent weakness bedevilling the US armed forces, as was clearly shown in Vietnam. Imperialist expansion, based on the economic needs of capitalism, makes for poor ideological motivation as far as the simple soldier is concerned. Aware of this, the US has relied more and more on highly sophisticated technological means of waging war and tends to prefer the combined use of active economic warfare backed by passive nuclear retaliatory threats. After the short-term psychological setback of the Vietnam debacle and the instilling of a more mercenary spirit (higher pay, more fringe benefits, etc) among its armed forces, the hawks are back in saddle, ready to intervene with conventional means wherever they deem fit.

It is clear that US foreign policy is based on a strategy that is global. Its East-West rhetoric (with its implied Northern bias) is but an ideological smoke-screen to hide its global ambitions. Any effective counter-strategy has therefore also to be global. El-Salvador in that sense cannot be dissociated from, say, the situation in Lebanon, as from US encroachment in Pakistan.

But in the case of Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Americans may find that they have yet to learn a few lessons. If they invade the Jamahiriya, they would know what aggression against a truly revolutionary state may herald. The struggle of the Jamahiriya against US marine imperialism is indeed part of the struggle of the entire Third World against superpower rivalry in international waters. The attack on Libyan Jamahiriya was indeed an attack on the Third World concept of coastal security, security zones and exclusive economic zones.

The entire Third World is agitated by the threat posed to national security from the high seas. All through the last five centuries most of these developing countries were subjugated by the colonial powers via the high seas. Also, the wealth of these colonies was transported to the colonial powers through the sea routes. Even today, the high sea routes are used to threaten the security and freedom of these countries. The intimidation potential of a naval fleet carrying a super-power's arsenal of latest weaponry can hardly be exaggerated. Gun-boat diplomacy is still continuing. No one has forgotten the dispatch of the Seventh Fleet to the Bay of Bengal in December 1971 at the height of the Bangladesh crisis. The very presence of the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean Sea and the Seventh Fleet in the Pacific is enough to terrorise the littoral states. No wonder the Third World countries have come to believe that the narrow three-miles or even 12-mile territorial waters limit does not offer them any real protection.

A consensus has gradually emerged in the Third World regarding the concept of a security zone in keeping with the spirit of the resolutions adopted at the non-aligned nations conference in Cairo in 1964, Lusaka in 1970 and George Town in 1972 as well as the resolutions adopted at the UN General Assembly on the question of creating a peace zone in the Indian Ocean. It has been found that even a 200-mile security zone is not sufficient for all types of vessels. Surface vessels which mount only conventional guns having a limited range as well as logistic ships can be permitted to come nearer the 200 mile boundary, whereas vessels like aircraft-carriers and nuclear vessels as well as submarines must be kept at a reasonable distance even from the 200-mile zone. If the submarines have to cross that area they should surface and identify themselves as long as they are near that zone. The right of innocent passage for foreign powers has been clearly defined under Article 14 (4) of the Geneva convention of April 1958 on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone. It says, "The passage is innocent so long as it is not prejudicial to the peace, good order and security of the coastal state."

Practically the whole Third World has accepted a 200-mile economic and security zone. Some countries are indeed demanding to go even beyond that. The non-aligned conference in Algeria in September 1973 and the OAU Conference in Megadishu in June 1974 clearly supported the 200-mile economic and security zone concept. As a matter of fact, even a hawk like Dr. Kissinger, speaking in New York on April 8, 1976 (as US Secretary of State) said that states exploiting their continental shelf resources beyond a 200-mile limit should share these with the international community. Thus Kissinger clearly accepted the 200-mile limit. In fact, the United States, and even the Soviet Union, took steps long ago to establish their exclusive fisheries jurisdiction over a 200-mile zone. The Indian Maritime Zones Act of 1976, too, declared a 200-mile exclusive economic zone as well as India's sovereignity over the waters of the Palk Strait, Palk Bay and the Gulf of Mannar. India's declaration has been preceded by similar legislation in many countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, besides Mexico, Norway Canada, Iceland, countries belonging to the European Economic Community, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

President Truman's Proclamation itself contained the continental Shelf doctrine which declares exclusive jurisdiction and control over the natural resources and the subsoil and seabed of the continental shelf beneath the high seas but contiguous to the coast of the United States. Within a few years one maritime state after another had expressed or made corresponding claims. Among the famous controversies of that period were the question of Japan's traditional cultivation of oyster pearls within the continental shelf of the North Coast of Australia and the 1962 lobster war between Brazil and France. Within 13 years of the Truman Proclamation it was possible to enact the international convention which became effective in 1964 after the twenty-second ratification and was accepted by 44 states in just five years. This was also confirmed by the decision of the International Court of Justice on the North Sea Continental Shelf case in February 1969. In its very first draft in 1951, the International Law Commission adopted a criterion for the continental shelf which was later adopted in the Geneva Convention. It defined the term "Continental Shelf" as the sea bed and subsoil of the submarine areas contiguous to the coast but outside the areas of the territorial waters where the depth of the subjacent waters admits of the exploitation of the natural resources of the seabed and subsoil.

This definition was readily accepted by most developing countries including India. Almost the entire Third World agreed to the concept of the continental margin, based on geological and geomorphological considerations which include the slope and the rise as decisive of the actual limit to the shelf in case it extends beyond 230 nautical miles. In terms of physical measurement it is now agreed that the coastal state has jurisdiction upto a point of 60 miles beyond the continental shelf or to the point were the depth of the sediment overlying the basic rock stratum is one per cent of the distance from the continental slope, but not to exceed 350 miles. There have been several agreements between countries with a 200 mile economic and security zone being regarded as sacrosanct wherever possible.

American duplicity is characteristic of its double standards in practically all matters. But Britain and other Western marine powers have been no less fraudulent on the question of economic and security zone for the littoral states. President Reagan seems to be living in the age of Columbus, Cabet, Vasco da Gama, Raleigh, Drake, Magellan and other great explorers. In the age of exploration, it was natural that the doctrine of freedom of the seabed should have emerged. But for this freedom, these explorations would not have been possible. Somebody should tell Reagan that the times have now changed and while exploration of the ocean is continuing, it is being done in an entirely different context. The search is not for simple knowledge of the existence of waters and where they can lead to, but for energy and food resources for mankind which every country has the right to share.

It is not suprising that the major maritime powers have always been supporters of the freedom of the seas, since their navies were able to protect their commercial interests including, in most cases, their overseas colonies, several major fleets and their fishermen. Between them they were powerful enough to maintain this freedom as a general doctrine of International Law. No wonder they were also the people who advocated narrow littoral waters — generally a three-mile zone exclusive sovereignity — the distance a cannon-ball could be fired effectively in the days of sailing vessels. Nations with limited maritime access, Russia for instance, have always claimed territorial waters of 12 miles or more, and this relatively moderate extension of territorial sovereignity has now been adopted more or less universally. One after another the traditional advocates of a narrow limit, including Canada recently, have proclaimed a 12-mile limit, and countries like the United States that have not yet done so, have infact come to the same position by claiming exclusive fishery rights, police powers and other controls over a contiguous area extending to nine miles from the three-mile limit of the territorial waters.

In conditions of war, in particular, most countries have openly sought to establish a security zone. During the Second World War, for instance, several states had established neutrality zones extending up-to several hundred miles from which they sought to bar any hostile act by belligerent nations. In the post-war period, at the height of the cold war, the USA and Canada had established air defence identification zones extending over several hundred miles out in sea. Pilots of foreign aircraft heading for the USA or Canada were required to identify themselves and to comply with security regulations while flying through those zones.

The security zone concept tends to free the security aspects from other aspects. It pemits the littoral states to regulate the movement of foreign naval vessels and support ships so that they are kept at a relatively safe distance. Evidently there is nothing unique if the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya wants to keep the Mediterranean, at least the 200 mile area off the Libyan coast, free from super-power presence. A campaign for keeping the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace has indeed been going on for a long time. The Government of India, like other Third World states, has strongly objected to the increasing Western presence in the Indian Ocean area based upon what is called the Vacuum theory. Indira Gandhi has derided this Vacuum theory times without number. She emphasised this point, for instance, even during her tour of the South-East Asian countries in May 1966. At press conferences in Singapore, Canberra, Wellington and Kuala Lampur, she repeatedly emphasised that the withdrawal of the British forces from the area would not create any vacuum, and if any vacuum was created, it ought to be filled by the local powers and not by outside powers. She pointed out that the entry of outside forces would not only create more tension but accentuate those which already prevailed in the area. Several Indian leaders have often argued that the best way to replace the British presence, whether in the Indian Ocean or in the Mediterranean Sea, was to promote rapid economic development of the regional states, so that sufficient local sources could be developed to resist any foreign threat to their security.

If the United States wants to test Col. Qadhafi's will power, as an NBC commentator pointed out last August, she iswelcome to it. Libyan Arab people appear determined to defend their territorial waters and integrity and sovereignity over the land and sea. They are not likely to allow any super-power to intimidate them by a show of strength. It was not for nothing that in the first few months of the September 1969 Revolution they evacuated all foreign bases from their land. They are just not going to allow them to come back. ●

Undying Faith in People

ANJALI DESHPANDE

Another political prisoner, Raj Inqilab, languishes in Bhagalpur camp jail, without trial, without a chargesheet, without being produced in court even once over a period during which the erstwhile Janata Government ruled and the present Government took hold of the reins of power. He was imprisoned because he asked for clean drinking water for the villagers and for some repairs to a bund which was the only source of irrigation in Rajaun block where he worked.

Raj Inqilab, a youth from Meerut, joined JP's movement before Emergency. During Emergency, like so many others, he was arrested, not to be released till the Janata Government was formed. Even then he was the last to get out of jail in Bhagalpur, on August 19, 1977. He soon proved an embarrassment, by first refusing to join any party and later organising the poor against a Government claiming to be the People's alternative.

Two days after being freed he set out to work in Rajaun block, the most under-developed area in Bhagalpur district. During a tour of this area he discovered the travails the peasantry was undergoing to irrigate their lands. Rajavar Bund, the only source of irrigation for over twelve villages, was lying broken for a year. Rajaun abounded in all such problems that beset rural India. No clean drinking water, no doctor at the health centre, no electricity, no place to live for poor Harijan students who came to attend school in Nevada from far-flung villages, which proved to be the most effective deterrent to their schooling.

The priority was repairs to the bund. From Nepa, Nevada, Babrak, Durgapur and other villages Raj Inqilab organised youths who decided to repair the bund. But the job called for more than the will to work. It required technical know how which nobody had. Realising the futility of such an attempt the youths decided to ask the local administration to do the work, which was their duty.

Predictably, the district officials sat tight on their appeals for help. A memorandum demanding immediate repair work at Rajavan hostels for Harijan students, clean drinking water, a pukka road from Nevada and other basic amenities was drawn up and presented to the district administration, who added the memorandum as another cushion to their chairs and continued sitting comfortably on it. The villagers went on a symbolic hunger-strike in September 1977. Even this failed to rouse the somnambulant administration. Raj declared a fast unto death — without impressing the rulers in the least.

An angry and determined Raj Inqilab then threatened self-immolation. The administration then bestirred itself and began making conciliatory noises. Promises came the villagers' way but they knew better than to trust verbal assurances. They wanted the administration to embark upon the repair work at least, before Raj could take back his action threat. His threat also brought a letter from JP asking him to give up the self-immolation plan. The administration was now in a great flutter over this "law and order" problem. They'd rather have people die drinking polluted water than put up with the embarrassment of the death of Raj Inqilab. It did not occur to them that they could proceed with repairing the bundh so as to cool the atmosphere. They sought the helping hand of the police who were only too eager to help. A case of attempt at suicide was registered, a big force was readied. It was at this point that Raj decided to break his vow of self-immolation out of respect for JP's letter delivered to him by a special messenger. He informed the police, who couldn't care less.

The police reached Nevada Bazaar, where Raj was fasting surrounded by this supporters, at midnight on October 12-13. The calculation of the police must have been that the village would be asleep by that time and no undue difficulty would be encountered in arresting him. They had evidently miscalculated. Agitated villagers would not allow them to take away their leader. In the confrontation the people pelted stones, the police opened fire. Officially two villagers were wounded and some policemen sustained injuries. But Raj vanished and the movement had to be withdrawn.

He was finally tracked down in May 1978 in the same district trying to organise the poor peasants, and was taken into custody. The same Government to whose making Raj had contributed his energies arrested him barely 10 months after his belated release in August 1977. The police notes that he had got together 'criminals'.

Fasting seems to be the fate of this youth wasting away in Bhagalpur camp jail since May 18, 1978, in Sector 3, reserved for Naxalite prisoners. Only because he refused to join any party, only because he felt it his duty to fight for the deprived under any regime, only because he not only cherished the dream of Sampurna Kranti but was prepared to pave the way for it, Raj lies in jail today with seven cases against him, with no formal chargesheet issued, and without being produced in court even once during two years of Janata rule and since 1980 under the present regime. He went on a fast unto death in jail for his rights as a political prisoner. The jail authorities found it expedient to force-feed him instead of giving him his rights as a citizen.

It took three years for a Raj Inqilab Bachao Samiti to be constituted in Bihar. On March 21, 1982, the committee came into being; on April 8 an impressive demonstration was taken out in Bhagalpur by the Samiti. The demonstrators urged Raj to break his fast, promising to fight his cause outside the precincts of jail. He responded favourably on April 9. A petition seeking his release on personal bond or alternatively admission in the AIIMS for treatment was admitted in Justice P.N. Bhagwati's court in the Supreme Court, and notice has been issued to the Bihar Government.

His health badly impaired, his bodily resistance lowered by repeated spells of fasting, but with an undying will to fight, Raj has declared *Zamanat par nahin janmat par riha honge* (Shall be released not on bail but unper popular pressure). *June 7*

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Lessons of Mid-term Poll

MADHU LIMAYE

THE recent mid-term elections have been an indecisive contest. The election results were not much of a surprise. The conformed, more or less, to the expected pattern. They Left alliance has entrenched itself in West Bengal. Promode Dasgupta further broadbased the alliance by including the CPI and other groups. The Congress-I has absorbed the strength of anti-Marxist parties like Janata and Congress-S. The BJP has once again been reduced to insignificance. In Kerala the communal-caste combination headed by the Congress-I has secured a slender majority. The alienation of the Anthony group from the Leftist Front resulted in the fall of the Nayanar Ministry, and has cost an election to the CPI-M. Atal Behari Vajpayee had grandly stated that Kerala would give the answer to the question whether the BJP is a North-Indian phenomenon. The Kerala electorate has given the answer. And it is an unequivocal answer. In the last thirty years the Jana Sangh-BJP has not won a single seat in Kerala. The big business press has completely lost face. But they will not change

Trends in North and North-Western India Share of Main Parties in Popular Vote

Himachal Pradesh

	Year	*Congress(I)*	*Jana Sangh/BJP*	*Independents, others*
Lok Sabha	1967	44.60	19.85	35.55
Assembly	1967	42.00	13.67	44.33
Lok Sabha	1971	75.00	10.60	14.40
Assembly	1972	53.24	7.75	39.01

Himachal Pradesh (under Janata rule and afterwards)

	Year	*Congress(I)*	*Undivided Janata*	*BJP*	*Divided Janata*	*Lok Dal*	*Ind. & Others*
Lok Sabha	1977	38.58	57.19	—	—	—	—
Assembly	1977	27.74	49.01	—	—	—	23.25
Lok Sabha	1980	53.00	—	—	36.25	5.64	5.11
Assembly	1982	42.52	—	35.15	—	1.45	16.12

Haryana

	Year	*Congress(I)*	*JS/BJP*	*Congress(O)*	*Lok Dal*	*Divided Janata*	*Ind. and Others*
Assembly	1967	41.03	14.39	—	—	—	44.31
Lok Sabha	1971	42.56	11.19	11.34	—	—	—
Assembly	1972	46.90	6.55	10.80	—	—	35.75
Lok Sabha	1980	32.50	—	—	33.50	28.14	—
Assembly	1982	37.82	7.75	—	24.13	—	20.39

Punjab

	Year	*Congress(I)*	*JS/BJP*	*Divided Janata*	*Lok Dal*	*Ind. and Others*
Lok Sabha	1967	37.31	12.49	—	—	—
Assembly	1967	36.56	9.84	—	—	—
Lok Sabha	1971	45.96	4.45	—	—	—
Assembly	1972	42.80	4.97	—	—	—
Lok Sabha	1980	52.85	—	9.97	2.56	—
Assembly	1980	45.19	6.46	—	2.08	—
			Delhi			
Lok Sabha	1967	38.79	46.72	—	—	—
Lok Sabha	1971	64.30	29.57	—	—	—
Lok Sabha	1980	50.40	—	37.89	6.91	—
			Uttar Pradesh			
Lok Sabha	1967	33.04	22.58	—	—	—
Assembly	1967	32.20	21.67	—	—	—
Lok Sabha	1971	48.36	12.28	—	—	—
Assembly	1974	32.29	17.12	—	—	—
Lok Sabha	1980	35.90	—	22.57	30.00	—
Assembly	1980	37.58	10.60	—	21.61	—

Note:- Divided Janata then included Jagjivan Ram, Morarji Desai, Chandra Shekhar and BJP.

their ways. The build-up for the BJP was deliberate; objectivity was by no means the criterion on these reports.

Apart from Kerala and West Bengal, two other States from the North-West and Northern region went to the polls recently. In Himachal, the BJP has been successful in inheriting the 1980 vote of the divided Janata Party. But the BJP objective was to win an absolute majority. Advani and Shanta Kumar repeatedly said that they would form a government by themselves. In this they have failed. They polled a little over 35 per cent of the votes cast. They were bested by the Congress-I, whose share of the popular vote was over 42 per cent. The large independent vote really accounts for the poor performance of the Congress-I and not the wide popularity of the BJP. The BJP's policy of disdaining alliances in Himachal Pradesh has caused this avoidable defeat. In Haryana the Lok Dal wasted two precious years in internal conflict which was somehow patched up after the election notification was issued. It must thank the electorate for saving it from disaster. The BJP has not been able to retain its urban support in Haryana. No excuses or accusations against others can explain the heavy defeat of its candidate in the purely urban constituency of Karnal.

The BJP's discomfiture in Kerala and West Bengal is paralleled by the CPI-M's total failure in the Northern States. Despite their pretensions, all Opposition parties are regional in the nature of their support.

The accompanying tables throw light on the BJP situation in the entire region. Barring Himachal and Delhi it is nowhere in a commanding position. In Delhi also, while it has recovered its old influence under the Janata dispensation, can it by itself secure an absolute majority? This is doubtful. The composition of Delhi's population is not the same. There is a large influx of people from other States. But the BJP diehards have not learnt and will not learn from the past. In Karnataka the death of Devraj Urs is a big blow. In both Karnataka and Andhra the Congress-I is still very strong; a united front among Opposition parties alone will provide the key to success. This can be achieved if the parties show humility, and proceed on a realistic basis.

In Kashmir Sheikh Abdullah is still a dominant figure and will be able to beat his opponents in the Valley. The opposition to him will be confined to Jammu.

The Opposition must, above all, offer a programme which will go beyond worn-out ideological shibboleths and match concrete solutions to the actual needs of the common people. Without breaking the continuing economic stagnation, they will not be able even to touch the fringe of the problem of unemployment and poverty.☐

Nuclear Disarmament *(from p. 10)*

pervasive has been the impact of the movement that several academicians and strategists have begun to question conventional concepts. McGeorge Bundy and Robert McNamara (who were themselves instrumental in evolving the strategy of "flexible response" whereby the USA reserved the right to escalate war in Europe to a nuclear level to compensate for NATO's inferiority in the conventional realm vis-a-vis the Warsaw Pact) have now suggested that America give a "no-first-use pledge" in the European theatre. George Kennan and Admiral Noel Gaylor have argued the necessity of substantial cuts in existing nuclear arsenals if the trend towards increasing nuclearisation is to be reversed. Others like Desmond Ball have contributed to the debate by showing the impossibility of containing a nuclear exchange or limiting it to a certain level. The debate about strategic concepts and the best means whereby nuclear weapons can be reduced has had a symbiotic relationship with the peace movements on both sides of the Atlantic. This movement cut across the political spectrum encompassing ecologists, Leftists, Social Democrats, and the Christian Church. The Roman Catholic Church in America and the Protestant Church in Europe are, in fact, in the forefront of the movement,

Thus, for the first time there is a disarmament constituency within the industrialised countries fuelled by the growing economic down-turn in the Western economies. Unemployment in these countries stands higher now than at any time since the Great Depression. Nor is there any sign of a return to the growth rates of the fifties and sixties.

The need to invest negotiations for nuclear disarmament with greater urgency stems also from the sweeping technological changes which are now under way, and which are likely to impinge not only upon the central nuclear balance but also on nuclear war doctrines. These technological developments include (i) neutron weapons, (ii) laser weapons for anti-ballistic missile systems, (iii) anti-submarine technology, and (iv) anti-satellite technology,

To give but one example, both the super powers have agreed not to interfere with the national technical means of verification. Surveillance satellites are an integral part of any verification procedure and are crucial for giving early warning of any missile lift-off in the adversary's territory. Both have now tested killer satellites which would enable them to destroy the surveillance system of the adversary. If decisions to freeze and reduce unclear arsenals can be taken before large-scale production and deployment of these weapons commences, the destabilisation caused by these technological changes in nuclear war fighting techniques can be avoided.

Of equal concern is what one commentator has called the growing sense of anomie — the feeling that anything is permissible. Nations are preparing for an era of resource constraints by setting up rapid deployment forces. Armed intervention in the affairs of other countries is increasingly being talked about and given legitimacy. It is not a coincidence that as the Second Special Session on Disarmament commences there is a war raging between Iran and Iraq, Britain and Argentina are fighting over the Falklands, and Israel is taking military action in

Lebanon.

There is, today, a need for the Third World to assess whether the old and familiar policy of exhorting the super-powers and waiting for them to arrive at arms limitation measures on their own is sufficient. A radicalisation of the Third World posture on disarmament and a willingness to apply whatever collective pressure can be mustered is necessary. The evolution of an appropriate strategy and course of action for the developing countries can be worked out on the basis of collective consultations. The international climate for disarmament has never been so promising as it is today. Every effort must be made to exploit this opportunity for there is "a time and tide in the affairs of men, which when taken at the flood may lead to fortune". In the case of nuclear disarma ment we are at a critical juncture (*June 8*).

France: Mitterrand's First Year

(*from page 14*)

A particularly interesting measure — echoing the democratic slogans and populist cries of May 1968 — is a bill currently under discussion in Parliament (and sure to pass in one form or another) designed to give workers of all kinds new "rights of expression and consultation" in factory and office, creating shop councils with significant powers and imposing on the employer the "obligation to negotiate" periodically with the work-force and take its views into account on such matters as hiring and firing, investment policy, etc. But the bill explicitly states that the employer's "final authority" in the firm must remain inviolate.

In the all-important area of civil rights and judicial reform, the Mitterrand Government, in cooperation with the Socialist dominated Parliament, has succeeded in abolishing the death penalty and in doing away with the special military courts previously used for political trials involving matters of "national security".

In its foreign relations, the Socialist administration has tried to walk a diplomatic tightrope by combining a staunch commitment to NATO — and a tough verbal stand against the Soviet role in Afghanistan and Poland — with uninterrupted, and fairly extensive, commercial relations with the USSR and an almost passionate attachment (although largely verbal, again) to the Third World and its aspirations.

Mitterrand's desire to maintain good relations with both Israel and the Arab world — as expressed, among other things, by his double stand in favour of Israel's right to exist and the Palestinians' right to an independent state — is dictated by a mixture of sentiment, principle and economic or political self-interest (the need for Arab oil and Jewish votes). But it is pure economics, of course, that explains the Government's uninterrupted transactions with the racist regime of South Africa — a regime frequently denounced by Socialist politicians in the past — and the unceasing and highly lucrative sale of sophisticated French-made weaponry to regimes, no matter how oppressive, around the world.

Faced with this mixed and contradictory political reality — in both foreign and domestic affairs — the active and committed elements of the French Left find themselves in the novel and somewhat confusing position of being able neither to wholly endorse nor wholly condemn the current Government of France, which their votes helped bring into existence.

Since there is no other alternative — in the middle-run — than a return to the stagnation and repressivenss of the "Old Regime", a widespread attitude of "critical support" for the present Government seems to offer the only chance of holding this powerful yet hesitant and vulnerable administration to its campaign promises of social justice and economic democracy, while hopefully pushing it forward to deeper structural changes.

Whether or not the mobilisation of mass energies required to achieve such a result will actually take place, and what forms it will assume, are among the as-yet unanswered questions that hold the key to the country's political future.

The just-ended 39th annual convention of the nation's second-largest trade-union federation (CFDT) displayed a combination of militancy and thoughtfulness. Its demand for effective ways of reducing unemployment by sharing the work-load, even at the price of sacrifices by the higher-paid categories of workers and others, was an example of the kind of spirit it will take to galvanise the labour movement and eventually push the French Government toward an untried version of democratic socialism that can only be defined in the course of experience and action. (*June 3*)

Nuclear Nightmare (*from page 23*)

threshold dose was blarney and soon found himself the target of a smear campaign directed from high levels of government. He retired from his professorship at Berkeley in 1975 when he could no longer obtain federal research funds." His book, according to the reviewer, "is the rare kind of effort that makes the medical issues surrounding nuclear energy accessible to intelligent readers from truck drivers and loaders of radioactive cargo to nuclear engineers and physicians."

Gofman's book has been reviewed in a recent issue of the American journal, *The Nation*, by Mckinley Olson who is himself the author of a book, *Unacceptable Risk: The Nuclear Power Controversy*. Olson enumerates the disastrous effects of low-level radiation and says: "We know all this, but most of the official studies of low-level radiation have been orchestrated to minimise these dangers. Our (that is, the US) Government has played a leading role in the effort to whitewash any disturbing news in this area for the obvious reason that it advocates and sponsors the development of nuclear weapons and nuclear power plants." In this country the situation is quite different. First, scientists must raise the issue and reach the information to the people. Right now the Government hardly has any need to whitewash 'news' that is virtually non-existent and which our vast ill-informed public is pitifully unaware of. ☐

This is certainly a time of trial for each one of us. Everybody will have to work hard and produce more in order to strengthen the nation. We have to make every effort to increase our production in the farms, in the factories and in whatever fields we are working. Only then will we succeed in the great task that is before us....

We are an independent nation, and we stand firm and erect in our independence. Each one of us will have to pay the price for preserving this independence...

The first thing which we have to learn from this challenge is to put an end to all those tendencies which divide us. Internal dissensions or disputes, whether they are between one region and another or between one language and another, have no place whatsoever in the circumstances of today. The national crisis demands that we should leave such things aside and think about the bigger and more important issues which face us. Therefore, I lay the greatest emphasis on the essential unity of India. We should work for the nation's progress and preserve its unity. Once the feeling of strength and unity is there, our task is easy to accomplish.

—Jawaharlal Nehru (October 26, 1962)

PRESERVING NATIONAL UNITY IS OUR PRIME TASK:
LET US FIGHT ALL DIVISIVE FORCES

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The Green March **الزحف الأخضر**

AL-ZAHF AL-AKHDAR

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Israeli Objectives • *Politics of Overkill*

Mainstream

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POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

Whither Indira?

AT the midway point of her current tenure as Prime Minister — June 15, 1982 — Indira Gandhi and the nation can hardly derive legitimate satisfaction from a certificate of merit from the World Bank and a pledge of substantial development assistance from the Aid India Consortium. What is described as these bodies' highly appreciative endorsement of the economic strategy India is following at present may please Government spokesmen and negotiators but is surely not the criterion by which the majority of our people will judge the performance of Indira Gandhi's party and Government. Indeed, such certificates may on the contrary tend to make those committed to independent, self-reliant national growth and the establishment of an egalitarian society, quite suspicious. It may be that Indira Gandhi can stand up to pressures, but the disarray in which we find the administration at the Centre and in most of the States, and within the ranks of the ruling party itself, does raise a whole series of question marks.

In early 1980 Indira Gandhi swept the polls with the promise of a "government that works", and this was followed by her revised Twenty Point Programme. It is rather hard to locate the "government that works", particularly if one takes into account the States run by her own party. The "leave it to the leader" syndrome is still all-pervasive, and nothing remotely resembling a collective leadership is seen to be emerging. On the contrary, in the last two and a half years the impression is more and more of one supreme leader running everything, or trying to do so, with the rest of the ruling party, including so-called leaders, constantly waiting for the stop-wait-go traffic signals. Corruption and misuse of office, however, have required no signals, presumably, and the Antulays refuse to fade away despite findings of courts while Gundu Raos, Jagannath Mishras and the like flourish.

There is no need to minimise achievements. Certainly after the Janata interlude a noticeable degree of overall economic recovery has been brought about. But the fact remains that this recovery, reflected in statistics as well as in the increased well-being of limited sections of the population, is not reflected in the general level

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of living of the mass of our people. The rate of growth of inflation has no doubt been brought down and the problems of vital sectors like coal, steel and transport have begun to be tackled. But all this, and the achievements in science and technology, from INSAT and APPLE to the Antarctic landing, have to be seen in the context of the condition of the people as a whole. Supplies and prices of essential com~~modities remain in bad shape~~, whatever claims may be made by official statisticians and airy economists. On the consumer prices front the Government is on a weak wicket, and seems to be aware of the fact. This is so though shortages are not widespread. The distribution system has steadily been reduced to a shadow, so that food management has in effect become cereals management, even vital commodities like pulses and edible oils being out of its purview. In short, the prices of items constituting the nutrition part of daily food requirements are going up, sometimes steeply, while availability is on the decline, if reasonable prices are the criterion. There is no consistent long-term management, even in pockets, of milk and milk products. Even the middle class is in difficulties, not to speak of the fifty per cent still below the poverty line.

On the employment front tokenism is sought to be palmed off as ultimate remedy. There has been no real breakthrough. And the education system, totally unrelated to popular needs in terms of employment and essential production, remains in a mess. The longstanding point about the vast majority of our people lacking the purchasing power to secure their minimum needs even in respect of food — leave alone shelter, clothing, medicare and the rest — continues to be valid today. The Twenty Point Programme covers a lot of ground, and honest implementation certainly can bring about noticeable changes in people's lives. But, though the Programme did help the Congress at an earlier stage to reach out to all sections breaking across artificial barriers like caste, religion and language, at present not even the Congress Governments in the States appear to be taking it seriously. President Sanjiva Reddy's loud lament about poverty and corruption almost on the eve of his exit from Rashtrapati Bhavan cannot carry conviction in the circumstances.

To criticise the performance of Indira Gandhi and her party and Governments is not to praise the Janata experiment of 1977-79 which was a calamity. But the present regime's prolonged wail over the debris allegedly inherited from the Janata interlude was a ludicrous exercise, hardly even an alibi for current failures. Mercifully, that phase seems past. In international affairs the present regime has done well, incidentally undoing much of the harm done by Morarji Desai and company, although the chinks in the South Block have been visible from time to time. From seeking improvement in bilateral relations with neighbours and others to restoring proper equations with the Afro-Asian, West Asian and other regions, to constructive contribution to mankind's war against war, India has been acting wisely most of the time. But then foreign policy has to be buttressed, as Jawaharlal Nehru used to say, by sound economic and social policies at home that can ensure national transformation. Full awareness of this fundamental truth is yet to be seen in the functioning of the administration at the Centre and in the States. The discernible shift ~~towards the Right~~, with the large indigenous industrial houses and the rural rich as the beneficiaries, plus multinationals, is hardly calculated to buttress our foreign policy or make the nation stable and prosperous. Involvement of the masses is just not in sight, while the prevailing poverty and mass illiteracy after thirty-five years of freedom must be seen as a grim warning of what lies ahead if corrective steps are not speedily taken.

On the political front, with Indira Gandhi coming back with a massive mandate and despite the bitter Emergency experience, one had hoped for signs of initiatives for national reconciliation. Power is a magnet that attracts all kinds of people, and the Congress today is by no means a party of persons committed to the service of the people. Every sycophant brought in his/her own sycophants at the time of the 1980 elections and even in the recent mini general election. Defectors have been richly rewarded. The corrupt carry on merrily, and even when they stand exposed it is considered enough punishment if they are gracefully permitted to resign from elective office and operate elsewhere. The power of the "fixers" was perhaps at no time greater than at present. and their number has increased at different levels. Caste, the bane of our society, has steadily become a force in politics and consequently in every walk of life, while the lower castes remain at the bottom despite special provisions in the Constitution and special enactments. Most of our parties are guilty of promoting this trend, but the position of the Congress is of special concern, in view of the plight of the Opposition, particularly the Left. From Assam agitators to Akali extremists, from the killing of Harijans in Tamilnadu to the alienation of large chunks of Muslims in many areas, the scenario is bleak.

There has to be a reconstruction of politics which must secure a social base in the whole of Indian society. Manipulations at the top, whether in the ruling party or in the Opposition parties, can only worsen the national situation. And in this reconstruction the Congress can play an effective, direction-providing role if it can regain some of its lost vitality as a *mass organisation* and if it can take initiatives to get the cooperation of those in the Opposition and in the community as a whole who believe in socio-economic transformation. Political parties functioning as coteries or caste groups or as one-person shows cannot do it.

So the question to be addressed to all our parties is where they are heading. And the most important question, in the absence of any mass movement or new leadership, is: Whither Indira?

C.N. Chitta Ranjan

June 15

COMMENTARY

Israel Attains Its Objectives

OUR DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

THE Lebanese war is virtually over and Israel has attained both its declared and unspelt-out objectives for its full-scale invasion of Lebanon on June 6. Beirut stands cut off from the outside world, the Damascus-Beirut highway is in Israel's hands, the Palestinians remain trapped inside what were once their strongholds, an administrative structure in Lebanon sympathetic to Israel has emerged, and Arab unity has again taken a severe battering.

Such has been the outcome of an adventure undertaken by Israel, with the connivance of its ally, the United States, for the second time in four years, ostensibly to secure Galilee — which was why the invasion was code-named "Operation Peace for Galilee" — from artillery attacks from the Palestinians.

Long and meticulous planning preceded the attack which the Israelis deliberately undertook to crush the military side of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). The declared objective was limited; it was to drive the Palestinians 40 kilometres northwards so that Galilee was out of their artillery range. The so-called red line of its security interests was sought to be moved up from the Litany river to the Zaharani river. But in the very first push, the Israeli intentions became clear as being something more than creating a safety zone of 40 kilometres. Its forces raced to Sidon, 60 kilometres north of the Israeli border, to Damour, another 20 kilometres further north, and to the eastern suburbs of Beirut. Additionally, Israeli bombers destroyed Syria's surface-to-air missile batteries in the Bekaa Valley of eastern Lebanon.

This was not part of the admitted plan since Israel apparently wantonly risked challenging Syria and drawing it into a full fight against its wishes. Even Israel's American allies were flabbergasted at this move: US Secretary of State Alexander Haig sounded pathetically distraught. The Americans did not care so long as Israel fulfilled its declared objective of clearing a 40-kilometre gap, but proceeding beyond it and engaging the Syrians in battle was not on. The Americans were quite conscious of the danger of the Syrians invoking their 1980 treaty with the Soviet Union, which was committed to come to its rescue in case it was pushed too far into the corner.

Israeli forces were all ready to roll across the border weeks before they actually did. All Israel wanted was an alibi, and a cause of immediate provocation which came when its Ambassador in London, Shlomo Argov, was cut down by a gunman, later identified as one Abu Nidel, who has nothing whatsoever to do with the PLO. But Israel did not wait for any clarifications. It began softening up Palestinian positions through heavy air attacks and artillery barrages for two days, and when the Palestinians reacted by lobbing shells across the border into northern Israel, the needed excuse was provided for the full war.

Israel's ally, the US, watched for a while but ultimately President Reagan did send a message to Menachem Begin from Versailles where he was in conclave with his six summit colleagues who obviously pressured him to do something; the message was delivered after the invasion had begun! Reagan linked the Israeli offensive with the assassination of the London ambassador, although by then the PLO and disowned responsibility for it. Even Reagan's staunch ally, Margaret Thatcher, was forced to say: "Israel has used it as an occasion to launch the offensive, but I don't believe that it is in retaliation (to the attempted murder)". Predictably, attempts began to bring about a cease-fire and the UN Security Council adopted a resolution supported by all members barring the US which vetoed it, its permament representative, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, staging a dramatic volte face in trying to withdraw the veto subsequently. However, a statement by her made it clear where US sympathies lay: "It is not reasonable or balanced or fair to point the finger of blame at Israel". The implication was that the PLO was equally to blame.

It was then that the US initiated moves to bring about a cease-fire between Israel and Syria, and Begin accepted it, largely because while his declared objective had been achieved, namely the destruction of the PLO inside Lebanon, the undeclared objective was also within sight. This was to attain a total restructuring of the Lebanese political map, create a Lebanon with which Israel can sign a peace treaty after restoring Lebanese sovereignty over the tiny country by driving the Palestinians and the Syrians out of it. In other words, the aim was to convert the multi-religious secular polity of Lebanon into a Christian state. This would then lead to the fulfilment of yet another objective, namely, impose its own version of a political solution on Palestinians living under occupation in the West Bank and Gaza. The annexation of the West Bank and Gaza would then be legitimised. The fact that the Americans go along with such a proposition was reflected in the US proposal that all foreign forces (the Palestinians and the Syrians) leave Lebanon to facilitate a "political settlement". According to General Eitan, Israel's Chief of Staff, the Israeli army "will organise an extended stay in Lebanon", while Defence Minister Ariel Sharon's standing orders to the troops was, "Hold on to Lebanon until peace returns to Galilee". Obviously, it would be Israel which would decide when peace will return to Galilee. Actually, the PLO, to destroy which the Israelis undertook the invasion, had scrupulously maintained the cease-fire so tortuously imposed by the mediation of US special envoy Philip Habib last July. Yet, the shooting of an Ambassador by a man hostile to the PLO was taken as adequate evidence of breach of the cease-fire!

It now looks as if Israel is in Lebanon to stay. This is consistent with what the hawks in Tel Aviv have been saying for the last four years. They do not want a repetition of the "mistake" of 1978; in other words, they do not want to withdraw from Lebanon and entrust Galilee's security to another UN force like the one created for the purpose in 1978, namely the UNIFIL. Israel would now prefer, and it has made no secret of this, a multi-national force of the Sinai type, controlled and manned entirely by the United States.

The UNIFIL's role has been reduced to a mockery. The UNIFIL forces took up positions after the March 1978 Israeli invasion with the declared aim of creating a buffer zone along the border. The initial 6,000 men were unable to move to the border because Israel had created a six-mile swathe of territory under the domination of Major Saad Haddad, a renegade officer from the Lebanese army, who is now a willing tool of Israel. Haddad has carved out a Christian enclave better known now as "Haddadland" or "Haddadistan". The UNIFIL forces were swiftly swept aside on the very first day of the invasion and found themselves ridiculously stranded behind Israeli lines.

Israel can now be expected to pursue its undeclared objective of restructuring the Lebanese political map by its periodic mopping-up operations which will force all non-Christians into Muslim districts. Haddad will be encouraged to expand his enclave since Israel is now in a position to distribute largesse. During a visit to the northern command a day after the invasion, Begin embraced Haddad and told him "Beaufort is now yours". Beaufort Castle, the crusader fortress of the Middle Ages, was both a strategic and psychological prize for Begin since it has been for quite some years a Palestinian guerilla stronghold and a threat to Israeli-supported Haddadland. Israel has already begun wooing Lebanese Christians in other sectors as well. For instance, Christians of Damour have been assured "every possible assistance" if they return and help in driving out the Palestinians. The Israeli game is to set Right-wing Christians against the Lebanese Muslims and Left-wing Christians. If this results in intensification on the civil war, so much the better for Tel Aviv which can then adroitly manipulate it. Reports from Jerusalem have already spoken of Israeli reliance on Lebanese Christians to help in ridding Lebanon of all Syrians and Palestinians; these reports say that the Christians "have not been at all unhappy about the terrible knocking the Palestinians have taken at Israeli hands."

Premier Begin, caught between two powerful sets of hawks within his country, has been gauging the extent of Arab and Western tolerance to the limits to which he can go to assert supremacy in the region. He has so far successfully got away with many adventures: the bombing of the Iraqi nuclear power plant near Baghdad, the annexation of eastern Jerusalem, the virtual annexation of Golan Heights. Now he seems to have got away with even more: the destruction of Syria's missile batteries in the Bekaa valley of eastern Lebanon. The United States has been only too willing to encourage Israel, while the Arabs, preoccupied with their own domestic squabbles and mindful of the implications of the Iranian revolution, have watched Israeli aggression from the sidelines without doing anything about it. Far from restraining Israel, the Pentagon agreed during the Washington visit of the hardline Defence Minister Ariel Sharon to supply another 75 F-16 aircraft worth 2.5 billion dollars!

The latest Israeli invasion could not have been undertaken with such impunity but for the divisions within the Arab leadership. Almost all Arab governments have made the "comprehensive, honourable and just settlement" of the Palestinian issue the hard core of their policies, but nonetheless, when it came to the crunch, their response was hesitant. The Syrians were only too ready to withdraw under the Israeli unilateral cease-fire offer although the destruction of its missile batteries was sufficient provocation for involvement. Why was Syrian response so cautious in the last ten days? The Syrian leadership is said to have grown distrustful of the independence with which the PLO chairman, Yasser Arafat, has charted out compromise proposals for a West Asian settlement. Syrian President Assad was said to have been annoyed with Arafat's enthusiastic response to the eight-point Fahd Plan which called for "mutual recognition of all territories". According to Western reports, the influence that Syria exerts over sections of the PLO through Syrian military presence in Lebanon is vital to President Assad's ambitions of regional leadership. The Syrians want no compromise with Israel on the basis of recognising it as an entity that is entitled to existence in West Asia.

What of others in the Arab world? Algeria and Libya extend moral support to the Palestinians and perhaps are generous with financial assistance. Saudi Arabia, whose late King Khaled was chiefly instrumental, in blocking an Israeli invasion planned for last year, has espoused the Palestinian cause with favour, but it has been seeking to bring about a settlement on the basis of recognising Israel. The fact that Egyptian President Hosny Mubarak flew to attend Khaled's funeral though the two countries have no diplomatic relations suggests that Saudi Arabia no more regards Israel's friends as its enemies. Mubarak himself is in a difficult situation right now. He was rebuilding Egyptian links with the Arab countries after the death of Sadat. He can only demonstrate Egyptian sympathy for the Palestinians through critical anti-Israeli comments, but if he chooses to do more than that, he will run the risk of abrogating the Camp David accord. As for Iraq and Kuwait and lesser Arab states, their pre-occupation is largely with the driving force of the Iranian revolution — Shiite fundamentalism and anti-Americanism.

Where do the Palestinians go now? No Arab government is seen willing to fight their battles. Israeli Defence Minister Ariel Sharon has callously said that the Palestinians had no business to be in Lebanon and they should go to Jordan. Jordan's King Hussain was the one who pushed them out in the first place; he wants no part of the PLO. Syria can offer only temporary refuge. The PLO has become far too influential and has made a great number of friends internationally for it to remain under Syrian hegemony for any length of time. The PLO, which pledged a "fight unto death" slogan at the outbreak of the war, has since said that defeat in Lebanon does not mean the collapse of the resistance. "We will carry on our hit - and - run- operations from wherever we can. If we are pushed out from one place, we will go to another". The fight will therefore continue even from within Lebanon with the assistance of the Lebanese National Movement, which is non-sectarian. The PLO and the Movement have become an integral factor of Lebanese polity; to shake them off permanently may be difficult though to subdue them for the present may be easy.

Meanwhile, President Elias Sarkis of Lebanon, who belongs to the Maronite Christian sect, has brought together all political factions under what has been described as a National Salvation Board to tackle the fall-out of the Israeli invasion. That the American ambassador declared the Reagan Government's support for the Board is good enough to make it suspect in Arab eyes, but it is one indication of US collusion with Israel in partitioning Lebanon to suit their common purpose of occupying Lebanon also in the guise of restoring its sovereignty. But for how long? Even the British Deputy Foreign Minister, Douglas Hurd, has had to admit that Israel's security cannot be won indefintely by occupying other people's land. "That simply produces terrorism which passes off as resistance movement," he has said. He may well have a point. (*June 16*)

Two Parties Out on a Limb

THE non-Communist opposition parties in their top-level conclaves have taken stock of their electoral performance. From all accounts, it has been an unenviable exercise for each of them, be it BJP and Lok Dal or Janata Party or Congress-S. The mere assertion that the Congress-I's prestige has declined and Indira Gandhi's charisma is wearing off has provided them little consolation, for they were required to give a plausible explanation for their own failures.

This is particularly true in the case of the Janata Party and the Congress-S. The two were allies in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh; both were split in Kerala and their official wings were part of the Left Democratic Front; the West Bengal State units of both parties had negotiated electoral adjustments with the Congress-I, apparently in violation of the line approved by their respective leaderships at national level. It is another matter that while the Congress-S state unit was able to successfully negotiate with the Congress-I in West Bengal, the Janata State unit could not.

The Congress-S chief, Sharad Pawar, added another dimension when during the course of byelections in Maharashtra he openly declared that his party and the BJP could usefully cooperate with each other in the State — a statement which went against his party's official stand. That he denied having made such a statement (at the party's working committee held on June 7) only further underlined the faceless character of the leadership. The same leadership which had taken disciplinary action against A.K. Antony and his group in Kerala for having negotiated with the Congress-I, was now offering alibis for its West Bengal leadership under Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi having openly entered into an alliance with Cong-I.

The Janata Party chief, Chandra Shekhar, had at least the courage— which Sharad Pawar miserably lacks— to own up responsibility for his party's failure in the election and offered to quite the post, which Sharad Pawar dared not do.

It has now dawned on the Janata leaders that their party is not a cadre-based organisation and that it does not enjoy the exclusive support of certain castes or regions nor sections of society as some other parties do. It has also conceded that the party lacks "cohesive thinking and planning". It is being realised that instead of striving for unity of the Opposition parties, if it had gone it alone and put up fewer candidates, the party would have shown better results. At the same time, general secretary Ramakrishna Hegde in his report has also claimed that "as the only national party in the Opposition" the Janata Party rightly took the initiative to unify the democratic opposition" and that in this, the party was only discharging its "historic responsibility". Ironically, it has also been conceded that the entire effort floundered for the same reasons as were responsible for the break-up of the old Janata." This only means that the Janata Party has learnt nothing; how can there be "cohesive" thinking so long as people ranging from Piloo Mody and Morarji Desai to Chandra Shekhar with Surendra Mohan — with Subramanian Swamy thrown in — continue to be in the same fold?

The BJP has learnt the lesson and decided not only to abandon the opposition unity mirage but has also spelt out a revised tactical line which was reflected in Vajpayee's presidential address at the BJP's recently held Surat National Council meeting. He frankly said that "neither the unity of democratic opposition is a panacea for all our ills nor the divided opposition essentially a curse." The BJP obviously would not bother about the Lok Dal's criticism that some parties (referring essentially to the BJP) posing as the "sole national alternative" had "confused the electorate and disrupted Opposition unity".

The Janata Party has to have a clearer perspective and evolve its organisation accordingly before it can hope to make a mark even in the ensuing elections in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh next year. With a directionless party and an incoherent leadership, it would again be running the risk of being left far behind — and the risk will be real because it has a stake at least in Karnataka.

Narendra Sharma

June 15

U.N. Special Session

The Second Special Session on Disarmament of the United Nations General Assembly is now well under way, with India among nations making significant contribution to the great debate on mankind's future. We publish here four contributions on different aspects — one by S. Viswam, Chief of the Delhi Bureau of the *Deccan Herald*, one by Dr R.R. Subramanian, Research Associate, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, one by O.P. Sabherwal, senior journalist, and the fourth a document jointly prepared before the commencement of the session by Prof Rasheeduddin Khan of Jawaharlal Nehru University and Prof Subrata Banerjee of the Indian Institutute of Mass Communication.

Towards Disarmament: Politics of Overkill

S. VISWAM

DELEGATES of 157 governments and private anti-war groups are currently discussing in New York — at the Second Special Session on Disarmament of the United Nations General Assembly — how to prevent a nuclear war. There is a touch of grim irony in their exercise because basically the prevention of a nuclear war has now largely become the responsibility of the two super-powers. Whether one likes it or not, the prime moves for reversing the arms race rest with the United States and the Soviet Union, but if the rest of the world community has become so exercised over the matter of disarmament, it is because, as Indira Gandhi so rightly points out, "never before has mankind as a whole faced the possibility of its destruction by the weapons some states claim to need for their security".

The Second Special Session would undoubtedly have benefited by the articulation of such a fear by Indira Gandhi in person at this most important gathering, but she has made up for her absence by raising her voice in the cause of peace and advancing a five-point "concrete" programme of action. This represents yet another Indian initiative and is consistent with earlier advocacy on several occasions by New Delhi of a total stoppage of production and deployment of all destructive weapons, whether nuclear or conventional.

As Narasimha Rao pointed out in his speech at the session, it has been India's conviction that the focus of disarmament must be clearly directed on nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. This was not to say that an ever-spiralling arms race in the so-called conventional weapons and the increasing sophistication in these weapons systems is not a matter of concern.

It is such basic consideration that has guided India's principal initiatives namely, in 1954 for the prohibition of all nuclear weapon tests; in 1964, for the stoppage of all proliferation of nuclear weapons, be it horizontal or vertical; and in 1978, for the prohibition of any use of nuclear weapons pending nuclear disarmament. The Declaration adopted by the First Special Session in 1978 had been regarded as an epoch-making event in the forging of an international disarmament strategy, but the euphoria over it had necessarily to be short-lived. For, despite commitment by all the nuclear-weapons producting states to the Declaration's objectives, neither the production nor the deployment of nuclear weapons abated. Indeed, if anything, there has been proliferation even on a larger scale. Notably, not a single weapon of mass destruction has been destroyed in the four-year interregnum between the First and Second Special Sessions. Indira Gandhi is therefore quite right in declaring that the prospects of an early accord may seem discouraging from the particular point of view of one side or the other, but the path to peace and security cannot and does not lie through an arms race or theories of deterrence. The world must be pulled back from the precipice. But can it be?

In an official note submitted to the session, India listed the four "basic and inescapable" facts about nuclear weapons. The existing nuclear armouries contain large megaton weapons, every one of which has a destructive power greater than that of all the conventional explosives, that have ever been used in warfare since the day gunpowder was discovered. The present arsenals, believed to number 50,000 or so, have an overkill capacity, that is, of destroying all life on earth several times over. There can be no winners in a nuclear war since civilised life as we know it will cease to exist anywhere. And the very existence of nuclear weapons posed a grave threat to the survival of mankind since even a miscalculation can lead to a nuclear holocaust.

This apart, the struggle for disarmament can no more be waged on the basis of outmoded theories of balance of power or deterrence and spheres of influence. The Western world persists in advocating such theories, which is why tension centres are gradually expanding and currently embrace parts of the world where new threats to peace and security have surfaced. The Indian Ocean area is one such, the Gulf another. Priorities are being distorted from nuclear weapons to conventional weapons, from measures of real disarmament and arms limitation to so-called confidence building measures and verification problems, from military alliances to non-aligned countries, and from the huge weapon stockpiles of the Great Powers the legitimate means of defence of small countries. Narasimha Rao has spoken of another aspect of the arms race. There was now a wider awareness of the high probability of any use of nuclear weapons getting totally out of hand, and military strategists are near-unanimous that it would be impossible to maintain any effective command and control over a nuclear weapons exchange within minutes of its commencement.

While the non-nuclear weapons states have found that their own security has come under threat by the continuing nuclear deployment, there has been very little corresponding awareness of such dangers on the part of the nuclear weapons producing states. One of the first casualties of Reagan's assumption of the US Presidency was SALT-II; detente had, of course, started being eroded even during the latter years of Jimmy Carter. Nonetheless, Reagan's proposal for resumption of strategic arms reduction talks (START) and its acceptance by President Brezhnev have generated new hopes which ought to be further bolstered by a renewed call for total disarmament from the Second Special Session, to which Indira Gandhi has now made her own contribution.

She has called for a freeze on nuclear weapons, immediate suspension of their tests, a binding convention on the non-use of such weapons; a treaty on general and complete disarmament within an agreed time-frame, and a programme of educating public opinion on the harmful effects of the arms race on the world economy. Narasimha Rao has also articulated the Third World position that the concept of "a nuclear weapons free zone", assiduously being advanced by the Western world, is unrealistic. "We cannot subscribe to the legitimisation of the possession of nuclear weapons by a few powers by agreeing to live under their professedly benign protection in the guise of a nuclear weapons free zone," he told the session.

Two other aspects of the disarmament discussions are relevant. Firstly, in proposing a nuclear freeze, India is envisaging a package formula: a complete cessation of the manufacture of nuclear weapons and a cut-off in the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes. Such a combined step would mean that all nuclear facilities everywhere in the world would become peaceful, and in that event the nuclear weapons states would have no alibis to deny international safeguards on their own nuclear establishments, which they are now asking non-nuclear-weapon states to accept on theirs in the name of fullscope safeguards. Such a package could also lead to an effective and yet economical safeguards system on the basis of objective scientific and non-discriminatory criteria, applicable to everyone.

Secondly, the nuclear weapons states have yet to concede the close nexus between the arms race and global economic development. K. Subrahmanyam, Director of the Institute of Defence Studies and a members of the Indian delegation to the current UN Special Session, has argued that the demand for the New International Economic Order and disarmament are intertwined. In the booklet "Struggle for Disarmament" authored by him, he says: "The rivalry and confrontation underlying the arms race between the East and the West constitute only one side of the global picture. The other side is the role of armaments in the North-South relationships. The linkage between the domination of the North in economic and political terms, on the one hand, and in military terms on the other, is symbiotic. Without the latter, the former will not be possible. Hence, for the developing nations, the struggle for the New International Economic Order is inextricably linked with that for disarmament."

Mr. Narasimha Rao emphasised this point forcefully in New York. Sustained development of the North has to be tied up to accelerated development of the South, he said. International relations must not be pursued in terms of conflict and competition or of gaining supremacy in nuclear strategic arsenals or conventional capability. The cooperative approach alone as envisaged in the New International Economic Order could provide long-term answers and solutions.

The basic question remains: Can the world be pulled back from the precipice? The answer must be: Yes, it can. Anti-nuclear war groups have proliferated of late. Scores of peace movements have begun exercising pressure on industrialised nations to abandon the arms race. Hundreds of peace marchers descended on the UN premises on the day the Second Special Session began, demanding an end to nuclear weapons; significantly, among them were several victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nearly 100,000 peace-marchers converged the other day on London's Hyde Park; it was the largest demonstration of its kind. If to such peace movements, the voice of the developing Third World is added, reason is bound to dawn on the nuclear states. But when?☐ *(June 14)*

A WORLD WITHOUT WAR

I was wondering if some symbol could be found for the modern world. Every age might be designated by a symbol. The present age would probably be designated best by the symbol of the mushroom cloud which comes out of an atom bomb. It has become the recognised symbol of the atom bomb and of nuclear warfare. To live under the shadow of the possibility of such a cloud arising is to live a life which is not civilised.

Ultimately it is not merely the avoidance of nuclear tests that will put an end to the danger of war, because there are vast numbers of nuclear bombs accumulated in various countries, notably in the USA and in the Soviet Union, but there has to be an assurance of a world without war ... It is true that the world has never been without war, but it is also true that the world has never lived with nuclear bombs as its bedfellow almost. There is no doubt that a war will lead to the use of nuclear weapons and the nuclear weapons will largely destroy the world as we know it ...

Even if we stop the manufacture of nuclear weapons, and destroy the weapons which we have got, there is a chance, if war occurs, of those weapons being manufactured afresh by industrialised communities. Ultimately we have to aim at a world without war. There is no choice left. So we work for disarmament as a first step.

Jawaharlal Nehru, June 23, 1962.

Verification Through Satellite Monitoring

R.R. SUBRAMANIAN

FRANCE proposed the creation of an International Satellite Monitoring Agency (ISMA) at the last United Nations Special Session on Disarmament held in June 1978. The proposal envisaged the progressive development of the system in three stages: (a) ISMA would receive and process data from states which own and operate observation satellites. (b) ISMA would build and develop its collecting and processing facilities. (c) ISMA would launch and operate its own satellites.

Satellites for Earth Observations (SEOS) are of special interest to India, whose space research organisation ISRO has fabricated the Bhaskara series and launched them with Soviet rockets. Today, observation satellites for both civilian and military purposes have attained a very high level of accuracy and precision. Unfortunately, most of the information that has been gathered to date has been processed by the two super-powers. It was agreed by them after the signature of a bilateral arms control treaty like SALT I to have national technical means (NTM) of verification through spy satellites. One of the weaknesses of the NTM system has been its bilateral nature — whenever the two parties concerned trade accusations against each other about violations of the treaty, the rest of the world has no way of knowing the truth. It is in this context then that one sees the merits of verification satellites owned by a United Nations agency. Furthermore, one can envision roles for it in UN peacemaking as well as in the sphere of international crisis management.

A resolution requested the UN Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive study of the implications of ISMA. As a result, a group of governmental experts from various countries, including India, was formed in 1979. The final findings of this group are now before the Special Session on Disarmament now being held at New York. The outcome of the deliberations seems unclear at the present stage. What is clear is that unlike at the time of the First Special Session, the grass-root peace movements in Europe and the United States for nuclear disarmament are quite intense. Nuclear disarmament should be the ultimate goal of the 21st Century; until then verifiable arms control is the next best achievement. At the 21st Annual Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs, held in Bulgaria in August 1978, in which this writer was a participant, non-governmental participants examined the role of ISMA in its entirety.

Satellites that are based in space today have also become the nerve-centre of communications and early warning systems. A system of management of the armed forces through command, control, communication and intelligence (C^3I) has come into being. In other words, satellites have become the "eyes and ears" for crisis management, especially in the case of the two super-powers. After the formal acceptance of SALT I by both sides, it was agreed that each side would orbit "close look" satellites so as to be able to provide a national technical means (NTM) of verification. In addition, the two super-powers have orbited several "close look" satellites that have enabled them to have access to the data of other countries. It was the reconnaissance satellites that detected the preparations by South Africa for a nuclear test in August 1977. There is often 'disinformation' put out by certain sources like the Pentagon on whether India or Pakistan are readying for a nuclear test. Such disinformation can only be checked by an effective ISMA. Pooling of resources of rich nations and those with nationally developed space programmes in the developing world can go a long way towards the creation of a single neutral agency so that the system of satellites can be called in to provide data and information that are not ordinarily made available by the two super-powers.

The terms of reference of the group of experts are broad and relate to all its technical, legal and financial implications. As far as technical and legal problems are concerned, they are surmountable, but as far as the financial aspect is concerned, there will be severe interplay of politics. Both the super-powers are not in favour of such a system, as they feel it would be an infringement of their privacy, and hence they will withhold finances for this venture. But to ensure effective operation of the system, launch facilities, telemetry and electronics will have to be sought from the super-powers. Alternatively, the capabilities of France, Japan, China and India to launch satellites may be pooled together in the long run. But then, France and Japan have commonly shared perceptions about the global situation, which India and China do not have. The solution may therefore lie in managing this system through a group of countries that are characterised as "neutral" (Sweden, Finland) and involving the non-aligned developing world in the decision-making and implementation process.

It is in the developing world that the areas of conflict are ripe and situations are engineered by various external forces. In the oil-rich areas of the Gulf, the possibilities for use of tactical nuclear weapons are great. It is therefore imperative that the developing world have enough warning about such contingencies. Consequently, it is vital that they shed their differences and aim to combat the interests of both East and West, and participate in a process that enhances the security of the developing world. For this reason, the 'rich' countries of the developing world must finance the ISMA through the United Nations with a view to having accessibility to a *data base*, different from what the two super-powers would like to maintain. Except for these two sources, the world has no way of knowing what the exact facts are, as far as violations are concerned. In response to the peace movements, President Reagan has come up with a proposal for Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) instead of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT). Perhaps this is one more piece of gimmickry, but the point of START is well taken, namely, that it is the warheads and not the launchers as lethal instruments of destruction that should be reduced. As far as the existing triad of strategic nuclear weapons (not counting those in Europe) are concerned, the United States accounts for 9200 warheads and the Soviets for 6900. These figures are meaningless when it is remembered that one 15 kiloton yield bomb dropped on Hiroshima decimated the city. Today the warheads are in the megaton range.

A major problem confronting START reductions will be the issue of verifications and in all probability there will be disagreements as far as the procedures to be adopted are concerned. The developing world will have once again to get involved in rhetoric and polemics because it cannot come up with a comprehensive verification system. Satellites alone are not the verification system for arms control. There are also "on-site" inspections, but it remains unclear whether the Soviets will agree to it. It is in this regard that the neutrals or non-aligned can play a role. (*June 14*)

Spectre of Chemical Warfare over Europe

O.P. SABHERWAL

WHAT is haunting Europe in the penultimate decade of the twentieth century, even more fearsome than the spectre of class struggle for the bourgeoisie predicted by Marx, or the post-hydrogen bomb discovery of a nuclear holocaust threatening a veritable destruction of European civilisation, is the gruesome image of wholesale manslaughter through new deadly chemical weapons to be used in the next war involving the super-powers. Is it this spectre which is driving the Europeans to a new and massive demonstration for peace, seeking an end to all sophisticated weapons of mass destruction? Sure enough, the haunting spectre of the new chemical weapons being added to the arsenals of war is one of the biggest impulses in the greatest-ever rally for peace, directed against Reaganite policies, that is presently gathering momentum all over Europe.

What is new in this talk of chemical warfare from what has been there for the past few decades? It is this: experimentations of thirty years have produced one of the most deadly and gruesome weapon that mankind has known: VX nerve gas — a deadly binary nerve gas — ready for use in the form of a bomb; and the now perfected weapon is already being produced on a big scale, as part of US war weaponry by decision of the American President.

The new weapon is simple to operate. Experts say that the two components of VX are relatively harmless so long as they are kept separately in two chambers of a bomb. Lethal mixture is formed only after the bomb is dropped from an aeroplane. A gas generator inside the bomb would generate pressure which would burst the thin metallic membranes separating sulphuric nucleus from the fluid surrounding it. At the same time the electric engine would start up the apparatus that would make the devilish mixture. Miniature charges would then open little slots on all sides of the bomb on way to the target: the resistance of the air would eject VX, and the substance would fall on the earth.

A thorough-going study of the new weapon, and all that goes with it, has been made by the West German magazine *Der Spiegel* and what it reports is alarming. A little drop of VX nerve gas, which is odourless —a drop as small as a drop of mist — would be sufficient to kill a human being in a short time. First symptoms would be respiratory troubles, perspiration, vomiting and blindness. The body would be unable to hold excreta. The last stage would be incapacitation of respiratory organs. Many people would suffer for a few minutes, others for hours. Fatal dose of VX for a human life is 0.4 mg.

In January this year, according to *Der Spiegel* President Reagan decided on big-scale manufacture of the new chemical weapon, making it part of the American arsenal. The US Administration has resorted to the same pretext as it did in perfecting other fearsome weapons of war, including nuclear and missile systems, in earlier periods: to pose its military "weakness" as compared to the Soviet Union, declaring that the West would have to modernise its weaponry to match Soviet strength — as a deterrent. Thus, this "third stage of modernisation of Western weapons of mass destruction", as *Der Spiegel* puts it, namely, the production of binary chemical weapons, has begun after development and production of neutron bomb, and after the additional production of medium range nuclear missiles.

To soften the fears of their European allies, the US war leaders explain their new line in terms that might banish all fears of bellicose intent on their part. "Now we have to resort to additional armament in order to disarm later." This is how the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, Bernard Rogers, put it. Reagan spoke in the same strain in his recent address to the West German Bundestag and in the address to the British Parliament.

That these are facile attempts to cloak a savage and frightful reality is shown by authentic reports of what has been going on in the USA and between the leading NATO powers secretively for years in developing several varieties of chemical warfare. These reports show that the US Government has already launched a 10,000 million dollar programme for the chemical rearmament of the US military arsenal, providing for manifold increase of chemical ammunition up to five million pieces in the five-year period 1982 to 1986. A plant with an annual capacity of 70,000 pieces of binary ammunition is being built in Pine Bluff, Arkansas; and many other chemical arms manufacturing plants are also increasing their output. At the same time, storage facilities for chemical weapons are growing — everywhere in the Western countries.

Now that the manufacture of binary nerve gas has been started, the base is being expanded for fundamental research in the development of other toxic means of warfare. The latest round-up of reports from United States indicates that an increasing number of American firms and institutes are being drawn into work for developing super-toxin agents against which no counter-measures are known to man. Research is on in toxins obtained from plants and animals such as pali toxin and ricin. Not infrequently, the effects of an agent are tested not only on animals but on human beings too, which when leaked out have created a big outcry in the United States.

The exact figures concerning current US stocks of chemical weapons are kept strictly secret, but US scientific journals suggest how much chemical warfare material has been produced by the United States for a war on an armed conflict. According to these journals, the USA produced 15,000 tons of sarin nerve gas during 1953-57 and approximately 5,000 tons of VX nerve gas during 1961-67. *Scientific American* states that the US army's stocks of chemical munitions exceed 150,000 tons. US depots in the United States and West Germany store some 3 million projectiles/sarin-filled projectiles for 105-mm cannons, sarin-filled and VX-filled projectiles for 155-mm and 203-mm howitzers, several thousand 500-lb and 750-lb sarin-filled bombs, hundreds of thousands of explosive bomb, each containing 8 litres of VX nerve gas, and some 1,500 aircraft spray-tanks, each containing 600 litres of VX.

What is more, America presently uses the scientific-technical industrial potential of its allies for developing new deadly toxic agents. For instance, studies of the prospects of development of chemical weapons for the eighties were carried out recently at the Stanford Centre for Strategic Research with the participation of Britain, West Germany and Israel. According to informed reports, secret joint work in the sphere of synthesising new toxic agents are being conducted in cooperation by Britain, West Germany, France, Canada, Japan, Israel and South Africa. A chemical binary shell for the rocket volley fire system is being developed jointly by the United States, Britain, France and West Germany.

The dimensions of chemical warfare development can be gauged from the organisational measures for restructuring and strengthening the military chemical service which are being carried out in the US Army. These include formation of chemical brigades in the army corps and inclusion of chemical battalions in the army divisions. Military experts are undergoing courses of training on the tactics and methods of use of chemical weapons and on defence against them at the various centres in the USA as well as in Western Europe. US troops have gas protection clothing, the latest variety of gas masks, and re-connaissance and decontamination means. As a rule, most of the war exercises and manoeuvres are held conforming to the conditions of waging a chemical war as well.

An interesting aspect of chemical weapons is that while the armies of the warring countries will have means of defence against chemical munitions, thereby reducing the losses of their personnel, civilians are virtually defenceless against such weapons. The losses of civilians in such warfare would exceed the loss to the troops by 20 to 30 times at least.

As the grim reality of the rising spectre of chemical warfare spreads in Europe and America, there is a surging outcry, fast developing into a mass upheaval against the new threat to humanity. It is clear that once let loose, there would be no way of controlling the monster of chemical warfare. The great "achievements" by the United States and its allies in this field could be overcome by any major power in a short time, unlike other sophisticated weapons, and proliferation can hardly be stopped. For instance, the complicated device to form a highly toxic agent in the mechanism of a bomb on way to the target of attack, although a technical novelty, can be reproduced by even middle level industrial nations. The chemical bomb could become widespread.

The greatest danger from the new deadly weapons is to Europe, where populations as well as industrial capacity are concentrated more than elsewhere. Small nations, divided by man-made boundaries, afford no protection from chemical contamination from one side to the other. Thus, a British daily, *The Guardain*, says that "lethal clouds over Europe" are undoubtedly a part of an image of chemical war which was made by the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the US armed forces. Millions would be killed, for the nerve gas could be blown to densely populated areas. There would be twenty times more dead civilians than combatants. "Compared to the use of tactical nuclear weapons, this ratio is even higher," the paper states.

The truth however is that the induction of chemical weapons is hardly an isolated act; it is the culmination of a process which keeps on perfecting the means of death and destruction, harnessing man's knowledge and resources, science and technology and fabulous wealth for this hideous purpose. This is a process of dehumanisation which has to be stopped, or else it would mean the end of all that is of value to human civilisation, and to the very existence of mankind. Europe and America are, no doubt, the prime theatres of this heinous, ravaging enactment. But they drag the rest of humanity alongwith them with the abyss of destruction. □

In the context of the Second Special Session on Disarmament of the UN General Assembly, Rasheeduddin Khan, Professor of Political Science, Jawaharlal Nehru University, and Subrata Banerjee, Professor, Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi, have prepared a note on behalf of the All-India Peace and Solidarity Organisation and the Parliamentarians for Peace. The note was prepared in the wake of a seminar held in March 1982 with about sixty participants from different fields. One of the purposes of this note, which was prepared immediately before the UN session began and has been released now, is to promote coherent discussion on the entire range of problems connected with disarmament. — *Editor*

India and Disarmament Perspective

RASHEEDUDDIN KHAN

SUBRATA BANERJEE

INDIA's role in the deliberations and formulation of decisions in the first UN Special Session on Disarmament (SSD-I) was positive and constructive though subdued and marginal. But India did play a role in securing the endorsement of the resolution by 103 states, which has declared the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons a violation of the UN Charter and a crime against humanity. While calling for the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, it emphasised that the "removal of the threat of a world war — a nuclear war — is the most acute and urgent task of the present day", and added a word of caution and warning by stating that "mankind is faced with a choice: we must halt the arms race or face annihilation." There is an opportunity for India to play a more vigorous role in SSD-II, in consonance with its status as the leading pioneer of the non-aligned movement and as a foremost spokesman of peace and peaceful development for ushering in a New International Economic Order.

Four years after SSD-I, has come the Second Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Disarmament (SSD-II), June-July 1982. A review of the activities during this period reveals dangerous lack of efforts towards implementation of the resolution in the first session, SSD-I. The only apparent advance has been that all the five nuclear weapon states are now participating in the work of the UN Committee on Disarmament (CD).

Unfortunately the sessions of the CD at Geneva have been unable to make any progress. This is indicated by the following facts:

(i) No agreement on establishment of *ad hoc* working groups on nuclear disarmament and a comprehensive test ban, as also on prohibition of all nuclear weapons tests and production, stockpiling, deployment and use of nuclear neutron weapons.

(ii) Inability to evolve a common approach to effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear weapon states against use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

(iii) No ratification of SALT-II by US and no indication about modifications wanted or about date of resumption of US-Soviet dialogue.

(iv) Establishment of nuclear weapon free zones and peace zones obstructed by military build-up, especially in the Indian Ocean-Gulf region.

(v) US-Soviet talks on convention on chemical weapons halted by US.

(vi) No progress in drafting comprehensive agreement on the prohibiton of the development and manufacture of new types of mass destruction weaponry.

(vii) Instead of a reduction in military expenditure it has been growing.

(viii) The Helsinki Accord has been virtually reduced to a piece of paper.

(ix) Inability to reach agreement on the convening of a world disarmament conference.

It is difficult to ignore the reality that the failure to implement the SSD-I decisions is mainly due to the obstructionist attitude of the US and some of the Western states, in opposition to the strong efforts of the great majority of delegations, including the Group of 21 consisting of neutral and non-aligned countries in the Committee on Disarmament, and the Socialist countries. This is understandable. It is not without significance that just at the time when the SSD-I was meeting in 1978, the NATO powers at a parallel session in Washington DC decided to increase their military expenditure by 15 per cent by 1985. Another such meeting has been scheduled at the same time as SSD-II.

It is not merely that the decisions of SSD-I have not been implemented. On the contrary, the threat of a nuclear war has become much greater today. This is evident from the report of the Group of Government Experts set up in accordance with the recommendations of SSD-I. The report draws attention to the following developments since 1978:

(i) There is a continuing threat to humanity from the existing nuclear arsenal which is in the range of 40,000 to 50,000 nuclear weapons.

(ii) Failure of nuclear weapon powers to enter into meaningful negotiations for disarmament as they are obliged to under the NPT.

(iii) Rapid rate of refining, modifying destructive capability and more effective delivery system for nuclear weapons.

The existing scenario acquires the most alarming dimension if account is taken of the following developments:

(i) Production of the Neutron Bomb.

(ii) Further expansion of nuclear weapons and the projected deployment of medium-range nuclear arms in Europe.

(iii) Extensive deployment of the new armaments systems and the formation of the Rapid Deployment Force.

(iv) Plans to manufacture new chemical weapons.

(v) Massive military build-up in the Middle East, Gulf, Indian Ocean and in the Caribbean.

(vi) Military intervention against the territorial integrity and political independence of sovereign states and against national liberation movements struggling against native semi-colonial, racist and fascist domination, particularly in Africa and Central and South America.

(vii) Nuclearisation of regimes like South Africa and Israel.

(viii) Deployment of a whole new generation of conventional weapons not only in the developed countries but also in some of the developing countries.

(ix) Allegations of violations of biological warfare conventions by some big powers; failure of second NPT review conference even to reach agreement on a joint statement on chemical and radiological warfare conventions.

(x) Increasing danger of the use of space for military purposes.

(xi) Widespread dispersal of weapons grade fission material in the West, unsatisfactory safety and security measures, illegal sales of such fission material, possibility of development of miniaturised precision guided ammunition leading to danger of such weapons falling into the hands of anti-social elements with international linkages in a turbulent society.

(xii) Nature of new weapons being developed may soon make verification and therefore arms limitation agreement impossible.

(xiii) Rapid expansion of nuclear weapons and their distribution to formation commanders have led to the danger of making the concept of 'central control a myth, more so as authority to launch nuclear weapons has already been delegated to formation commanders of NATO.

(xiv) Most important is the fact that the surplus of nuclear weapons has led to change in strategic doctrines from Mutually Assured Destruction to Nuclear Target Strategic Solution and such dangerous theories as ‘limited” and “winnable” nuclear wars and quantification of “survival” possibilities. Any distinction between such concepts as deterrence, war fighting, conventional weapons, and strategic theatre and tactical nuclear weapons made totally meaningless.

(xv) Emergence of a nuclear philosophy opposing cooperation and replacing it by confrontation as a weapon of solving international disputes and difference. This is aimed at maximisation of gains to oneself at the expense of others. A cooperative approach is in total contradiction with a system where a handful of nations and of population consume the maximum amount of world resources for the profits of an even smaller number of people.

The other alarming development arising out of the new philosophy of confrontation is the increasing proliferation of flash points of armed conflicts in different parts of the globe, especially in the southern hemisphere: Middle East, Cyprus, Southern Africa, Central America, Caribbean, Lebanon, and the threat constituted by the conversion of the Indian Ocean into an ‘American lake’ with Diego Garcia linked with a chain of bases girdling the earth in the southern hemisphere. Also extension of NATO activities beyond the borders of Europe, especially in Middle East, Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

Gunboat diplomacy of the days of rising imperialism has now been replaced by aircraft-carrier diplomacy, whether sea-based or land-based.

These development have wider implications, especially for the developing countries, for instance:

(i) The current nuclear philosophy of confrontation in international relations is converting the developing countries into areas of experiments with and trials of new weapons systems, especially bacteriological and chemical warfare.

(ii) Proliferation of arms means misuse of non-renewable natural resources mostly extracted from the developing countries.

(iii) External interference in conflicts between neighbouring countries in the developing world, a legacy of imperialist rule, causes arms proliferation at the expense of resources necessary for development programmes to fight poverty.

In the midst of inevitable social upheavals arising out of the development process itself, retardation of development intensifies avoidable and unhealthy social tensions, national security is made an excuse for imposing restrictions on people and even the imposition of military dictatorships, thus releasing all the forces of destabilisation obstructing the process of orderly political development according to the wishes of the people, ultimately leading to the loss of political sovereignty.

Increased expenditure on arms development in advanced countries is at the expense of the use of science and technology and scientific skill and manpower resources, finance, scarce mineral and energy resources for the benefit of mankind; it prevents any possibility of the transfer of technology and financial resources from the advanced to the developing countries, thus preventing any possible progress towards the development of a New International Economic Order.

Emergence of Transnational Corporations as super-states, in the armaments and allied industries, chemicals, space technology and in communication and information industries, controlling the resources and governments of some of the major developed countries and developing countries with manpower and natural resources.

In the four years since SSD-I, India's concern for disarmament has also become more specific, particularly in the face of threats to its national security and territorial integrity and to the prospects of its developmental plans:

(i) For India the concept and the quest for peace has been not merely a historical tradition and a moral issue but also an integral part of the national liberation movement, a goal of building democratic secular polity.

(ii) India's foreign policy of peace, anti-imperialism, and support to all liberation struggles, stems from the goals set by the founding fathers of independent India.

(iii) Validity of this peace perspective increased after Independence, with the realisation that peace is a historical necessity to develop retarded economy as quickly as possible and to strengthen and consolidate political sovereignty, territorial integrity and national identity.

(iv) Basic content of non-alignment in the context of cold war in the wake of the attempt to force the world into two military blocs, is to assert the *peace alternative* and work for detente, disarmament and development.

(v) Today this very policy of non-alignment is threatened by attempts to engulf India in the notorious “arc of crisis”, which is one of the potential areas of experiment of “limited nuclear war”.

(vi) All this has forced India to increase its defence expenditure against its own will. India still believes nevertheless that there is a correlation between internal economic strength and political stability and national security which cannot be ensured by mere superiority in sophisticated weapons systems.

In this context India has a major role at SSD-II. The position taken by India at recent conferences such as the Commonwealth Conference, the Cancun Summit and the New Delhi Consultations and the conference on technical cooperation between developing countries recently concluded at New Delhi, must now be followed up more boldly and vigorously.

The international situation may seem hopeless. In reality it is not so. India must recognise the new emerging forces of peace all over the world:

(i) The World Peace Movement has been growing from strength to strength gathering within its fold people of the most diverse opinions and beliefs.

(ii) A new anti-war movement is emerging in West Europe against attempts to convert it into a theatre of nuclear war.

(iii) Once again anti-war forces are emerging within the USA and in the US Congress.

(*Continued on page 34*)

Versailles Summit and Developing Countries

GIRISH MISHRA

"VERSAILLES is a challenging gesture of autocracy. In a flat piece of country a few miles west of the capital, a huge palace stands on an artificial mound, looking down through hundreds of windows upon artificial waterways and artificially designed gardens — and then forth into vacancy".

"That was what Louis XIV wanted! By removing his court from the capital, establishing the most sumptuous palace in the world amid vacancy, he emphasised the fact that a king of France had no need of the great city, of its citizens, of the masses, as supports for his power. Versailles was built to give France a tangible demonstration that the people were nothing and the king everything", writes Stefan Zweig in his book *Marie Antoinette*.

When the big seven of the imperialist countries, namely, the USA, Britain, West Germany, Japan, Italy, France and Canada, chose Versailles as the venue of their annual economic conclave early this month, they might have had such a feeling or intention. At least the USA surely had this in mind when its President flew into France. Flora Lewis wrote in *International Herald Tribune:* "The Reagan Administration started with the thesis that there could be no trade-off, that the allies should line up behind its tough approach to Moscow but that the role of the dollar was something else, none of their business."

Thus the US Administration wanted to demonstrate that the rest of the world was nothing and it did not care a damn even for its allies. But, as ill luck would have it, the Reagan Administration could not have its way and it had to beat a hasty retreat on almost every question. Reagan had a taste of the mood of the allies when he met them in Louis XIV's seventeenth century splendour of the Chateau de Versailles over a ceremonial dinner hosted by French President Francois Mitterrand. From the very beginning the US policies, both economic and political, were subjected to scathing attacks.

Israel's blatant invasion of Lebanon with the connivance of the USA and the British war over the Falkland Islands came in for bitter attack and they cast their shadow over the conference throughout. Even Britain was not happy with Reagan because of his equivocation which was evident in the US stand over the UN resolution calling for a cease-fire.

On every issue the USA had to revise its original stand. On two major ones it had to face defeat. These were the attitude to the Soviet Union and to the developing world. The US Secretary of Treasury made himself an object of ridicule when he claimed that the agreement or the final declaration "accomplished what we set out to do. It is for the first time that we have agreed to limit our economic and commercial dealings with the Soviet Union".

But other participants were quick to refute this claim. To quote a report appearing in the *International Herald Tribune*: "West European officials said, however, that the Reagan Administration had failed to obtain stronger language that would commit the allies to 'economic warfare against the Soviet Union'."

The portions of the final declaration relating to the Soviet Union have been drafted in such ambiguous language that they have given rise to more than one interpretation. They read as follows: "We agree to pursue a prudent and diversified economic approach to the USSR and eastern Europe, consistent with our political and security Interests. This includes actions in three key areas. First, following international discussions in January, our representatives will work together to improve the international system for controlling exports of strategic goods to these countries and national arrangements for the enforcement of security controls.

"Second, we will exchange information in the OECD on all aspects of our economic, commercial and financial relations with the Soviet Union and eastern Europe."

"Third, taking into account existing economic and financial considerations, we have agreed to handle cautiously financial relations with the USSR and other eastern European countries, in such a way as to ensure that they are conducted on a sound economic basis, including also the need for commercial prudence in limiting export credits. The development of economic and financial relations will be subject to periodic ex-post reviews."

Mitterrand admitted that even if these steps were seriously pursued, their impact on the Soviet economy would be no more than marginal because its trade turnover with western Europe was not even one per cent of its GNP. The same was the view of West Germany. Its Finance Minister Manfred Lahnstein stated that the agreement was open to interpretation and it did not necessarily commit the participants to reduce their trade and commercial dealings with the Soviet Union. He asserted: "We will continue to work with East European countries and the Soviet Union as usual, and when there is no political risk, we will use creditworthiness as a criterion."

Japanese Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki was also non-committal about honouring the agreement and reducing export credits to the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries.

These countries realised that to follow the US dictates in their relations with the Soviet Union would mean further deepening of the crisis they were in. They knew their crisis had become acute because of the policy of high interest rates followed by the USA. In order to keep their domestic rates of interest competitive to stop the flight of their currencies, the franc and the lira were propped up by interest rates on short term and long term and deposits going up to 21 per cent and 24 per cent respectively. But this adversely affected their economies. This slowed down the rate of investment and they were suffering from stagflation. Unemployment rate had gone up leading to discontent and turmoil. It went up from less than 6 per cent to over 8.5 per cent. The number of unemployed was 3 million in Britain, 2 million in Italy, around 2 million in France and 1.4 million in West Germany.

According to one European banker, "There is a great deal of nervousness and uncertainty, because we never had interest rates so high. We have no standard against which to measure what may happen." He went on to add: "In 1978 and 1979, we had an economic recovery from recession that was led by consumers. But no one in Europe believes that consumers can pull us out of this one. You need an investment boom to lead us out of this one and you just won't get that when real interest rates are running around 10 per cent."

Mitterrand, contrary to established practice, aired his differences with the USA publicly and attacked its dear money policy. Both France and West Germany made it clear to Reagan that they could not afford to go back on the multi billion dollar gas pipeline deal and reduce their trade relations with the USSR to land themselves in greater difficulties.

Another issue on which the USA had to eat the humble pie related to the attitude towards developing countries. The USA had all along been maintaining that there was no place for global negotiations under the auspices of the UN and the activities of the multilateral agencies must be curtailed. There could be aid and trade relations with developing countries only on individual and bilateral basis and Reagan had put up the condition that he would prefer only those countries which believed in the magic of the market place and served American imperialist designs. That is why he ordered a drastic reduction in US contributions to international financial agencies. The *International Herald Tribune* had reported in the first week of May that; according to an official document of the US Government: "The Reagan Administration has decided that foreign aid will be channelled primarily to countries that directly benefit US security interests" and "it sets out an explicit rationale for spending aid money as a lever for advancing US defence policies." It meant "in effect, the Reagan Administration is abandoning the fiction that aid and base rights were separate issues."

This line of thinking was rejected at Versailles. The final declaration of the conference said: "The growth of the developing countries and the deepening of a constructive relationship with them are vital for the political and economic well-being of the whole world. It is, therefore, important that a high level of financial flows and official assistance should be maintained and that their amount and their effectiveness should be increased as far as possible, with responsibilities shared broadly among all countries capable of making a contribution.

"The launching of global negotiations is a major political objective approved by all participants in the summit. The latest draft resolution circulated by the Group of 77 is helpful, and the discussion at Versailles showed general acceptance of the view that it should serve as a basis for consultations with the countries concerned.

"We believe that there is now a good prospect for the early launching and success of the global negotiations, provided that the independence of the specialised agencies is guaranteed."

These paragraphs were seen "as a last-minute trade-off, as the United States pressed its allies on the trade issue and Canada and European countries urged more give from Washington in the so-called North-South dialogue."

However, it must not be forgotten that on such issues as the establishment of a New International Economic Order, more multilateral and Governmental aid and abrogating protectionist measures by advanced capitalist countries along with affording opportunities to developing countries to get better prices for their export goods, the big seven had the same stand. That is why the declaration remained silent on these issues. They reiterated their faith in the unreformed World Bank and they wanted "encouragement of private capital flows, including international arrangements to improve the conditions for private investment". In other words, "economic aggression" against developing countries will continue.

Though the funding problems of IDA VI and IDA VII were discussed; nothing concrete could emerge. The USA did not agree to restore the cuts in its contributions, nor were the others able to make any agreements to make up the shortfall. *(June 14)*

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DISCUSSION

Indian Development

The perspective of Indian development is fast becoming a matter of crucial concern for the polity of the nation. Taking into account the need for serious discussion of the state of our political economy and the options before the country, *Mainstream* (March 20, 1982) published a contribution from a distinguished observer of the economic scene. This was followed by seven thought-provoking contributions (*Mainstream*, April 10, April 24, May 1, May 8, May 29, June 5 and June 12). Here we publish two contributions one from R.C. Dutt, former Secretary, Government of India, and now Honorary Adviser, Standing Committee of Public Enterprises and the other by Shiva Chandra Jha, Member of Parliament. — *Editor*

Nehru and the Left : An Analysis

R.C. DUTT

Dr H.K. Paranjape in his article "Must Left Repeat Its Mistakes?" (*Mainstream*, May 29, 1982) has over-stated, and perhaps over-proved, his case. His conclusion that in the present context, the Left must fight its own battle, patiently do a good deal of grass-root work and not allow itself to be misguided by "pseudo-radical slogans" — in short not join the band-wagon of the ruling party — is unexceptionable. A strong, and indeed irrefutable, case for this conclusion can be made out by an analysis of the current policies and the recent decisions of the Government which clearly indicate the dominance of bourgeois forces, in both urban and rural areas. It is not necessary to support this conclusion by drawing an analogy of doubtful validity from the Nehru period of our post-Independence history. I am concerned in this rejoinder with the Nehru period, and I am concerned only to show how Dr Paranjape has misunderstood Nehru and misinterpreted his role, and how, therefore, he has come to wrong conclusions about Nehru's relationship with the Socialists in India and about the latter's attitude towards him.

This is not to defend Nehru, right or wrong. Dr Paranjape is right when he refers to his "inadequacies". He also makes a valid point when he says that "the deviations from the professed path of development" cannot be blamed "merely on the vested interests surrounding him", though the seeds of misunderstanding are sown when he (Dr Paranjape) refers to Nehru's "weak leadership and poor understanding". There was no question of "weak leadership", and if there was "poor understanding" it had to be blamed on the entire policy framework which the country had accepted, no doubt at Nehru's instance. In this framework, democracy of the parliamentary variety with its accompaniment of freedom and personal liberty was not merely "an essential precondition" for organising the dispossessed, as Dr Paranjape has put it in the last paragraph of his article, but an end in itself. Socialism which Nehru espoused had not only to be consistent with democracy of this type, but, to re-echo Churchill's famous sentence about the war had to be fought for democratically.

It may well be argued, as Prof Gyanchand did (*Socialist Transformation of Indian Economy*) that "a dynamic technique of social change (is) not inherent in parliamentary democracy...", and that therefore the parliamentary path is bound to falter, if not to fail. Nehru, however, never contemplated discarding this path, and had, therefore, to function within its constraints. One of the constraints was that though he was personally immensely popular with the masses, and could get any resolution passed or legislation enacted, there was no real socialist consciousness in the country, as there was national consciousness during the freedom movement. Whether in the circumstances adoption of the parliamentary path to socialism was itself indicative of a "poor understanding" of the social forces is a moot point, though it must be pointed out that even the Communist Parties in India have now come round to adopt this path. This of course does not necessarily make it the right path, but whether right or wrong, Nehru by his training and his deepest conviction could follow no other. If this was a failing, and if this showed poor understanding, Nehru can be condemned, but if parliamentary democracy is accepted, and Dr Paranjape appears to have accepted it, Nehru can be judged only on the criterion whether or not he fully availed himself of the opportunities that the parliamentary path presented to him, to introduce socialism.

Even on this criterion, the democratic path needs to be defined precisely. Dr. Paranjape has stated that from 1953 to 1962 "Nehru's sway over not merely the Congress Party but also over Indian polity as a whole was hardly challenged". The implication obviously is that during this period he could have carried through any measure that he desired. This is only technically true. Perhaps he could have, but resolutions and legislations do not necessarily lead to socialism, unless there is popular participation in, general acceptance and therefore proper implementation of these measures.

But even if these were forthcoming, it would have meant Nehru overriding substantial, if not majority, opinion in his own party.

Dr. Paranjape has also pointed out that in party interests Nehru preferred even anti-socialists like Morarji Desai, S.K. Patil or B.C. Roy to avowed socialists. It is true that Nehru could have kept such conservative leaders out of power, but to him this would not have been the democratic path. Each of these leaders, whatever their views, had a standing not only in the party but in the country, and as long as Nehru was relying on the Congress Party it would not have been democratic for him to exclude substantial views within the party and deny them representation in Government. What he sought was to infuse the Congress Party itself with stronger socialist elements. That was why he deplored the exit of Socialists like Acharya Narendra Dev from the Congress, as he did in a contemporary letter to the Chief Ministers. That is also why he tried to bring Jayaprakash Narayan into Government, though even without him he had a clear majority in Parliament. His objective was obviously misunderstood by JP. It was not a question of his reluctance to accept JP's fourteen points. Indeed, he stated that personally he was prepared to accept them. But he did not want these fourteen points to be forced on the Congress, even if he could do so on the basis of his personal standing, when he knew that the majority or at least a very substantial opinion in the party was opposed to their acceptance. He wanted JP to join him in Government and help him get these and similar programmes accepted.

This reluctance to ride roughshod over the party, presuming that he was in a position to do so, may be regarded by some as a weakness in Nehru. They draw the conclusion therefore that he was not really serious about his socialist programme. Whether it was a weakness or not, the latter conclusion is not correct, because the "weakness" was inherent in Nehru's concept of democratic functioning. It must be remembered that Nehru came to socialism not by a direct acceptance of the Marxist theories and values, but via the British school of liberalism. It is because he felt that individual freedom and dignity could not be assured merely by parliamentary democracy and without a change in production relations, that he accepted the economic structure of socialism. He always made it clear, however, that he did not accept the communist methods of bringing about changes.

Dr Paranjape's instances of Nehru's clash with the Indian Communist Party do not disprove the latter's socialist credentials. It is true that, at least in the early post-Independence years, he was highly critical of the party, but he had ample reasons to be so. The conduct of the Communist Party during the Quit India movement, 1942, was certainly no help to the Socialist movement in India. It branded the Communists as anti-national, and as men with extra-territorial loyalty. Even after Independence, the adventurous course of armed revolt when the country was still in the spell of post-Independence euphoria would have ruined the party completely if the course had not been corrected. To criticise the Communist Party in this context does not make Nehru anti-socialist, specially when it is noted, as it should be, that he never allowed himself to criticise the Communist ideal of a socialist society. The burden of his criticism invariably was that the Communist Party by its conduct was doing a disservice to socialism. In many instances, not necessarily in all, he was right.

Dr Paranjape is right in referring to the Congress campaign against the first Communist Government in Kerala in the late fifties. The episode is unfortunate, not so much because the Kerala Assembly was dissolved in consequence of a campaign against the State Government, but more so because the Congress, contrary to its progressive professions, led this reactionary campaign. It certainly showed the anti-socialist outlook of the majority of Congressmen, not excluding many of its top leaders, but this was no revelation. In fact, this was the core of the problem Nehru faced. His contemporary utterances on the subject showed no sympathy for the anti-Communist campaign of his party-men, and even when the State Assembly was dissolved he justified it as an opportunity for the Communist Party to renew its credentials at the polls. This entire episode showed the dilemma Nehru faced — the bourgeois outlook of the party he presided over, and his own reluctance to brush aside that outlook and impose his own on the party on the strength of his immense popularity in the country.

The second instance cited by Dr Paranjape, namely, Nehru's attitude to the creation of a separate Maharashtra State and to the inclusion of the city of Bombay in it, is, on the other hand, irrelevant to an assessment of Nehru's socialist view, however strongly Dr Paranjape may feel about it. The principles adopted by the Soviet Union in dealing with the problem of nationalities cannot be regarded as an integral point of the theory or practice of socialism. The practice of the Communist Parties to imitate the Soviet precedent in all matters, regardless of suitability in different contexts, is one to which Nehru objected all his life. And for this, he had the authority of Lenin himself, as quoted by him (Nehru) in his *Glimpses of World History*. "In no sense do we regard the Marxist theory as something complete and unassailable," Lenin had said. He had added: "We think that it is specially necessary for Russian socialists to undertake an independent study of the Marxist theory, for that theory gives only general guiding ideas, which can be applied differently in England, for instance, than in France, differently in France than in Germany, differently in Germany than in Russia".

Nehru may have deviated from the pre-Independence policy of the Congress in regard to linguistic provinces, he may even have been wrong in his attitude to the demand for linguistic States in the fifties (though this is not all that certain), but the fact that he did not follow the Soviet model in this respect does not shake his Socialist credential.

The above analysis, as has been stated earlier, is not to defend Nehru. Nehru has now been dead for eighteen years. He has passed into history, and history will no doubt give its verdict on him. The past, though dead, however, has still a relevance for the present. It has to lessons for the present and the future. Let us draw these lessons without denigrating Nehru, without questioning his sincerity, for as Dr Paranjape himself states, "Nehru's basic contribution to the democratic and socialist movement in the country" cannot be questioned. Later in his article, however, Dr Paranjape does just this when he states, "It should not be overlooked that since becoming Prime Minister, Nehru had gradually lost his faith (*if he ever really held it*) in what he himself had earlier described as scientific socialism', (emphasis added). And again, "One wonders whether, at least on the part of Nehru, it was all naivety; or there was also a definite feeling that a basic change in property relations would upset the applecart and this would not be welcome in his own party".

Without denigrating Nehru or questioning his sincerity, there are several lessons which can be debated and learnt from the Nehru experience, not only from the "inadequacies" of Nehru's policies, but from the "inadequacies" of the Left response to Nehru also. It is not possible here to make a detailed analysis of such "inadequacies" but they need to be analysed and debated. For the present, some of them, perhaps the more glaring ones, may be referred to, on an illustrative basis, to initiate this debate.

First, even within the democratic framework, was Nehru right in relying on the Congress Party, built up by bourgeois leadership for a bourgeois revolution, as a vehicle for socialist transformation? Nehru was keen on retaining the Socialists within the Congress Party, and even on persuading former Congress Socialists like Jayaprakash to join him. He also wanted the co-operation of the Communists to build up a climate of opinion in the country to influence the Congress Party and make them move in a socialist direction. He would not, however, allow the Socialists in the Congress, until the 1962 crisis forced him to do so, to form socialist groups or forums within the party, for this he regarded as factionalism. Was it not a vain hope in the circumstances that the Congress Party would be an adequate vehicle for social change?

Secondly, and following from the first, was it not a grave failure that Nehru neglected to build up socialist cadres which could spread socialist consciousness in the country and help implementation of socialist measures in the field? This "apathy of Nehru and his like-minded followers", as the perceptive critic, P.C. Joshi, put it*, "to the painstaking work of socialist organisation specially at the grass roots" led to the failure of the land reform movement and of Nehru's vision of a network of agrarian co-operatives in the country.

Thirdly, the concept of a Mixed Economy which Nehru endorsed, though he fondly hoped that eventually the private sector would "fade away", needs to be analysed. Was not a Mixed Economy, specially at a stage when a nascent public sector was yet to take root, an open invitation to the private sector to grow beyond the dimensions envisaged for it by the successive Plans? The finding of the Monopolies Inquiry Commission within a year and a half of Nehru's death that "the actual needs of the situation proved too strong and not much could be done to counteract the various forces which made more and more concentration inevitable" could well have been anticipated.

To these queries relating to Nehru's "inadequacies" may be added others relating to the Left response to Nehru. The exit of the non-Communist Left from the Congress, their splintering into numerous parties and groups, and a gradual erosion of their socialist ideology can give rise to a number of such questions. Even the Communist response to Nehru, and their failure to emerge as a cohesive national group can be questioned. They are all equally relevant for an analysis of the past.

While on the basis of these and other queries lessons from the Nehru experience will have to be drawn and analysed to provide a guide for future action, these lessons, it should be realised, will have to be applied to a situation which has changed substantially. The emergence of pressure groups in both urban and rural areas, far stronger than they were in the first decade and a half when Nehru functioned, will now have to be reckoned with. Following the democratic path, and there is no other, the problem will be to devise a "dynamic technique of social change" which, to quote Prof. Gyanchand again, "is not inherent in parliamentary democracy" though not inconsistent with it. ☐

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*"Nehru and Socialism in India" by P.C. Joshi in the volume *Socialism in India* edited by B.R. Nanda p.p. 139-140

Dangers of Opportunism

SHIVA CHANDRA JHA

THE discussion on Indian development, started by A Student of Political Economy (*Mainstream*, March 20, 1982) and joined by C.H. Hanumantha Rao (April 10), Mohit Sen (April 24) and An Economic Observer (May 1) is thought-provoking. But I think a few points need further clarification from the point of view of the Left forces and the Left movement in India. These are: (1) What is the basic contradiction of the Indian socio-economic set-up which is responsible for the present mess in India? (2) What does Hanumantha Rao mean when he writes: "It would not be an easy task for the Leftist movement in India to play a positive role at this historic juncture without shaking off *the weight of received doctrines* (emphasis added). What is needed, above all, is a deep commitment to the solution of the day-to-day problems. The Indian Left has lagged very much behind the socialist movements around the world in moving towards ideological independence". (3) Class structure of the Indira Government. (4) Will a good or even an agreed foreign policy solve domestic problems like growing unemployment, increasing disparities, pervasive corruption, deteriorating law and order situation, etc.? (5) The kind of technique of struggle that the Left should pursue in the present Indian set-up.

These five major points, I think, have been partially touched upon but not fully clarified in the valueable contributions listed above.

I shall begin from Point 2 about "the weight of received doctrines". It is a great pity, and reveals a glaring weakness of the Left, when it starts cursing itself because it got the eyes, the doctrines (received or self-made), to see things clearly.

Why is the Left called Left or Leftist? Why do Leftists in India call themselves Leftist and not just Indians or Indians from Bengal, Bihar, UP, Andhra, etc.? Is this very categorisation as Left or Leftist not based on some doctrine, whatever that may be? Then, was even our freedom movement not guided by doctrines? Yes There were two major doctrines, the doctrine of Mahatma Gandhi and the doctrine of Karl Marx, guiding the fighters for Indian freedom. Was Gandhi not doctrinaire in insisting on what even Jawaharlal Nehru in his *Autobiography* dubbed as Gandhian fads? For instance, Nehru has written that he could not make out the efficacy of fast against the armed adversary (British rule in India) and thus personally he never resorted to it during the freedom movement. Then there were others in the movement who believed in the end-justifies-means philosophy and thus resorted to it (fast) whenever occasion demanded it.

Hanumantha Rao saying that the Left should concentrate more on "the solution of day-to-day problems", etc., makes me recall what Edward Bernstein used to propound, that movement is everything and goal is nothing. Every student of the world Left and socialist movement knows where Edward Bernstein stood, and I will not go into details here.

Again, Hanumantha Rao's view, that "the Indian Left has lagged very much behind other socialist movements around the world in moving towards ideological independence" is not a true reading of the socialist movement in India. The reality is that the Left and the Leftist and socialist forces have displayed great independence in action by which they have made historic contributions in scientifically applying their "received doctrines".

In short, Rao's way of looking at the Left movement is all right from the free discussion point of view but not, I think, from the point of view of strengthening the Left forces.

On Point 1 about the basic contradiction of the present Indian socio-economic set-up, I think, a little more clarification is needed. All contributors have highlighted the contradictions in the present set-up. But my question is: Is there any glaring contradiction in India to which the Left should give more thought? Contradictions there are in the UK, in the USA and other countries where there is capitalism. Antagonistic or non-antagonistic contradictions there are all over the world. But is there anything specially glaring in the Indian context which can be pinpointed? The initiator of the discussion, A Student of Political Economy, is nearer the answer when he talks about the growth of the public sector and the growth of monopoly houses. Thus, the basic glaring contradiction in the Indian set-up in this growing public sector and growing Private Sector through the Five-Year Plans. How long is this situation to continue? Is it not the duty of the Left to give more thought to this situation that is being unfolded by the Five-Year Plans? Long before J.M. Keynes conceived of his *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (1936), it was Lenin who not only conceived of but created this public sector and private sector growth milieu through his NEP policy. But Lenin also clearly visualised that the growth of the two would beget contradictions and confusion. So some day a stop had to be put to the growth of the private sector, and a stop was accordingly put.

In India, development of the public sector was demanded even in the Tata-Birla Plan (1944) for the welfare of the private sector. The Five-Year Plans have fulfilled that task. The stunted industrial houses of the pre-Independence days are now at the galloping stage through dallying with multinational partners. Their tentacles are getting stronger and stronger after each Five Year Plan. The time has come when their tentacles are to be clipped. The MRTP Act or any other Act is not going to make a dent even as the Sherman Anti-Trust Act (1980) did not make any dent in the USA. Only the immediate nationalisation of at least the top twenty monopoly houses would enable breakthrough.

But is this demand for nationalisation of big monopoly houses made by the Leftists in a forceful way? Ritual resolutions are passed at conventions and conferences. But because some public undertakings are running into loss and the bureaucratic stranglehold is pervasive, I find a lukewarm attitude towards this demand for nationalisation as such on the part of the Left. Forceful demand for nationalisation is looked down upon as sloganeering, youthful exuberance, immature thinking, etc. The more technocratic one's suggestions, the more mature and practical such suggestions are supposed to be. From the position of maker of a new society based on equity and justice. thinking has come down to the engineering and repairing aspect. The talk of nationalisation of banks was once considered to be slogan-mongering. But when it was done by Indira Gandhi in 1969, it was welcomed as a meaningful and practical step.

What I am emphasising is that these clear-cut steps for social ownership should be duly emphasised as in the past. This will strengthen and not weaken the Left forces.

About the class character of state power, Mohit Sen has referred to the *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. The class character of the Indira Government is petty bourgeois as it was of Louis Bonaparte, playing one class against another for remaining in the saddle.

About foreign policy. Accepting that India's foreign policy has been very virtuous from the beginning, does this help in easing the growing unemployment, increasing disparities, etc., inside the country? So by stressing the virtuous foreign policy, is not the Left inviting a kind of complacency in its struggle within the country?

Lastly, about the technique of struggle. India has now a parliamentary set-up. The people of India are committed to democracy. Any effort to undermine this technique of social transformation as during Emergency will not be brooked by the Indian masses, as was demonstrated in 1977. The Left in India has to start from this premise. The basic contradiction of the Indian socio-economic set-up calls for intensification of the struggle. Combination of parliamentary technique and intensified class struggle becomes inevitable. In other words, there should be proper coordination between the political and trade union wings of the working class.

The Gandhian technique of satyagraha is in full compatibility with the parliamentary system. Then, when the Left political parties embark on satyagraha, it has to be duly backed by the combined strike of the trade unions. The misfortune of the Left forces has been the lack of coordination of the political and trade union wings of the working and common people. When the Left parties have started peaceful agitation on any all-India issue, it has not been fully backed by the trade union people. And when the trade unions have embarked on any all-India strike they have not been fully backed by their political wings. The result has been that they get beaten by the vested interests. An effort was made to combine these two in 1974 under the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan. The trade union people, specially the railway workers, did respond to the call but not adequately. Anyhow, as the political aspect was intensified, it did bear fruit in 1977. A lesson has to be learnt by the Left from the 1974-77 JP movement.

The Left cannot advance if it does not stop hanging around Indira Gandhi and her charisma. If any progressive step is taken (like nationalisation of banks and abolition of privy purses), this does not mean that she has become the leader of the Left and the salvation of the Left lies only through her. If that is so, is the Left going to accept her Twenty-point Programme as its major basis of action? If it does, that would be suicidal for the Left. But if any good oozes out of the Twenty-point Programme, the Left should have no objection to it. The Left should have its own clear-cut line of action and not nurse illusions about Indira Gandhi and her charisma. The job of the Left is not to strengthen Indira Gandhi.

The Left is not just to live from hand to mouth by solving day-to-day problems as pointed out by Hanumantha Rao, but it has to work for the future, for a clear-cut goal like socialism, and after socialism, communism. Without such a goal the Left may land in the morass of gross opportunism. To Hanumantha Rao's doubt as to whether the Left has ideological independence, I will say that the Left has enough. But that is a long story.□

Budgetary Policies and Small Investor

KAMAL NAYAN KABRA

WHAT does an investor-actual or potential — look for in the budgetary policies of the Central Government? The immediate excitement generally is about the rates of taxes, new taxes, various concessions, deductions, exemptions, methods of computing income, wealth and taxable incomes and such things as are contained in the Finance Minister's Budget proposals for the ensuing year.

This is certainly understandable. These tax proposals have a direct bearing on the finances, income and rates of return on various investments. They affect capital appreciation and carry-home, disposable incomes. All the motives for which the investors undertake their activities are vitally effected by the nature of the proposals made in the Budget.

This tendency to concentrate attention on the tax and related proposals made by the Finance Minister in a particular budget is further strengthened by the popular response to the Budget in the press and other public fora. Prior to the Budget, intense propaganda and lobbying is mounted by many interests, particularly pertaining to trade and industry, about the tax side of the budget. All this goes to rouse certain expectations. The secrecy enveloping the formulation of Budget proposals also adds to excitement over the tax proposals.

The questions I would like to raise here are: Who are the investors? What are their interests? How do their interests relate to those of industrialists — big, small or medium, and traders, etc? Do they share them with the common masses, who do not come directly into the ambit of the budgetary operations, for they do not have income, employment, property, skills, education and consequently a sharp and indentifiable interest of an order which can be directly (in a clearly identifiable way) affected by what the Finance Minister does or does not? In any case, in so far as they are indirectly and by implication affected by the Budget, presently they are not either organised or strong enough to make any reckonable impact. But is there something common or not between what happens to them and the Budget's impact on investors?

For one thing, let it be clarified at the outset that the popular tendency to concentrate criticism, positive or negative, on just the current Budget is a very misleading, may be even harmful, way of judging a budget, from the angle of the interests of the investors. Insofar as budgetary decisions impinge on their fortunes, it is the totality of the fiscal system which is relevant. True, an incremental position attracts immediate attention. But at least one should look at these proposals in the context of the last three or four years. It should be asked whether these successive budgets contribute in the same direction, or make a departure. Then, it is short-sighted to look only at the tax proposals. The extent to which, for example, public borrowing is done, new public securities are floated, the rate of interest

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offered on them and other conditions are changed, produce more direct effects on the investors, the investment climate and opportunities.

For instance, the issue of capital bonds and social security bonds this year are important landmarks for the investing public. Even in so far as large-scale borrowing is resorted to by the state, to which the financial institutions have to subscribe in a big way, it changes their investment portfolio. Thus it affects the returns they can offer to the investing public. The growing size of interest charges as a part of Government's overall expenditure also affects many things, including the size of additional tax efforts. Investors cannot remain indifferent to these issues. Thus, it is important for investors to be concerned with at least a couple of budgets taken in their totality and in a more comprehensive sense than with taxation aspects of a year's budget alone.

I would like to mention particularly the role of the size and pattern of public spending and other related economic policies for the investors. The investors put their money in the hands of a large number of financial institutions and corporate sector industrial and other companies. The size of the Budget, whether it is big or small, affects the order book position or demand for the industry's production in a big way. The Government is the single largest buyer. Similarly, the marketability conditions are greatly affected by the Budget's decision to allocate resources for specific sectors. For instance, the great emphasis in this year's Budget on energy, power, coal and petroleum sectors will affect the fortunes of companies in these sectors very favourably. However, liberal imports policy will neutralise this advantage to the extent imports are resorted to. The effect of the Budget on money supply and credit policy will also bear on the demand prospects.

Greater emphasis on one sector means less emphasis on others. Hence the concentration on energy sector this year may not tell as favourably on other industries, particularly in the short run when favourable effects through enhanced power supply do not materialise. Similarly, inflation can erode the real incomes of investors particularly of the coupon-clipping variety. However, inflation helps companies to make a good kill and hence may help companies earn good profits. These may partially spill over to the investor.

Let us, at this stage, come to the question: Who are the investors? Those who buy shares, debentures and make fixed deposits with the financial institutions and companies are investors. They are suppliers on the capital market. On the other hand, the industries and other promoters of companies are the buyers on the capital market who demand funds for financing investments either as risk capital or as secured or unsecured loans. It is the network of capital and money market operators who bring about the supply of savings to the industry; compared to the number of suppliers, the number of those who demand is smaller,

The financial institutions are both suppliers and demand-makers — they demand funds from the general investing public and supply to the corporate sector and other corporate interests. Or alternatively, they are intermediaries on the capital market. Being bulk suppliers, they can protect their interests better than can individual investors, provided of course they have the will to do so. It is not unlikely that, despite being in the public sector, they might collude, as bulk suppliers, with large borrowers.

The interests of buyers and sellers on any market rarely go together. There are more often conflicts between their respective interests than a harmonious adjustment. It is facile to say, if not totally incorrect, that the more the profits the companies make, the better it is for the investors. For one thing, the tutored, reported account book profits of companies are a fraction of the real profits. The profits are not only concealed from the Government to avoid and/or evade taxes, but also from the shareholders, lest they be shared in the form of dividends or capital appreciation. In fact it can be shown that the interest of the industrialist-promoters of companies who exercise control over their functioning is not just to get their proportional share of dividends and capital gains but to increase their financial, social and political gains through expansion of the companies network and industrial empires.

Inflation adds to profits but reduces the real value of dividends. Even capital appreciation may not compensate for the real depreciation of earnings caused by the fall in the value of the rupee. The companies sow in nominal terms a certain amount, but reap in real terms only a fraction. The appreciation of the value of *physical assets* (like land, buildings, machinery, etc.) belong, in law, to the corporate person, but, in effect, to those who control the affairs of the company.

In view of the large area of conflict between investors and industrialists, it is surprising that, in the name of encouraging savings and investment, the Budget gives concessions only of the type that encourage the supply of savings to industry and the corporate sector. There are next to no provisions made to see that the real benefits and profits becoming available to the investing public are protected from the twin dangers of inflation and concealment in the from of black incomes.

Through inflation the real benefits to the savers are reduced. In fact, financial investments are reduced in real value. Through tax avoidance and evasion, the company profits are milked away by the captains of industry through under and over invoicing, in both the local and foreign markets. Through perks, commissions, contract and cuts, through nominal, formal auditing, through illegal contributions to political parties, through patronage in the form of employment, supply and construction contracts and advertising, shareholders money is channelised for private, non-corporate gains. The fiscal and Indian Budget and other policies remain silent on these issues. They favour the big borrowers at the cost of the creditors, those who actually forgo current consumption to finance capital formation and growth. These practices and policies violate the accepted norms of capitalist functioning and behaviour. No wonder, in the place of the text-book model of a milk-white capitalism, operating through impersonal market forces, we have in our midst a lumpenised version of capitalism!

The lack of employment opportunities and lack of purchasing power in the hands of the masses reduce the demand for simple, mass-consumption goods of daily need. Insofar as the Budget does not help these sections of society, it is harming investors. Investors would be really well-off if they used their own savings plus borrowings from public financial institutions by way of setting up small-scale private or cooperative ventures. The gains which the industrialists make on the basis of the savers' resources would then become available to those who really use it for consumption. This however, is only a pious hope as it negates the growth dynamic of a private enterprise market economy. How does the real system work?

The lack of demand for such simple items and means of their production prevents the small men, the real investors, who bear the actual risks of industrial ventures (the margin money provided by big industrialists is easily more than recouped by them in the form of all kinds of cuts, commissions and underhand payments by the time the project is completed) from blossoming into actual controllers of industry. The budget and other public policies hardly create massive employment. Creation of such employment opportunities is, after all, the same thing as the creation of a large and growing working class.

On the contrary, it is encouragement of big monopolies which kills potential jobs many times larger in number than the acual ones they generate. In fact, the concessions and incentives given to savings and investment go to the investors only in name. They really flow to the big industrialists. Thus the real, long-term interests of the real savers and investors are identical with those of the poor masses in our rural and urban areas, who are prevented from becoming active members of the working class. Such interests do not get heard in the corridors of power. Even genuine investors concentrate on their immediate, short-run nominal gains. Thus year after year they are made to contribute to the growth of big monopolies. A real investors-oriented budget will have to be a budget of massive employment generation, poverty reduction, increase in demand for simple goods of mass consumption which can change our small investors from financial investors into real industrialists. Such a budget is yet to come, because, among many factors, there is little conciousness of the historical necessity for such an orientation in public policies. The growth of monopolies has made such a mobilisation apparently difficult. But the reality of the depradation they cause can certainly spark off consciousness and movement. ☐

Higher Education: Failure of an Experiment

M. KISTAIAH

HIGHER education today is in a state of turmoil. This is due, among other things, to several indiscriminate and hasty measures introduced in higher education in order to make it purposeful and meaningful to society. The measures introduced sustained for a short period, giving a remarkable performance in the beginning, but gradually melted away under the onslaught of pressures built up due to inherent weaknesses in the measure itself. The semester system with internal assessment method was one such important reform.

The semester system with internal assessment method was ushered in as a panacea for all the ills confronted by the teachers and the taught in most of our universities during the mid-seventies. The policy-makers, administrators and educationists hoped that the system would clean the Augean stables at the centres of higher learning. But within a short span of about five years, the system has given rise to innumerable problems never faced by the universities under the earlier dispensation.

It was introduced primarily to reduce the academic load on students. In the earlier system, the students were expected to take the lessons over a period of one academic year (mostly of nine months' duration with a short mid-winter vacation) and appear for the written examination once in a year. The critics pointed out that it was extremely difficult for the young mind to be in battle-trim with all that had been "inflicted" by the teacher for a period of nine months, digest the matter, do justice to the examination in a brief three hours and secure a reasonably good grade. It was also felt that the system perpetuated the chasm between the teachers and the taught, and in the process, the students were totally insulated from the "gurus". Further, it was said that most of the students did not take the lessons seriously throughout the year since there was no way to keep them on their toes; so they indulged in "anti-social" activities. Having been engaged in extra-curricular activities, some of the students were compelled to resort to cramming the answers. The student community also felt that the year-end examination did not bring out the real talents of the students because the method was defective. Thus the year-end system became a curse.

The semester system with internal assessment method has been in vogue in American institutions of higher learning, Our American-returned academic pundits felt that it would help overcome the defects in our system because of the following reasons:

Under the new system, there would be continuous assessment of the intellectual calibre of the students by the teacher in any academic pursuit. Continuous

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assessment is ensured through slip tests, interviews, regular dialogue, etc. The syllabus is prepared for a duration of fourteen to sixteen weeks and extensive coaching methods have been formulated. Since it is a time-bound programme, the calendar is set in such a 'way that everything should proceed with military precision. Books were to be made available to all so that each student could devote full attention to studies and complete the course in a given period of time.

But the experience of the last few years has led to rethinking on the entire approach. It is true that for a couple of years the response of the student community to the new system was encouraging. That was partly due to the atmosphere during Emergency. Later, the reality gradually surfaced.

The time-schedule was never adhered to by the students and the governing agencies. Since the academic community has been actively involved in statecraft, whenever there was a crisis, irrespective of its relevance, a boycott call was given and successfully observed. The Rameeza Bee episode, the Shakeela controversy, etc., are examples. The students and the teachers alike take up the cause of the downtrodden and espouse their grievances with ferocious anger against the inaction or slipshod action of the authorities. Similarly, the students fight their elections in the campus on party lines, encouraged and actively supported by the 'elders'. Often the results of campus election are settled in the streets. The result is a chain reaction in colleges, leading to bandh calls and closure of colleges. In addition, the student community by and large are such combustible material that the slightest spark is enough for a strike. An innocent altercation in an RTC bus may lead to dislocation of the academic schedule.

The authorities, instead of acting promptly, are at first indifferent and later initiate action—by that time enough damage has been done. On several occasions our seasoned politicians would not hesitate to induce the young people to indulge in acts of indiscipline in furtherance of their own political designs. This ultimately leads to complete alienation of students from the academic culture.

The teacher-student ratio should be reasonable. But in most colleges no uniform criteria have been followed while admitting students. In the case of liberal arts, students were admitted without regard to physical facilities like accommodation, library facilities, etc., and a sizeable number would be always seen outside the classrooms. The number of colleges being limited, sometimes the authorities would "request" the principals to absorb as many students as possible to avoid demonstrations by students before the VIPs. Thus the class is full to the brim, making a mockery of the Kothari Commission's recommendations for a ceiling on class strength.

To avoid congestion and overcrowding new colleges are established. The State Government does not follow any uniform policy. In Andhra Pradesh, for example, there are four types of colleges — University colleges, Government colleges, private colleges with grant-in-aid benefits, and private colleges managed without the benefit of grant-in-aid. New colleges could be organised in any of these categories.

University colleges and Government colleges receive full financial assistance and are impersonal institutions, whereas the problem of semester system and internal assessment got accentuated in the last two categories of institutions.

The case of colleges receiving grants-in-aid is pathetic. The grant-in-aid is given provided there is full strength in the subject continuously; otherwise it is terminated. Therefore, the teachers sometimes reluctantly try to be 'liberal' to sustain and protect their precarious position in the college. All kinds of methods are adopted, including liberal valuation. Otherwise how does one explain the case of students who score distinction in Sanskrit although it is never spoken outside the class-room? In the case of colleges which do not receive grant-in-aid, survival depends on the intake of students. Lack of proper physical facilities like accommodation, equipment, library, etc., sometimes compel the managements to turn a blind eye to academic standards. We have a large number of black sheep who try to cover up their incompetence by being "liberal" while awarding marks in internal assessment. Furthermore, students accuse some teachers of being partial because of considerations other than academic, vitiating the whole atmosphere in the class-room.

The teaching community is divided on class, clan, caste, area, ideological lines and has not developed a professional attitude. There may be a few exceptions. If the teaching community is united, perhaps things would be slightly different. There have been a number of conscientious teachers who do not sacrifice principles but stand their ground firmly. Some of them have became scapegoats because they did not succumb to temptations and did not yield to the pressure of the student community. Often they have had to pay a heavy price. In the absence of professional spirit, the boys are able to blackmail the teacher to secure cent per cent marks.

About assessment by the teacher, the less said the better. We have reached a stage where even for slip test, the questions are announced well ahead of the examination. Even then the students are not satisfied. They demand cent per cent marks irrespective of level of competence. If the demand is not conceded there will be boycott or demonstration and at times the students do not hesitate to threaten the teacher with dire consequence. Further, in a class of say one hundred students, how can anyone maintain continuous rapport with the boys? Assessment becomes mechanical and impersonal. The whole philosophy is defeated. If a student wants he can repeat the internals. And there is no end to this. Elaborate arrangements are made to conduct internal tests with the help of invigilators. Teaching schedule is suspended during the tests and the entire scenario gives the impression that some of the evils of the year-end system have crept into this new dispensation.

Added to this, at the end of the semester, the university examination is held. The examination is a lengthy and cumbersome process. It is best explained by an illustration. The Law degree is of three years' duration divided into six semesters with six papers in each semester. At the end of each semester, there will be thirtysix papers for which exams have to be held separately because a student of, say, the sixth semester is at liberty to appear either for pass or improvement in any semester papers. The examination unit of the university is always busy with exams of some course or the other. The semester system presupposes scope for completing the course at the convenience of the candidate.

Sometimes, even internal test is not taken seriously by some who often absent themselves. Then follows the demand for re-examination for the absentees. All these constraints lead to delay in the teaching schedule, exam results, and the entire academic programme. To make up the time lost, students demand reduction in the academic load, promotion to the next semester without waiting for the announcement of the results. If these demands are not conceded then the students resort to wildcat strikes.

An analysis of the results of the students reveals an astounding picture. A large number secure first class with several distinctions (above 70 per cent), a few high second class and none third class. The results of successful candidates reach an absurd level of more than ninety per cent. The remaining opt for the next exam to improve their overall percentage. Otherwise the results would have been cent per cent passes. But the performance of candidates sometimes is so poor that some institutions, particularly private managements, debar students of certain universities from employment in their organisations. This is mainly due to the fact that a few who score cent per cent in the internals, get absymally low marks in the university exam, but scrape through because of the aggregate score.

All students who seek admission in colleges do not take the classes seriously. Many of them seek admission to college and meanwhile try for employment. Added to this, States like Andhra Pradesh provide tuition fee relief, meet mess charges, allow pocket allowances to almost all students. Then why wait outside? An educationist has remarked that the colleges have almost become waiting halls for the unemployed youth.

A few conscientious students admit the futility of the semester system with internal assessment. But they have to show their marks sheet to their parents who have great hopes and aspirations about their children.

Thus, the campus atmosphere presents a picture of confusion. Instead of reducing the gap between the teacher and the taught the semester system has created a new atmosphere of fear, suspicion and animosity in academic institutions. In the earlier system the students and the teachers would not have bothered much about each other, but under the new system there has developed open hostility and rancour between and among students and teachers.

The centres of higher learning are at the crossroads today. Instead of finding a lasting solution, temporary palliatives are suggested. Education has become a hobby-horse for all and sundry. Dwarf varieties of Western models have been transplanted without understanding the native ethos. Having failed with the experiment of internal assessment, a number of universities have gone back to the old time-tested system of year-end examinations. A few are toying with the idea of open-book system — again a hasty move which can take us nowhere.

The crucial question now is: Is everyone suitable for higher education? It is time for a thorough examination of higher education on scientific lines. Tinkering will not help.□

Man, Culture and Revolution

PRANAV KUMAR VANDYOPADHYAYA

MAN is always restless and in quest. It is a natural phenomenon whose explicit demonstration is suppressed by the social forces. In a society, generally, social norms are designed by those who enjoy the power to control physical human energy. Apparently they are the most sophisticated beings and influence the psyche of millions, who may not necessarily have vested any faith in them.

The evolution of Man is itself good evidence that at the individual level he revolts right at the level of family but then reverts on social considerations. There is a tremendous amount of confusion between the individal end and the social end, and Man has yet to know the exact position he has captured for survival between them. However, the history of human conflict has proved that the individual end has never been the social end.

Man has been suffering in different ways, primarily, not because he defied any bondages, but for the reason that at the level of thought he wanted to plan his own destiny. Nature justifies, generally, in no way such a phenomenon as contests the interests of other. In other ways every individual of a particular specie can live without harming others, and such a growth of human society is followed by cohesion in individual human relations. This sounds Utopian and unrealistic because the present human society is used to suppressions to such an extent that after a particular point, the human mind ceases to be free in a real sense.

We as a human society strive for individual freedom, yet we do not want to live in individualistic islands. One's growth is always an individual one, while for the reason of survival, one is not just an individual. Interestingly, the world of Robinson

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Crusoe has no growth because it has no struggle or ambition or a desire to live or die. Crusoe's intellectual faculty is anti-society and cannot be a model for any social function. Ironically, vested interest has a subtle but colossal power to convert the human relation into an individualistic Robinson Crusoe world.

Culture is a manifestation of Man's eternal wishes, hence it is a strong driving social force which is moral, true and just. Culture is a language through which Man thinks and refines himself endlessly. It can never be designed by an outsider though it can be influenced by one or more alien powers. Crusoe had no cultural identity nor in himself he evolves and follows any course of life that makes Man complete in any respect. But Crusoe is an institution, a driving force, no matter how anti-social he is, in the present world order.

The ruthless global order has been relentlessly trying to change human relations to a system that paralyses the power to think independently. It is, in fact, a colonial attack on those who have massive intellectual and spiritual resources to design a freer world.

Culture is a communicating force which bridges various types of gaps caused by Man's imperfection. No one likes to live in the mute zone of life, and through constant communication one enriches one's experiences and refines the individual ingredients of human life.

Vested interest is a force that decultures human civilisation through certain illusions. It is a dangerous process, and had there not been constant emergence of positive forces, the world would have been blown up long ago.

Man survives not because he cannot commit suicide, but because life and death are not a subject of argument, rather it is chemical transformation of body and mind. In this process one discovers oneself at deeper levels of truth and re-creates the world. Culture in fact is this re-creation.

There has been enough confusion over culture; refinement could not be explained in general terms. However, culture is a community concept which has no confrontation with alien communities as Man cannot survive independently. This interdependence is sharing of experience at an intense level, keeping the individual entity free from colonisation.

Through colonisation the settlers rape the natives and force a confrontation with the basic existence of those who do not have enough military power to resist the rapists. Interestingly, the whole act is so crude and far from refinement that it is not even culturally connected with the settlers. The psychic world of the settlers does not represent the general will of the people whom they claim to represent. In fact, in a real cultural sense there is no representation and everybody takes part in cultural manifestation in his own way. Representation is a jugglery and it suppresses one's right to participate in a desired function. So, in the language of political philosophy one has to understand the actual meaning of democracy in which people's will is 'beautifully' suppressed. Perhaps, right from the beginning there has not been enough clarity to explain democracy which is supposed to be a vehicle for human freedom. For a free human society, I am sure, there can be an alternative to the established democratic system in which Man, in general, has the least freedom.

There has been much debate over the concept of revolution, its process and its means. Broadly, most of us conceive of revolution as an instrument for the salvation of mankind, though in a real sense it has never been possible to translate the idea into reality. This is because of human imperfection which remains in most of us in the absence of a complete communicative system, that is, a perfect cultural style. We have enough historical evidence of how a revolution is ruined because of lack of cultural understanding, which in itself is an educational means for a society.

Culture, which is the established style of living of a society, is fake because it was imposed by those who had power to control the capital factors of production. So, when one says culture, one defies the 'popular' life-style and launches an alternative system which has erupted from the general will of the oppressed. It is really tough to identify the 'general will' of a community, for there is already an organised and strong mechanism to make the people live in a fantasy.

A genuine culture which emerges as the only social alternative is, by all means, revolutionary. Its first task is to make people realise the ill effects of the fantasy which is responsible for the decay in human relations and sympathy. It is a colossal task for, at the level of thought man enjoys comfort with the established way to rationalise a problem. He, mostly, accepts it as 'popular' thinking and takes little care to know that it is really an unpopular one. In the area of conflict in thought, there is always a danger of smashing the original roads unless one deeply understands the process of degeneration in the structure of human civilisation.

Strategically, Man is an essentially revolutionary creature. The anatomy of Man's aspirations indicates that the world has yet to achieve the state of revolution that brings emancipation to every living person. It is just not the reverse distribution of world or state resources, but an ultimate system that takes Man close to his entity, which is, surely, bondless. Revolution is, therefore, erupted by the state of bondlessness because it is a natural phenomenon.

The relationship between Man and revolution is scientifically natural but the process of revolution is man-made. Culture decides this process. No culture, other than revolutionary, can identify itself as the natural style of living of the people. But in reality, many artificial styles are functioning, and for some reason or other, they apparently look powerful. Historically, Man's strategy has been to be away from the jaws of power, and whenever he got an opportunity, his own supremacy was established.

But no revolution has meaningfully lasted long, because firstly, a counter-culture that controls the psyche of the masses could not be meaningfully installed. Secondly, within the culture, the question of Man's spiritual freedom was either ignored or answered diplomatically.

There are numerous experiments and counter-experiments in the field of culture. The world has yet to experience one which is structurally strong enough to hold even the mute man's wishes to bring about a never-ending revolution. □

New Onslaught on Trade Union Rights

K.L. MAHENDRA

In the course of a few days four amending bills and one bill with regard to hospitals and educational institutions etc were introduced. The effort is to get these passed in the monsoon session of Parliament.

The Government did not consult the Central Trade Union Organisations before introducing these in Parliament. Most of the amendments proposed, especially with respect to the Trade Unions Act 1926, and also the new bill are blatantly anti working class, anti-trade union, and are almost copied from the infamous Industrial Relations Bill 1978 sponsored by Janata Government, which was opposed by the entire trade union movement including the INTUC. Indira Gandhi on that occasion stated that her party, the Congress(I), would stand by the working class.

The working class in Andhra Pradesh opposed the Industrial Relations Commission Bill proposed in the State Legislature.

Now the Congress(I) Government has changed the form and is bringing it in the shape of amendments to various Acts apart from the Essential Services Maintenance Act and the National Security Act. The amendments seek to impose Restrictions from the stage of the very formation of trade unions and provide for penalising trade unions and their leaders on the pretext of 'unfair labour practices'.

The Supreme Court verdict of February 1978 with regard to the definition of "industry" is brazenly violated and establishments like hospitals educational institutions have been specially excluded from the purview of the Industrial Disputes Act and a separate bill for these establishments has been introduced, faithfully following in the footsteps of the Janata Government, prohibiting strikes and prescribing compulsory arbitration, etc.

These bills coupled with the ESMA and the NSA in the armoury of the ruling classes seek to throttle the trade unions and the working class movement at the behest of the monopolists and multinationals.

In the proposed amendment to the Industrial Disputes Act the following are excluded from the definition of "industry": (1) any agricultural operation except where this is carried on in integrated manner with industry; (2) hospitals or dispensaries; (3) educational, scientific, research or training institutions; (4) institutions owned or managed by organisations wholly or substantially engaged in any charitable, social or philanthropic service; (5) Khadi or village industries; (6) any activity of the Government relatable to the sovereign functions of the Government including all activities carried on by the departments of the Central Government dealing with defence research, atomic energy and space; and (7) any activity which is carried on by a cooperative society in which not less than ten persons are employed.

Thus very large sections of the workers who were so far covered under the ID Act and had the right to strike, though restricted, are now proposed to be excluded and a separate act has been proposed for these categories.

These categories are covered by the Hospitals and Other Institutions (Settlement of Disputes) Bill, 1982. It covers hospitals including nursing homes, dispensaries, etc, educational institutions including university, college, school, scientific institutions, institutions for research, training. This provision is copied from the bill proposed by the Janata Government. But even this bill which bans strikes and imposes compulsory arbitration does not cover (1) agricultural operations, (2) institutions owned or managed by organisations wholly or substantially engaged in any charitable social or philanthropic service, (3) Khadi or village industries, (4) work of departments dealing with defence research, atomic energy and space, and (5) the activity carried on by a cooperative society. Persons employed in the above categories cannot raise any dispute on their wages or service conditions, leave alone the right to strike.

The proposed bill further makes it clear that nothing in this Act shall apply to any hospital or educational institution owned or managed by Government or by any organisation wholly or mainly engaged in any charitable, social or philanthropic service.

Thus, the above categories are neither covered by this bill nor by the ID Act.

Under this bill, for those covered the clause states, "No workman employed in any establishment shall go on strike or indulge in any other form of cessation or retardation of work in such establishment such as work-to-rule, go-slow, gherao or the like in breach of contract".

Thus a blanket ban on strike and all kinds of agitation which cause retardation of work is imposed in all the establishments covered by this bill. Violation of this invites punishment by way of imprisonment which may extend to six months or

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fine which may extend to Rs 5,000, or both.

This bill provides for setting up of grievance settlement committee which will consist of representatives of management and workmen, the latter to be nominated by the recognised trade union. The trade union should have at least thirty per cent of the employees as members and should be majority union. The bill does not clarify the method of verifying membership of trade unions eligible for claiming recognition.

No outsider can be an office-bearer of such a union. It states, "Each of its office-bearers is a workman in such establishment or in any other establishment to which this Act applies".

The bill provides for compulsory arbitration in case any party to the dispute demands a reference where they have agreed to voluntary arbitration.

Reverting to the amendments proposed to the Industrial Disputes Act, direct reference of an industrial dispute connected with an individual is barred without reference to the grievance settlement authority. A new grievance authority is sought to be created but rules and procedure have not been clarified.

Section 25M (1) dealing with notice for layoff has been extended to mines if such layoff is due to fire, flood, excess of inflammable gas or explosion. The factors cited in connection with mines are not beyond the control of management, but may occur due to continued negligence in observing mines safety measures.

The amendments introduce punishment for so-called unfair labour practices. The bill provides for imprisonment and/or fine for committing unfair labour practices. This chapter has been lifted from the IR Bill 1978. This is one of the direct curbs on trade union activity and treats trade union leaders and workers as criminals.

A new section has been added which delegates powers to the appropriate Government to exempt any industrial establishment or undertaking under the control of the concerned Government from all or any of the provisions of this Act.

In the case of insurance companies the Government had to pass legislation to take over powers to fix wages or service conditions. But this clause empowers the Government to act in a similar manner in connection with any industrial establishment under its control, which means either departmental or public sector undertaking or enterprise. This provision endangers the trade union rights of lakhs of industrial workers.

The only positive feature of the proposed amendment to the ID Act is that supervisors drawing up to Rs 1600 p.m. (instead of Rs 500) are covered under the Act.

Instead of introducing a new bill as was done by the Janata Government, the present Government has proposed amendment to the Trade Unions Act apart from the Industrial Disputes Act. A new clause has been introduced dealing with trade union dispute.

First of all the minimum number required to apply for registration has been increased from 7 to 10 and 10 per cent membership is made obligatory for registration of a union. The Registrar is authorised to cancel the registration of a trade union if he is satisfied that the union has called for, or participated in, any illegal strike, and "illegal strike" has the meaning assigned to it in Section 24 of the Industrial Disputes Act 1947. A person cannot be an office-bearer of a trade union if he has been convicted under the Industrial Disputes Act. And this will have retrospective effect. If anyone was convicted under the ID. Act in the past he shall cease to be an office-bearer of any union on the day this Act comes into operation. The number of outsiders has been restricted from one half to one-fourth to serve as office-bearers of a union.

The Registrar has been given powers to verify the membership of registered trade unions in a manner to be prescribed by the State Governments. The method of verification is sought to be statutorily imposed though all the trade union centres except the INTUC have demanded secret ballot for determining the strength.

The appropriate Government can refer a "trade union dispute" to the Registrar of Trade Unions. The Government will have power to interfere in the internal affairs of a union and through this process immobilise a trade union and obstruct its functioning.

The bill makes a provision for payment of subsistence allowance during the period a workman is under suspension pending enquiry at fifty per cent of the wages for the first ninety days and three-fourths of wages thereafter.

The Payment of Wages Act is being amended so as to provide for deduction by the management of trade union fees from wage on the request of the worker. This gives a legal basis for the check-off system. The management can also deduct funds for any welfare measure the management may start if the worker agrees to the same. The workers may give their consent under duress and there is no protection.

A new provision prescribes payment of due wages only (not all dues) to the person nominated by a workman. But where no such nomination has been made the section does not mention about payment to his legal heirs.

Thus the attack on the trade union movement is very wide, and we face the danger of all this being adopted by Parliament during the monsoon session.

Cooperative Societies include cooperative sugar or textile mills, the Super Bazar and the Cooperative Banks, and workers in all these will lose their trade union rights. Departmental and public sector employees face the danger of losing their rights whenever the Government so desires as the amendments empower the Government to decide that the ID Act or parts thereof shall not apply. The employees of charitable institutions will not be covered by any legislation. Similarly, employees of Government hospitals and educational institutions will not be covered by any law.

In the past the trade union movement has resisted such attacks on trade union rights. Let the trade unions and democratic opinion raise their voice powerfully now. *(June 10)*

Paris: Anti-Summit of the Streets

SCHOFIELD CORYELL

WHILE the French Government and its Socialist President were graciously serving as hosts to the top leaders of the "seven richest countries" of the capitalist world — coming together to harmonise their often conflicting policies in the luxurious surroundings of the historic Versailles Palace — the streets of Paris, like those all over Europe, rang out with protests against the threat that Ronald Reagan and his "allies" represent for the peace of the world and the well-being of the human race.

The march of thousands was in response to an appeal issued by a coalition of some sixty anti-war or anti-imperialist groups — but without the participation of the Socialist and Communist Parties — "against the new nuclear arsenal in Europe and its logic of overkill" as well as in support of the "struggle of the peoples of Central America."

Demonstrators of all ages and from a variety of countries — representing the numerous exile communities in Paris — streamed through the streets of a busy working-class quarter behind an almost bewildering multiplicity and variety of banners. Despite their differing emphasis, they all stigmatised Reagan's counter-revolutionary crusade and arms race as a major cause of the world's suffering.

A particularly numerous group of participants were the thousands of Turkish workers, brought out into the streets on this occasion by Left-wing immigrant organisations of various tendencies. Their banners invariably denounced the "fascist junta" established, with US backing, in Ankara and many marchers held up enlarged photographs of comrades who had been tortured to death in their prison cells.

It was as if all the really burning problems of the world's people — the problems that were hardly touched on at the Versailles summit — were being reviewed and dramatised in the streets that day. Leaflets distributed by each group of participants concisely explained their own particular concerns and needs.

A Moroccan group denounced US military support for the King's repressive regime, the establishment in that country of new bases to be placed at the disposal of the Rapid Deployment Force, the pursuit (with vital US backing) of Morocco's war against the people of the Sahara.

A Palestinian group emphasised the "unprecedented brutality" of the Israeli government's policy of repression in the territories occupied since the Six-Day War, the Zionist regime's stubborn refusal to negotiate with the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, the massive killing of Palestinians and Lebanese in repeated strikes against Lebanon — and concluded by pointing out that none of this would have been possible without the encouragement and military, economic and diplomatic support of the USA.

The Iranian Left-wing opposition was present to denounce Reagan's visit and to call attention to the massive repression under Khomeini's rule and to the demands and aims of a newly-formed resistance coalition: full rights for the country's national minorities, people's councils in every field, land reform, equality between women and men, etc.

The Paris Committee for "Solidarity with Solidarnosc" — with the participation of Z. Kowalewski, Solidarnosc's representative in France — also demonstrated against Reagan. It denounced the military dictatorship in Poland and all the other military dictatorships in the world: in Turkey, in Chile, in Salvador, in Bolivia, in Argentina.

The Latin American exiles themselves were out in force, with contingents from Guatemala, from Argentina, from Haiti, all stressing the domination of their countries by Washington's iron heel.

A leaflet distributed by a coalition of Latin American support groups described Reagan as the symbol of "military intervention against the people of Salvador, of support to the dictatorships of Guatemala, Haiti and Chile, of backing for the goons of Samoza against free Nicaragua, of invasion threats against Cuba and Grenada, of the military occupation of the Panama Canal, of the colonisation of Puerto Rico, of backing for the colonial ventures of the British Government against the Malvinas.

A group of "US Citizens for a Humane Foreign and Domestic Policy" marched behind a banner denouncing "Reagan's Imperialism in Central America" and shouted:

"*Reagan, Haig: You Can't Hide!*
We Charge You With Genocide!"

Thelr leaflet emphasised Reagan's unprecedented military budget, his dangerous "strategy of tension", the effect of budget cut-backs for social needs on the welfare of large sections of the United States population itself.

A wide variety of French organisations marched past in a moving forest of colourful banners and red flags. The Communist Committees for Self-Management, the International Communist Party, the Revolutionary Communist Party, the Unified Socialist Party, the Revolutionary Communist League, and several others. With varying political accents, all described US imperialism as the world's number one problem and many protested the absence from the demonstration of the Communist and Socialist Parties.

In a leaflet, the Movement for Political Ecology sharply criticised the French Government's insistence on developing a nuclear defence force, and called for France's complete and unequivocal withdrawal from NATO.

The anti-Reagan, anti-Summit peace march — which, although critical of the Government's foreign policy, was officially tolerated and practically unmolested by the police — was the occasion of a lively debate within the Left over the general question of disarmament.

Sponsors of the demonstration, like Claude Bourdet — veteran peace advocate and leader of a small but dynamic anti-war organisation — explicitly refuted Mitterrand's thesis concerning the Soviet Union's "military superiority" and flatly rejected the argument that more arms must be produced by the nations of Western Europe to counter-balance that alleged threat.

The Communist Party, of course, agrees with this aspect of Bourdet's reasoning, but — because of its own loose alliance with the ruling Socialists and the presence of four Communist Ministers in Mitterrand's Cabinet — it did not support the June 5 march. It would have been "undiplomatic" to demonstrate against Reagan when he was in Paris as Mitterrand's invited guest. But the CP does plan a big peace and disarmament march of its own for June 20.

The Socialist Party is another kettle of fish, with its various more or less distinct tendencies. Many rank-and-file members who disagree with the top leadership on the question of arms race hesitate to join a public demonstration on this issue for fear of "discrediting their own government" in the eyes of the electorate. But many other Socialists do in fact see the Soviet Union, especially after the invasion of Afghanistan and the pressures against Poland, as a greater threat to world peace than Reagan's America.

In answer to such attitudes, Claude Bourdet, in an article published by *Le Monde*, wrote that in the view of numerous military specialists (including General Costa Gomez, former President of Portugal and retired French Admiral Sanguinetti) "the NATO forces in Europe are somewhat more numerous and clearly more efficient than those of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact — which, in addition, have China to worry about!" He also pointed out that "the USSR's fifty thousand tanks are more than counter-balanced by NATO's 500,000 guided precision weapons."

He went on to explain that the June 5 peace demonstrators are opposed to both military blocs and advocate the dismantling of the USSR's SS-20 missiles. But in Bourdet's view, the American decision to instal Pershing II and Cruiser missiles in Western Europe is in reality not a mere response to the Soviet SS-20s, since the extreme precision of the American missiles makes them essentially "first strike" weapons. The temptation would be great, he said, for the American military to bring them into play, at a moment of extreme tension in order to destroy the entire Soviet nuclear arsenal at one blow. Fearing such a move, the Soviets might, in such a crisis, immediately launch their own missiles against Western Europe.

In his important post-Summit press conference of Wednesday, June 9, Mitterrand — in answer to a journalist's question — unabashedly reaffirmed his attachment to what he described as the "defensive" Atlantic alliance, but at the same time he tried to lay to rest the insistent rumours (undoubtedly spread by those who would like it to happen) about the possibility of France's rejoining NATO's "integrated military command" from which de Gaulle withdrew back in 1967.

"We remain loyal to the Atlantic Alliance and even want it to work better," he explained, "but there is no question of subjecting French forces to an integrated military command over which the French Government would have no control." This reservation does not, however, prevent France from going ahead with the development of a neutron bomb and a seventh nuclear submarine — all in the alleged "defence" interests of both France and NATO as a whole.

Mitterrand also pointed out, on the other hand, that the had no intention of responding positively to Reagan's call for an economic boycott of the Soviet bloc for purposes of political "punishment". He defended once again the contract that France and several other countries recently signed with the Soviet Union whereby the Europeans would receive a substantial quantity of natural gas in exchange for their contribution to the construction of a gigantic pipeline to transport the gas from the Soviet Union to Western Europe.

Mitterrand gently taunted the American hawks by pointing out the inconsistency of their urging Western Europe to drastically reduce its trade with the USSR when the fact is that France's own trade with the Soviet Union actually declined somewhat in the past two years while American trade with that country (mainly wheat sales) actually increased. The Versailles conference final joint communique merely recommended "prudence" and concern for Western "security" interests in extending credit to the USSR.

Does Mitterrand's commitment to NATO run counter to his equally passionate commitment to the demands and needs of the impoverished South of the planet as against the rich and powerful North? This contradiction came sharply to the fore with Mitterrand's swift and overwhelming diplomatic support to Britain's colonialist cause in the conflict over the Malvinas (Falklands) following Argentina's move to recover possession of those British-owned islands.

A journalist's question at the post-Summit press conference elicited from Mitterrand this somewhat embarrassed comment: "When Argentina attacked British interests and British national pride, we were bound to leap to the defence of our European ally. There is no question that this stand inevitably complicates our relations — which we value highly — with the countries of Latin America. But we are hoping that the conflict will be brought to an end as soon as possible and not be transformed into a war of revenge."

The wording was a careful warning to Britain to contain her imperial ambitions and injured pride. It also implied that, when the smoke of battle dies out, a compromise agreement between the nations involved should be arrived at concerning the question of sovereignty over the disputed islands. Thus did Mitterrand try to reconcile loyalty to a NATO partner with his concern for a fruitful North-Sought dialogue.

A particularly serious challenge to France's diplomacy was Israel's invasion of Lebanon in its war on the Palestinian Liberation Movement. The Middle East is an area where Mitterrand is deeply involved, torn as he is between France's inescapable need for Arab oil and his own strong sentimental (and electorally-motivated) preference for Israel, the "Jewish State"—an attitude widespread among French democrats and socialists of the Second World War generation. When news of the Israeli attack came just as the Summit was ending, Mitterrand was visibly embarrassed about taking a stand and only belatedly, and under journalists' prodding, expressed his disapproval of this blatant defiance of international law.

Left-wing journalists immediately stressed the contrast between the President's rapid and uninhibited condemnation of Argentina's action in the Malvinas and the mildness and slowness of his reaction against Israel's attack on a country which the French Prime Minister, Pierre Mauroy, had recently visited to express his concern for its territorial integrity, its need for peace and a chance to live its own life, free of outside interference. That visit was prompted by a terrorist bomb attack on the French Consulate in Beirut.

Serge July, editor of the independent Left-wing daily, *Liberation*, urged Prime Minister Mauroy to return to Beirut immediately to show his country's solidarity in the face of Israel's onslaught.

In his Wednesday press conference, Mitterrand spoke out more sharply than before and "unreservedly condemned Israel's aggression", but refrained from advocating any kind of sanctions to back up his condemnation. Once again, he reiterated his double stand in favour of Israel's "right to exist" and the Palestinians' "right to a state of their own."

In a front-page editorial, the respected liberal daily *Le Monde*, commented sharply on the United States' veto of a moderately-worded Security Council resolution condemning Israel's military action and calling for the unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from that country. Was the editorial also an implied criticism of Mitterrand's own attitude to Israel and of the moderation and slowness of his reaction to the new and terrible Middle East crisis? Perhaps not, since Mitterrand, despite his pro-Israel feelings, did finally condemn the invasion of Lebanon and did firmly repeat his stand in favour of a Palestinian state.

On the evening of Thursday, June 10, the French Communist Party, and a series of progressive, immigrant groups, staged an outdoor march of several thousand in support of Lebanon and against the Israeli aggression.

Even as Mitterrand was anxiously pondering the crises in the South Atlantic and the Middle East, another crisis broke out in the former (and present) sphere of French influence in the heart of Africa when the rebel forces of Hissene Habre invested and captured the capital of Chad, N'Djamena, and set up a new government there, driving the former President, Goukouni Oueddei, into exile in the Cameroon. From reports in the French press it seems that the taking of the capital was accomplished without much bloodshed. The struggle in that country is presented in the French Left press as essentially a tribal and regional conflict. Since the recent departure of Libyan troops, the Chadians have been left to fight it out among themselves.

Pressed to explain his position concerning this situation at his press conference, Mitterrand stressed that the struggle in Chad — a former French colony that became independent in 1960 and has since been ruled by a succession of Presidents — was at this point a civil war situation that would have to be settled by the Chadians alone. France, he pointed out, did have a treaty of "military cooperation" with that country, but has no obligation to intervene except to help it defend itself from "aggression by outside forces". French troops left the country in 1980 under Giscard and Mitterrand has made it clear that he has no intention of sending them back.

During his recent tour of Black Africa, the French President repeatedly affirmed that a "new day" was dawning in Franco-African relations and — in the Ivory Coast, Senegal, Niger, Mauretania — he reiterated in many ways that France has no ambition to be the "gendarme of Africa". The fact remains, of course, that Paris is still the centre of a vast neo-colonial sphere of influence in Africa and — while the methods of rule may change — the basic power-relations do not. (*June 11*)

CHRISTIANS AND MARXISTS

Christianity is a set of values, and we have in the Christian gospel, a picture of the Kingdom of God, the picture of a situation where men and women live together as brothers and sisters. But it is not a political blueprint. It is Marxism which gives the tools of analysis which helps us unlock the laws of history. And so Marxism becomes an indispensable tool because it is scientific, to help us understand society and to understand forces we should align with if we are serious Christians who are opting for life.

It is the Capitalists who tried to suggest to Christians that Marxists are our first enemy when in fact because together we want a society where people can live together as brothers and sisters. Christians and Marxists are natural allies not natural enemies. This is what the oppressed people in Latin America and Africa are discovering in greater numbers not because one uses the other, but because we are groups of people, Christians and Marxists, people participating in society, who experience oppression and want life, food and shelter. Father Michael Lapsley, head of the Anglican Chaplaincy at the National University of Lesotho.

Human Rights in Nagaland

NANDITA HAKSAR

"...As and when again I explained that I was not at all to be doubted and suspected as I was also a Military personnel like themselves, the Havildar holding me away and beating me with rifle-bud handed me over to one sepoy as nothing was found out. Then, the Captain (named) severly tortured me by charging me shock of electricity at my private parts, heap and thigh more than ten times just to say that Shri (named) was an Under Ground Naga affirmatively. I could not escream as human being but like a buffaloe at the time of death."

This affidavit is an annexure to an eight-page letter written by the Naga People's Movement for Human Rights (NPMHR) to Justice Chinnappa Reddy. The letter is an impassioned appeal to the Supreme Court of India for Justice.

The letter begins: "It is with profound grief and anger that we are writing to you of the mass atrocities which are being committed on our ordinary Naga people by the armed forces of the Government of India. Genocide, rape, illegal detention, desecration of our churches, educational institutions, insult and torture of our respected elected and religious leaders, women and youth, collective fines, forced labour, looting of villages have been going on over the last thirty years..."

The letter has been admitted as a writ petition under Article 32 of the Constitution. On April 21, 1982, the Supreme Court issued notice to the Union of India and to the Governments of Nagaland and Manipur. The Court has asked for information on the missing persons mentioned in para six of the petition under the heading "Abduction". And it has appointed Kapil Sibal as amicus curiae to assist the Court in matters relating to the petition.

The petition has listed the atrocities under six headings giving details of the torture committed and the names of the victims. All this information was collected by a fact finding team of the NPMHR.

The first paragraph deals with sexual assault on women. It begins: "When the army came to Nungbi Khullen village on 25.2.82 and began brutally assaulting the villagers, some women sought shelter in Mr K.Y's house. The army forcibly entered the house, drove out the owner and began sexually assaulting the women forcing them to undress and plucked pubic hair as part of their enjoyment." (Names of four women victims are given).

In the second paragraph instances of mass torture of ordinary villagers by men of the army are given. Medical details of 39 individual cases form part of the appendices. The medical report and affidavits have been given to NPMHR at the risk of death to the writer. One case of K.M., a 55-year-old Pastor of Chingai, reads: "C/O being beaten and subjected to electric charge on both ears, neck end genitals on 3/3/82 by the army. O/E Hermatones — gross — on both sides of the waist extending from the cosial margin to iliac crest gross lemayomas on both the back of thigh extending from the glecteal fold to the popiteal fossa. Hematomas underneath the soles; gross swelling of both the legs and feet below the knees; swelling of the back of the hand; Hermatone on the left side of the neck; tenderness all over the limb and hip joint; treatment: hospitalisation from 10/3/82 to 15/3/82: treated with *injection* analgesic, emollin ointment; injury: grievous."

Under the third heading the petition speaks of desecration of religious institutions and toture of pastors. One incident cited is of two pastors who were "subjected to electrocution of soft and private parts, hanged upside down, made to dig their own graves, when unconscious made to lie on chipped stones and when they cried out to God to end their sufferings and take their life, they were told to bring Jesus Christ to rescue them." This was on March 3 this year.

The fourth heading, violation of educational institutions, describes how colleges and schools have been turned into army camps. Special mention is made of Ukhrul's Pettigrew College which was "built on the sweat of years of work of the local people." The principal was humiliated and academic work is disrupted as the "occupation continues despite appeals and later protests of the people and their representations to higher authorities."

The fifth paragraph deals with forced labour and collective fines. According to the Directorate of Information and Publicity, Nagaland, Kohima (March 18, 1982) collective fine was imposed on 18 villages of Mon and Tuensang districts of Nagaland. The total amount collected in 1980-81 was Rs 1,06,500 and for 1981-82 it was Rs 1,24,000.

The last paragraph lists the number of villagers who have been "abducted by the army without reason and detained or confined in unknown places".

The petition went unnoticed except for a few paragraphs in the *Indian Express.* The case has raised important issues of civil rights but the media have always looked upon the problem in Nagaland as a problem of succession. They have portrayed the peaceful cultivators of Nagaland as head-hunting savages living on dog meat. No attempt is made to break through the stereotypes and look reality in the face. Even democratic people fight shy of discussing the problem and have turned a blind eye to the horrors of mass torture and rape which have become part of the everyday life of Naga villagers.

The case will come up for hearing on July 19, after the Supreme Court reopens. Whatever the outcome of the case, the wider problem cannot be solved by the Court — the problem of restoring the basic democratic and human rights to the people of Nagaland and Manipur. The court can redress individual grievances. It can give relief to certain people. But most victims are too scared to speak of the atrocities. Only a democratic movement for human rights can break their silence.☐

Harassment of Students

ANJALI DESHPANDE

FULL eighteen days after the discovery of a time bomb in Palika Bazaar on May 25, the Connaught Place Police raided the Jawaharlal Nehru University hostels under the Explosives Act and the Public Security Act. They had a court order to thwart any resistance the University authorities or students might offer and presumably also to force open locks, for that is what they did. The police had gone well prepared to do so, taking a key expert along. The search team included two policewomen.

The raid on June 11 lasted over seven hours. The JNUSU could do nothing but accompany the raiders to make sure they planted nothing on the students. Rooms of boarders who had left the university a year ago were forced open. They even tried to break into the room of Megano Liegise who had cleared out of Jawaharlal Nehru University last year after completing her M. Phil in the Life Sciences and who is now teaching in Science College at Kohima. Her father currently holds the post of Health Minister of Nagaland. Her room was double-locked and after some deliberation it was left untouched. But they broke the lock of Laltena's room and ransacked it in his absence. Laltena, an assistant professor in the Jawaharlal Nehru University branch at Imphal (now converted into Manipur University), is on a field trip in UK.

Police exhibited a great deal of interest in the posters of JNU, layers and layers of which plaster its walls and paper its window-panes. At Godavari Hostel they carefully peeled off the upper layers one by one with a knife to peer at what lay underneath. A poster by JNUSU announcing a general body meeting aroused their suspicions and they wanted to photograph it because they thought they could discern a similarity between the handwriting on the poster and that on the slips of paper found with the time bomb at Palika Bazaar. When a student tried to argue that writings on posters tend to be similar by virtue of their being written in large bold letters and at times poster writing of a person is quite unlike the person's normal handwriting, the police told her they knew all about handwritings. They were, however, prevented from photographing it in the absence of students' union office-bearers.

In some rooms the police found friends of the occupant sitting around and wanted to note down their names. The JNUSU objected to this and the students, other than those whose rooms were being searched, refused to divulge their identities. The police were confronting a highly literate group with a fair degree of political awareness, and they couldn't do more than look around nicks and corners and at all sorts of posters.

University security officials displayed more enthusiasm than even the police. Even when the police felt they had had enough the security officers picked up books at random leafing through them to uncover any cleverly hidden explosives or formulae for such items! They could only be diverted from this deeply absorbing job by the irritated police and the furious students.

But all these seven long hours of sweating on a hot afternoon came to naught. No incriminating evidence could be found although some students remembered that the police found a copy of *Dawn* in Laltena's room.

Research scholars anywhere, studying social, ethical and political groups and various movements of the past, and the recent past, are bound to possess some underground literature of which they have to take stock and which is among their source material. Although procurement of underground literature indicates contact with concerned activists, it does not necessarily mean the student is a sympathiser of the movement or group. After all these well-researched dissertations only enrich the achives of the Home Ministry as well-compiled backgrounders. After the raid the students do not know what to do with such source material — hide them, burn them or just throw them away? If after years of wooing some remote contact they procure some such material and it is confiscated as incriminating evidence, the scholar is not only subjected to undue harassment but has to set about collecting them all over again or forget the idea of completing the study.

That most of the twenty rooms raided were occupied by north-eastern students, chiefly Nagas, is a pointer to the logic of our police who think all north-easterners are bound to be sympathisers of 'insurgent groups'. The fact that Megano's name was on the raiding list shows that the police think that she, being a Naga, must have something to do with the PLA. Do they not know that the PLA is a Manipuri Meiti group which has strained relations with the Nagas, ask many Naga students.

If the purpose was really to discover evidence, the police should have taken this step immediately after the discovery of the dynamite sticks. Eighteen days of publicity with the PLA being blamed by all and sundry would have been enough to make anybody remotely connected with the incident to take to their heels and to hide evidence.

All this has made the north-eastern students indignant. It makes them feel the police are only trying to harass them. The feeling is heightened by the fact that harassment has taken place in the past also. A couple of months earlier, a police official went to Jawaharlal Nehru University looking for Luingam Luithui, member, executive committee of the Naga People's Movement for Human Rights. This time too they had his name but not the correct address so they could not track him down.

The treatment meted out to Nagas and others here does nothing to reassure the north-easterners that they are considered bonafide Indian citizens.☐

(*June 15*)

'Defence in the Eighties'

P. K.S. Namboodiri in his "Defence in the Eighties" (*Mainstream*, April 24, 1982) says, "True, in terms of absolute figures the defence outlay may look awesome. In fact, the increase of India's defence expenditure represents largely the growth of the Indian state and its economy". He concludes his article by saying: "What is needed...is a concept of total planning for defence and development to optimise both".

The above two quotations summarise the total style of thinking that has been induced into the mental processes of our so-called defence theorists, which is borne out by the Defence Minister's address to the top brass as quoted by P.K.S.N. that "defence plans are prepared to meet contingencies that *may* arise from continuous assessment of the *possible* adversaries' capabilities rather than intentions." (my emphasis).

We can even begin by conceding that the Defence Minister is right; but how do we assess and when have we assessed the capabilities of "possible adversaries"? To begin with, who is a possible adversary and why? For years we took Pakistan to be the only possible adversary, for the good reason that Pakistan was a country that never had been, but was likely try to coagulate itself into being by jingoism and by trying to make out that residual India was a wicked ogre. A true assessment by us would have brought us to the conclusion that flexing our muscles at Pakistan was just what their leaders wished of us, so that they could raise the hair on the scalps of their people. So, was it clever strategy to do so? It was really quite commendable when we kept our military cool all those years, even though some emotional tirades came forth.

Let us ask ourselves what Namboodiri means by saying that the defence expense of today "represents largely the Indian state and its economy". Is the growth of a state and its economy the measure of its defence spending? May I point out that the author himself admits that China took a bloody nose from tiny Vietnam, while the former gave the air and artillery supported Indian Army a rude mauling. Then on what premises is all this military strategy, military potential and 'balanced' expenditure between defence and development being assessed? In fact our compass is being forced to point to the South Pole when we wish to set our course to the North Pole.

The hazard that lies before us thus grows daily; because we are fast gaining a momentum of suicidal proportions. It will not need an outside enemy to set off any sort of devastation.

The statistics given by Namboodiri do not counteract the few simple facts of life, that is, that the number of uneducated people grows daily, health services are as inadequate as when the British left, and very much more in towns, while India, which has the third largest number of scientists and technicians in the world, cannot visualise a take-off point in the 20th Century. Does it not occur to someone then that the fantastic rise in defence expenditure was triggered off in 1962 after the Chinese war? Furthermore, has our hazard doubled since 1976? The defence budget of 1982 is over double the 1976 figure; but economic growth is not anything like double.

All we can plead is, please think before propounding policies and systems as an exercise in intellectual gymnastics.

E. Habibullah
Maj Gen (Retd)

Lucknow

P.K.S. Namboodiri writes:

I have no intention to join issue with Gen. Habibullah on matters of subjective comments which he has generously beautified by a liberal use of adjectives. Yet to put the record of history and statistics straight I would reply as follows:

To his question, "...how do we assess and when have we assessed the capabilities of 'possible adversaries'?", my answer is that frankly I do not know. In fact, one would have expected a man of Gen. Habibullah's experience and knowledge to answer that question. As far as common knowledge and truth go, we developed an adversary relationship with Pakistan and China not because our leaders wrongly assessed their good intentions but because both China and Pakistan committed aggression against India. To begin with, we conceded the demand for Pakistan not to wage wars but to live in peace. In all history, this was the only voluntary and non-violent decision of a country to shed one part of it to form another nation.

Gen. Habibullah implies that India has been flexing its muscles at Pakistan. Can he cite one instance? Pakistan came to war with India thrice before 1971. We have recorded evidence of Pakistani leaders themselves describing how they planned and carried out attacks on India. India returned 90,000 prisoners and 5,000 sq. miles of territory to Pakistan after the 1971 war, again as a gesture for peace in the subcontinent. As for China, everyone knows how hard we tried to keep up the spirit of 'Hindu-Chini bhai-bhai' and how the Chinese deceived us after signing a no-war pact in the form of the Panchsheel agreement. Deng Ziao-peng himself admitted in 1979 that China did attack India as a punitive step.

Since Vietnam gave a bloody nose to China and the ill-equipped Chinese army defeated India, Gen. Habibullah pleads for something other than military potential and military strategy to defend the country. True, military power is only one element of national strength and we need to equally strengthen the will of the people and their welfare. But let us not forget that Vietnam was able to checkmate China with massive Soviet backing and China was able to break through to India largely due to our lack of military will to fight. (Incidentally, the Indian army was not supported by air power and mountain artillery, as the General says).

Let us now come to the question of defence expenditure since that appears to be the major point of contention. All that I tried to bring out in my article (*Mainstream*, April 24) is the fact that defence expenditure should not be considered in isolation but should be viewed in relation to various other expenditures. Consider the following table:

Year	*Def. Exp. (Rs. Crores) (Current figures)*	*Def. Exp. as percentage of Central Exp.*	*Def. Exp. as percentage of GNP*
1965-66*	885	32.5	4
1982-83	5,100 (Budget Estimated)	16.9	3.8-3.9

(**1965-66 marks the highest ever defence spending as percentage of GNP*)

It shows that despite the apparent growth in absolute terms, it still remains well within 4 per cent of the national cake and constitutes only half of what used to be the earlier share of the Central Government expenditure. Gen. Habibullah's reference to the "momentum of suicidal proportions", if it relates to defence spending, is not, therefore, particularly warranted.

Defence expenditure constitutes less than 10 per cent of the total public expenditure in the country and it is less than 30 per cent of even what is called the non-developmental expenditure, much of which goes for public administration. In fact, more savings are possible in this areas where there is enormous redundancy and inefficiency. Since we need resources for our development efforts, why not effect cuts in other sectors and why this demand for cuts only in defence spending?

Another question to be asked is why the ratio of capital formation to domestic savings is falling steeply. We have almost doubled our savings rate since the sixties; yet, the capital formation increase has been only just half of that. The growth of a parallel black money economy is largely responsible for such distortions in the economy. Therefore, the causes of poverty lie elsewhere than in defence spending. Since defence outlay is so conspicuous it has become a whipping boy for all kinds of problems of our economy.

Our liberals have borrowed this alibi, like most others, from the West. The liberal view as it emerged in the post-Vietnam period is that security as defined by the ruling class has nothing to do with the people. Indeed, gone are the ages of revolutionaries and reactionaries. This is the age of liberalism. The Western democracies who have strong traditions of security management can afford to be casual and naive in public approach to their security, which is well built into their system anyway. Can a country like India whose security is the concern of the Indian people alone afford this luxury?

BOOK REVIEW Family Planning and Imported Fallacies

Population Policy and Compulsions in Family Planning: by Vasant P. Pethe: Continental Prakashan, Poona-30; pp 70 + 188; Rs. 45.

Among the most pressing problems of the day, that of the burgeoning population of the Third World is probably the most crucial. The 1981 Census has enumerated almost 684 million Indians. The average annual growth rate during the 1970s was 2.23 per cent, slightly higher than in the 1960s. The expectation of a decline in the growth rate during the seventies has thus not materialised. It exceeds projections used for the Sixth Plan by 12 million or about 2 per cent. Thus the need for slowing down population growth is obvious and family planning is clearly the answer.

In his long preface, the author rebuts many concepts popularised by Western scholars and Indians influenced by Western training. One such belief the author points out is that the poor and the illiterate produce many children in an irresponsible manner and thus contribute more to population growth than the educated middle and upper classes of society, ignoring the other side of the coin, namely, mortality. "If fertility is high among the poor and in the rural areas, so also is mortality. Similarly, if fertility is low among the elite groups and in urban areas, so is mortality. Consequently, the net contributions to population growth are not likely to be vastly different in respect of the two groups. To be specific, Crude Birth Rates and Crude Death Rates were 34.2 and 16.0 per 1,000 population in rural areas and 27.8 and 9.4 in urban areas of India in 1977. Thus the rate of natural increase was slightly more and not less (by 0.2 points) in urban areas (18.4) than in the rural areas (18.2). The infant mortality rates in urban and rural areas were 89 and 143 respectively in 1973. This means that the urban areas contribute more surviving children (911) per 1,000 births than the rural areas (857). There are reasons to believe that what is true of rural versus urban areas is also true of poor versus well-to-do classes".

The author is critical of population research in our country for narrowly confining to fertility or family planning. For viewing it in proper perspective he stresses that the following areas of enquiry become very crucial — marriage practices, migration and urbanisation, health and morbidity, education, employment, wages, nutrition levels, inequalities of income and wealth, property relations, ownership patterns of the means of production in agriculture and industry, etc.

The author warns against a misplaced alarmist and panicky orientation which inevitably leads policy-makers into the slippery path of coercive measures, doing great harm to the family movement itself. Further, the Western approach and Neo-Malthusian thinking have led to gross misconception and fallacies concerning the relationship between population, resources, environment and development and consequently have misguided research as well as policy. On the other hand, it would be desirable to encourage family planning. Its importance for population control as a means of promoting family welfare (in terms of status of women, health care, education, greater work participation, etc.) as part of the process of economic development and basic social transformation is stressed. The author points out that the Gandhian approach and the approach of various religions at the present time would accord with this view.

Referring to other viewpoints Pethe draws attention to the Marxist view according to which the incapacity to produce enough is basically due to the capitalist mode of production and defective socio-economic organisation. Shedding the obsession with population would help to attack poverty through fundamental and revolutionary changes in the economic, social and institutional framework of society. It is in this light that the recent reorientation of goals of India's economic planning in terms of growth for justice rather than growth with justice is to be understood. The author has outlined the essentials of a programme in a separate chapter; it is comprehensive, integrating policies concerning population and social transformation.

To the diehards who want population limitation in Asia, Africa and Latin America for the world's future to be secure, the author says there must be an even more drastic slowing down of the consumption patterns of the affluent countries — and we may add, of the affluent sections in developing countries. In fact, "data from the World Fertility Survey and other sources indicate that a dramatic decline in fertility levels is under way in many parts of the developing world."

The book is a welcome Asian corrective to the widely propagated Western obsession that the key to economic development is in thwarting even by compulsion, the millions of poor multiplying themselves — by implication, first for the heck of it!

R. Gangadharan

DIVINE SUMMIT

"How did you know it was Jesus Christ?" queried the incredulous defence lawyer. "I remembered him from his holy picture," replied the Rev. Moon Sun Myung.

Testifying as a reluctant witness before a New York court, the controversial South Korean evangelist who heads the lucrative US-based Unification Church claimed he first chatted with his Redeemer on a Korean mountaintop in 1936. He requested me to help him in the salvation of the universe," Moon explained.

The 63-year-old missionary of capitalism admitted the summit conferences with the Lord under questioning from defence counsel for Ganen Kelly, an ex-Moonie (the church claims three million votaries worldwide) who is being sued by an unreconstructed disciple for kidnapping and trying to "deprogramme" (unbrainwash) him in 1979. But the forum really put on trial the visions of the Rev. Moon, who was convicted on May 18 of evading payment of 162,000 dollars in federal taxes....(Moon) also confessed to meetings with Moses and the Buddha....

From *Asiaweek*, June 11, 1982

Disarmament *(from page 12)*

(iv) In the Arab world there is a growing awareness and hostility against attempts to increase foreign military presence in the shape of an international peace-keeping force at Sinai.

(v) Above all, it is becoming more and more difficult to dismiss as diplomatic gimmicks the ever-widening peace proposals, like those sponsored by the Soviet Union.

In this context the Vienna Dialogue, comprising 125 countries, held in January 1982, was a major development. India was represented well and our delegates actively participated together with peace-loving peoples from all over the world. Among the many decisions of the Vienna Dialogue, the following are significant:

(i) Rejection of theories and doctrine of "limited" and "winable" nuclear wars.

(ii) Call for implementation of Helsinki Final Act.

(iii) Emphasis on urgent need for US-USSR talks.

(iv) Demand to end the militarisation of the Indian Ocean and for taking concrete steps to make it a zone of peace.

(v) Reaffirmation of call for progressive reduction in the level of military parity between the two military blocs, freeze on further nuclear weapons, and steps towards progressive and complete disarmament.

(vi) World-wide popular support to the struggle to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace as witnessed in the recently concluded successful World Conference at New Delhi (April 23, 25, 1982).

In this context India must take the lead within the non-aligned movement for a non-aligned initiative for peaceful settlement of disputes among non-aligned and other developing countries. This would entail:

(i) Reversal of policy of seeking security in competition among the developing countries for strategic and tactical superiority in weapons, ensuring progressive reduction of arms purchase and building up of the industrial base of the countries through mutual cooperation.

(ii) Campaign against war propaganda.

(iii) Develop an educational programme for peace and disarmament.

(iv) Ensure withdrawal of all foreign military bases from developing countries.

(v) Ensure sovereign rights over natural resources to prevent their use for military purposes by any outside power.

In order even to be able to take the initiative in putting across such a programme at the international level, India must make suitable steps towards solving its own international problems in relation to its neighbours, especially in the sub-continent. It is not an easy task, but the world must see that India is not wanting in taking genuine initiatives in this direction. We must look at the wider reality. Without such an approach our voice among the non-aligned and particularly at the UN cannot carry much conviction and necessary credibility.

We have some tasks in the domestic sphere too:

(i) Educate people about the threat of war and its economic consequences not merely in terms of India's relations with Pakistan, but in the entire South Asian region in the present global context.

(ii) Use all available media resources to popularise a national and international peace programme in relation to our development priorities.

(iii) This international peace programme and the stand of India at SSD-II must be backed by mass mobilisation of the people, as a demonstration to others to build similar mass movements for peace.

Today disarmament, development and freedom indivisible. We must proceed with confidence. War is not inevitable. It is much more difficult to unleash a war today than it was in 1939. The aircraft-carrier diplomacy cannot work There are countervailing forces in the world which can hold back the warmongers. Every attempt in the last 30 years or more, since the end of the Second World War, to dominate by superiority of arms the people fighting for their rightful inheritance in any part of the world, has failed. Already there is a growing realisation in the advanced countries that an arms drive cannot be sustained at this pace for long. The economic crisis is prolonged. The future is uncertain. Many countries of Europe are realising the crippling effect of such massive expenditure on arms on the ecomony.

The question of disarmament is not as simple as finding a suitable formula acceptable to the USA and the USSR. The foremost industrial and military power on earth is determined to seek a solution to its economic crisis by passing on the burden to its own allies and to the developing countries. At the same time it is determined to contain its competitor, whose strength itself acts as a countervailing force in international relations today by frustrating any country's ambitions of world domination.

The major focus of attention must be on the nuclear threat. At SSD-II India must demand:

(i) A nuclear weapons freeze.

(ii) Setting of a date for the total destruction of nuclear stockpile.

(iii) All nations with nuclear capability should declare that they will not manufacture unclear weapons, as India has done.

(iv) All countries should sign a pledge not to make the first strike with nuclear weapons.

(v) SSD-II must reaffirm support for full implementation of the final document of SSD-I.

(vi) Call upon all UN member states to reach agreement on a comprehensive programme at SSD-II for disarmament and other more immediate measures for significant progress towards general and complete disarmament.

(vii) Early agreement on Chemical and Radiological Weapons Conventions.

(viii) Adequate security assurance from nuclear weapon states to non-nuclear-weapon states.

(ix) Multilateral talks on nuclear disarmament and comprehensive test ban treaty negotiations.

(x) Start negotiations on new weapons of mass destruction.

(xi) Early resumption of strategic arms limitation talks including reduction of medium and intermediate range nuclear weapons in Europe.

(xii) Negotiations on nuclear weapons free and peace zones covering entire surface of the earth.

(xiii) Convening early conference on Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.

(xiv) Negotiations for moratorium on all military research and development.

(xv) Establishment of review procedure of all agreements reached at SSD-I.

(xvi) Prepare a comprehensive programme for disarmament based on final document of SSD-I and points put forward by Disarmament Commission. Its principles should be included in the final document of SSD-II together with those already agreed to by Disarmament Commission.

(xvii) Recognise fully the inter-dependence of comprehensive programme for disarmament and New International Economic Order.

(xviii) Lay down time-frame for periods of negotiations and implementation.

(xix) Recognise role of disarmament education in achieving objectives of the UN resolution on disarmament, and ensure further assistance by relevant UN bodies in carrying out disarmament education effectively.

(xx) Declaration of renunciation of use or threat of force in international relations.

(xxi) Ban all forms of war propaganda. ●

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The Green March الزحف الاخضر

AL-ZAHF AL-AKHDAR

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West Asia: PLO's Limited Options

Mainstream

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POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

Presidential Stakes

THE whole exercise of selecting candidates for next month's Presidential election has been bizarre as never before, with both the ruling party and the Opposition contributing their share, the latter perhaps in greater measure. It can legitimately be asked whether the Prime Minister and her party have indeed fielded the best possible person for the highest office in the land. On the other side, the Opposition parties have not covered themselves with glory by the picture of utter confusion they presented before they finally managed to secure a candidate to challenge the ruling party's nominee.

Giani Zail Singh seems set to win, thanks to the big majority the ruling party enjoys in the electoral college. But that by no means makes him the greatest. Certainly he has a political background, even of sacrifice and suffering, but as an administrator he has not established an enviable reputation. His performance in the Home Ministry was far from glorious, and his involvement in Punjab's faction politics is a matter of public knowledge. But then the choice is necessarily a political one, and the ruling party's criterion not surprisingly has been dependability in normal as well as abnormal times. Call it loyalty if you like, but there is no escaping from such calculations. It is not as if Zail Singh does not possess some commendable qualities too, among them a genial temperament.

As for the Opposition, the parties concerned — from the BJP to the Communist Parties — put the wrong foot forward right at the start. Why there should have been so much excitement about a "consensus" on the choice is not clear. What was clear throughout was that the Opposition parties, with all their differences, were united in seeking to make Indira Gandhi accept their choice as the consensus candidate. It is hardly surprising that in the event the Prime Minister opted against the consensus idea, which has no particular sanctity. We have had Presidents elected after contests in the past, and no one can say that the mere fact of a contest in any way diminished the prestige of the high office. If there has been erosion of the prestige of Rashtrapati Bhavan, it began

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with Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed; and Sanjiva Reddy, whom the Opposition parties insist on describing as a consensus choice, cannot be said to have measured up to the standards set by earlier Presidents right up to V.V. Giri.

One fact to be noted is that in the final stages Indira Gandhi held consultations with leading lights of her party only regarding three names—R. Venkataraman, P.V. Narasimha Rao and Zail Singh. And most of these leaders, including the ones from the South, favoured the last name. Without going into the factors involved, it may be said that the ruling party in choosing Zail Singh took into account at least two factors: first, elevation of one from a militant minority community which in recent times has been quite vocal; second, ensuring that not only in the coming months but also after the 1985 general election someone whom Indira Gandhi cannot trust completely does not occupy Rashtrapati Bhavan. Perhaps it is also felt that once he becomes President, Zail Singh will gradually acquire the poise and dignity expected of the Head of State in a parliamentary democracy.

The Opposition began by proposing Hidayatullah as the "consensus" choice. It was strange to find the BJP being a party to this move, considering the Jana Sangh's hostile attitude and propaganda when Indira Gandhi put up a stalwart of Zakir Hussain's stature and eminence and again when Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed was her choice. How they expected to force her to accept the proposal in the name of minority community this time is not clear. When that fell through, during the final two days the Opposition parties created history of sorts by running from pillar to post in search of a candidate of their own. Many opted out, while Hiren Mukerjee, who agreed, did not find his name in the voters' list and had to bow out. Even before this little drama was complete some Opposition leaders had made harsh statements against fielding a Communist, though Hiren Mukerjee's long and notable parliamentary performance and his eminence cannot be questioned. Finally they were able to rope in H.R. Khanna who can hardly be said to be non-controversial. What stood exposed in all these crazy goings-on was the lack of purpose or direction of the Opposition parties as a whole. The only purpose seemed to be to have a contest, no matter who the candidate. They are welcome to it, but what kind of credibility have they established in terms of possible Opposition unity? What are the principles they are supposed to be fighting for? The answers to these and many other questions are by no means clear. At least the Left parties have to explain their logic in being active participants in all this melodrama.

Next month's election will not be a historic one as for instance the elections in 1967 and 1969 were. Even opponents of the ruling party concede that Zail Singh will win comfortably, though the posture of the contest not being a "token" affair is sought to be maintained by those who have brought Khanna into the arena. However, there is nothing to be said against a contest, except for hoping that both sides will be clear about the position of the President under our Constitution and about the relations that should subsist between the President and the Prime Minister. It is to be noted that even in the ranks of the Opposition not all sections subscribe to the idea of a President acting independently or as a countervailing centre of power.

As things stand, it seems clear that Zail Singh will become the President of India next month, and it is to be hoped that he is fully aware of the great responsibility that the office of Head of State involves. It is to be seen whether the highest office will lead to transmutation, raising the incumbent above interest in a particular State or the attractions of factional politics. The office of Head of State remains a constant star amidst the ebb and flow of politics. In times of crisis, of stress and strain, the President has to prove to be a person of great wisdom and knowledge and experience, dedicated to the highest interests of the nation as a whole. The duty of providing advice and counsel is predicated upon such an understanding of the Constitution and of the office of President. Zail Singh has a great deal to learn and a lot to unlearn. In short, History will be watching whether we have a person occupying Rashtrapati Bhavan who in normal times as well as in times of crisis will rise above the circumstances of his own past and above contemporary political storms.

While it will be hoped that both sides will keep the contest and campaigning on a high level of dignity befitting the office that is to be filled, a word of caution seems called for. The office of President has in recent times been drawn into public controversy of an unsavoury kind — the demonstrations held by the then Janata stalwarts in mid-1979 will be remembered, apart from Fakhruddin and Emergency. The ruling party mainly, and the Opposition as well, would do well to note the feeling of uncertainty, or at any rate unease, still haunting many citizens.

Re-establishment of faith among the people that the President is above partisan politics and loyalties is the most urgent need. And there has also to be certainty in the public mind that while the President and the Prime Minister function in harmony in accordance with the Constitution, the larger interests of the country will be constantly kept in mind at the highest levels.

That is the task of the immediate future, with long-term implications for the nation.

C.N. Chitta Ranjan

June 23

COMMENTARY

India-Mauritius Ties: New Phase

THE advent of the new Leftist government in Mauritius, constituted by the alliance of the Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM) and the Mauritian Socialist Party (PSM), is no flash in the pan but the culmination of factors which have been in operation in the Mauritian set-up for several years now. The sweeping results of the recent elections which have ushered in the change speak for themselves—all the 62 seats in the contest have been captured by the Leftist alliance, 60 going to the MMM and the remaining 2 to the PSM, with 90 per cent of the Islands' population casting its vote in a decisive verdict.

It is clear beyond doubt that the domestic policies of the outgoing Government of Seewoosagar Ramgoolam were not only anachronistic but were leading to the veritable collapse of the Island's economy. The figures of unemployed youth had reached the startling proportion of over 40 per cent of this section of the populace, while the inflation rate was soaring to the figure of 50 per cent annually. In a bid to find easy solutions, the Ramgoolam Government was reaching out desparately to Western quarters. Having accepted veritable bondage of the economy by the IMF — the notorious IMF panacea of devaluation for Third World economies was forced on the Island in 1979 — the orientation towards the West was leading to increasing dependence on South Africa as a way of enhancing Mauritian tourist trade. That such policies could only lead to a further slide-down of the economy had become clear during the last few years.

It is important to note that the change in Mauritius is not an isolated phenomenon. It completes the process which has in recent years ushered in Leftist-patriotic regimes in Malagasay Republic and in the Seychelles. The complexion of events becomes clear when one recalls the desperate bids made by American-backed coup bids in the Seychelles, the last of which was staged by Western mercenaries using South Africa as the jumping off ground. The incoming of the Government of the Mauritian Leftist alliance, headed by the tried and tested MMM leader Aneeruda Jugnauth, lends a great deal of strength to the forces of rejuvenation and independent growth in the entire region. It also exerts a powerful influence to realise the aim of freeing the Indian Ocean from militaristic adventures and pressing forward with the demand for making the Indian Ocean a zone of peace.

The changes in the Mauritian political set-up do not in any way adversely effect the bilateral relations between India and Mauritius. If anything, these relations are in the process of being further reinforced in all domains — economic cooperation as well as cultural interrelationship, and above all, in forging a common approach in the sphere of regional policy. The upshot of the elections has not come as a surprise to New Delhi; rather, the direction of the changes taking place were being carefully and correctly assessed by the Government here. It should, actually, be no surprise to know that some time before the elections, the Leftist leader Aneerusda Jugnauth had visited New Delhi in order to dispel any misplaced ideas which had begun associating India's close links with Mauritius with the helmsmanship of Sewoosagar Ramgoolam.

In reality, the overdoing of dependence on Ramgoolam was becoming an impediment in the extension and strengthening of relations between India and Mauritius. The factor of Ramgoolam catering to the 52 per cent of the Hindu majority population was being wrongly assessed by misinformed opinion in this country. The fact is that the MMM, the main force in the Leftist alliance, headed by the two leaders, Aneeruda Jugnauth and Paul Berenger, has become the unifying force of ethnic entities in Mauritius. It already represents the bulk of the majority ethnic population of Indian origin; but what is more, it also unites the ethnic groups, the majority and the minority. Instead of the Leftist emergence in any way weakening the ties between Mauritius and India, the new development will initiate new processes of further cementing these ties. The manner in which New Delhi responds to the situation will, however, be important in shaping these processes.

For one thing, the prospects of economic cooperation have broadened considerably. Mauritius needs Indian economic cooperation in a much bigger way than the previous regime was prepared for. The Leftist alliance would be far more receptive to replacing dependence on South Africa and the West by Indian assistance in the sugar industry as well as in developing tourism and opening new avenues of employment for youth. As for Indo-Mauritian cooperation in international relations, the outlook is positive. The Leftist regime has already voiced the demand for dismantling the Diego Garcia military base and return of the island to Mauritius. No doubt it will have to wage tough battles to gain international acceptance for this demand and force Britain as well as the United States to accede to what is an unimpeachable position. The previous regime too had voiced the demand for the return of Diego Garcia to Mauritius, but theirs was a feeble voice because of excessive dependence on the IMF and the West.

It should now be possible for New Delhi to lend powerful support to the Mauritian demand. India's stand on this question has always been clear, but not enough emphasis has been put on the Diego Garcia issue. It now acquires a different complexion with the undiluted position taken by the Mauritian Government. Even more significant will be the common efforts to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. This makes the change of political complexion of the Mauritius regime really significant in shaping the course of events in this region.

The decision of Prime Minister Jugnauth to visit India in the near future, as well as the invitation extended by the Mauritian regime to Indira Gandhi, goes to emphasise the importance that the new Government in Mauritius attaches to the strengthening of Indo-Mauritius relations. It is necessary now for New Delhi to work out the next steps for cooperation between the two countries.

O.P. Sabherwal

June 22

National Economy and 'Aid'

The two-day meeting of the World Bank-sponsored Aid India Consortium in Paris early this month has brought a considerable degree of satisfaction to the Government of India. Not only has the Consortium been sympathetic but has agreed to increase its aid in nominal terms. It is a different thing that even this will not be able to bale out the Government and the country from the economic difficulties. The Sixth Plan may not be salvaged.

The Consortium has agreed to grant development assistance to the extent of 3.66 billion dollars during the year 1982-83. To this 2.2 billion dollars will be contributed by the World Bank and its affiliates and the rest will come from 13 member-countries of the Consortium, including Britain, West Germany, Canada, the USA, Italy and France.

In nominal terms the quantum of aid represents an increase of 5.7 per cent over the commitment made last year. Last year the total volume of aid agreed upon was 3.4 billion dollars. In terms of SDRs the volume of assistance sanctioned this year shows an increase of 17 per cent. In absolute terms, last year 3.3 billion SDRs was pledged, while this year 3.66 billion SDRs has been committed. Among the members of the Consortium only Britain, West Germany, Canada and Japan have increased their commitments marginally while the US commitment remains unchanged at 210 million dollars.

In real terms the aid commitments do not indicate any increase. The increase in nominal terms will be nullified by the eroding effect of inflation. The disturbing aspect of the aid is its composition The proportion of concessional aid in the total volume has been going down sharply. Earlier 80 per cent of the aid was almost interest free and the rest carried an interest rate of 11 per cent, but now the proportion of the former has gone down to 40 per cent and in future this will further decline if there is no change in the attitude of the Reagan Administration. This change in the composition of the volume of aid will entail an additional burden of 100 million dollars per year by way of interest payment. This will put further strains on India's balance of payments position. Already there is a huge deficit in India's balance of trade and it is going to increase further because of the slow rate of growth of export earnings and protectionist policies adopted by Western countries. Despite borrowings from the IMF there is no sign of any appreciable improvement in the balance of payments position. All the policy concessions granted to boost exports have failed to make much difference.

The growing burden of debt servicing will certainly be utilised to put pressure on the Government of India to announce more concessions and policy changes in the name of export-promotion and tourism. There is no doubt that in years to come the proportion of concessional aid will become insignificant and the country will be forced to seek the help of private lenders who will extort as much price as possible in terms of both high interest rates and policy changes in the economic field. The World Bank has already praised India's recent policy changes intended to free the private sector from the shackles of control and state regulations. This "positive assessment" about India's economy is, according to one newspaper, based on "the increased willingness of the Government to take a pragmatic position on a variety of policy issues. Amongst these are the changes in cement pricing policy and the continued liberal import regime in the face of the country's difficult balance of payments problems."

Despite the aid sanctioned by the Consortium there is not much hope of any significant improvement in the overall resources position and continuing even the truncated Sixth Plan. The aid may slightly ease the strain on the balance of payments position but will not bring about any lasting improvement.

What is shocking is the complete indifference shown by the so-called Left and democratic elements and parties to the economy and its direction. While they seem to be extremely worked up about trivialities, they do not seem perturbed in the least at changes in the Government's economic policies. Has any demonstration been organised in the Capital on matters like scuttling of the Sixth Plan, industrial delicensing, the plight of sugarcane growers, cement decontrol, the proposed amendment to the MRTP, etc.? Why? Why are all the trade union big-wigs silent?

Why cannot these people get together and prepare an alternative set of policies and programmes to take the country towards economic independence and take it out of present difficulties? On the basis of feasible alternatives mass mobilisation can be done and it will have some impact on the ruling party and the politics of the country. But it seems they are under the illusion that the growing difficulties on the economic front, if allowed to go unchecked, and increasing dependence will pave the way to revolution!

The Left and democratic forces can demarcate themselves from communal and pro-imperialist forces only when they give proper attention to the present state of the economy and the need for its reorientation. Unfortunately they have relegated this to the background because the need "to sink all political differences" to appease communal and other pro-imperialist forces is uppermost in their minds. Where will this lead?

Economist

June 21

They Are Not for Burning

Long sustained efforts and campaign against bride burning by a number of women's groups in the city is bearing fruit. In place of the deafening silence that used to follow dowry deaths only a year ago, angry voices of protest can be heard. There seems to have been no decline in the number of such cases, on the average one case a day is reported, but the protests are reaching a new pitch as they widen out.

Last week Chandra Mohini, wife of a Supreme Court advocate, Rajan Saluja, died under mysterious circumstances while holidaying in Simla. She was reportedly being harassed by her in-laws for dowry for a long time. The demonstration in front of Rajan Saluja's residence in Lajpat Nagar reached such a furious pitch that the demonstrators pelted stones smashing window-panes. In Gulmohar Park the residents gather every Sunday morning to demonstrate in front of P.R. Narula's house. Three weeks ago his daughter-in-law, Bharati, died of burns. Pushpa Bansal of the same colony was another victim of dowry-starved in-laws in the same colony and the Bansal house, for the last two weeks, has been the scene of protests every Sunday. The regular weekly demonstrations are one step ahead in the drive for social boycott of families where daughters-in-law either get burnt or are driven to suicide due to constant harassment.

Public opinion firmly expressed in concrete acts of protest alone can compel a callous police force to act in accordance with law. The in-laws and the husband in particular get off lightly, not only do they not return dowry already acquired but the husband actually gets married again with more dowry. Although the in-laws are mainly and immediately responsible for such tragic deaths, the parents who only wake up and weep after the girl is actually dead are not less to be blamed.

Chandra Mohini Saluja's parents had been pestered so long for dowry that they had threatened to break off the engagement. Only then the in-laws postponed their pestering to the post-marriage period. In another case Savita's parents married her off to a person not in his right mind despite being aware of this. However, Savita had the guts to go to a women's group and apply for divorce. Shobha Rani Gupta's parents provided her with everyday necessities for six years in her in-laws' house but did not help her break the unfortunate marriage. Rama Maheshwari of Saharanpur, whose dismembered body was found in Delhi, was married off into a family where two brides had already died mysteriously.

Daughters from birth are considered 'Paraya Dhan'. This feeling is so deeply entrenched that even mothers who have borne the child and brought her up acquiesce in getting them married off to greedy people. Mothers who take great pains to cook the daughter's favourite dishes do not find it necessary to consult her wishes when she is to get married or do not have the strength to register their protest. Theirs is the unheard voice in the family.

And daughters brought up by such slaves of custom in the image of the docile, unarguing, sweet-tongued and hard-working women trained to suppress their desires if any, by mothers who are themselves exactly that, can hardly have inculcated in them at spirit of assertiveness and courage; and fathers who are made to think they are always right seldom find courage to denounce the in-laws, and when they do, they rarely find support.

This is what parents have to learn, and their daughters—that it is better to run away from hell than seek an end in self-immolation. Girls have to learn a different kind of courage, not to bear anything but to fight for the right to live with dignity. And that courage will come only if such runaways are not only lent a helping hand but hailed as crusaders against an evil. Few people realise that revenge after death is useless, but revenge by showing the in-laws that a girl is not a fragile doll but a strong person capable of living independently of them is far more rewarding in all senses.

Anjali Deshpande

June 22

WEST ASIA

Limited Options before PLO

OUR DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

ISRAELI Premier Menachem Begin's address to the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament was boycotted last week by the majority of the participating delegations, but the contempt thus shown for Israel has hardly affected the conspiracy that is being hatched in Washington and Beirut to turn Lebanon into a US-Israeli vassal state. After demurring initially, President Reagan thought it fit not only to meet Begin but confabulate with him for nearly two and a half hours, chalking out plans for setting up "appropriate structures" in Lebanon to fill the vacuum after Israeli withdrawal.

With Philip Habib negotiating the framework of such structures in Lebanon with President Elias Sarkis, and Secretary of State Alexander Haig masterminding strategy in Washington, the projections of US-Israeli collusion for changing the face of Lebanon have now become clearer. The United States is attempting to unite the warring groups within Lebanon, firm up the Lebanese domestic authority, disarm the Palestinians in western Beirut, get rid of the Syrians and reduce the Palestine Liberation Organisation to an ineffective political force shorn of its military infrastructure.

The Americans voted in the Security Council for immediate and unconditional Israeli withdrawal, but there have apparently been second thoughts since then. What Washington wants, now that Israel holds half of Labanon, is not "immediate" but "eventual" withdrawal, to allow time for the appropriate structures to emerge and take root. It is a hawkish plot conceived by those who share Israeli ambitions to create a Lebanon which will be a willing tool for furtherance of American interests in West Asia. The only moderating voice, that of the Defence Secretary, Casper Weinberger, who has been advocating a tougher line with Israel in order to mollify the sentiments of the pro-Western Arab "friends", has been stilled in the process.

Soon after his meeting with Begin, Reagan said he was anxious to save Israel from violence from the north, implying clearly that the PLO had been intruding into Israel across Galilee and thus violating the ceasefire of 1978. This, as subsequent events have established, was only a pretext, feeble at that, to launch the invasion. Habib admitted, as did some of the Israeli army commanders, that the Palestinian ceasefire violations were neither so frequent nor so many as to warrant the kind of invasion which Tel Aviv embarked upon. In any case the issue of Israel being subjected to violence either from the PLO or the Syrians is ludicrous in the light of the fact that Israel now holds half of Lebanon and threatens to enter west Beirut.

The boycott of Begin's speech had undoubtedly some propaganda value, but nothing beyond that. The most astonishing factor of the events since June 6 when Israel launched its Lebanese action is the helplessness, tinged with an attitude of indifference, with which the world watched the Israeli troops pulverise Lebanon and leave it bleeding. As it was all over bar the shouting at the end of the fortnight, there appeared to be some stirrings of conscience. Libya's Gaddafi called for an Arab summit, King Fahd of Saudi Arabia sent warning messages to his Washington ally, Iran sent volunteers to Syria and even President Hosny Mubarak of Egypt persuaded himself to caution the United States that its hesitation over an Israeli withdrawal was badly damaging American reputation in the Arab world. The Soviet Union too began a diplomatic initiative to convince Washington it was playing with fire. However, where does it all leave the Palestinians, the Syrians and the Arab world?

The PLO, it must be acknowledged, has lost its military infrastructure and much of its power to manoeuvre its independence within Lebanon. They are cornered and trapped within western Beirut, and the only factor inhibiting the Israelis from marching westwards is the possible losses in terms of lives and reputation its troops will suffer on the streets in hand-to-hand combat with the armed Palestinians.

The Syrians have had enough humiliation already: the Beirut-Damascus highway is in Israeli hands and their missile batteries have been lost. Ascertaining how they were lost is an exercise that must await the restoration of comparative normalcy. But, while the Syrian leadership has proclaimed it is not yet ready to take on Israel on its own or with Arab assistance, it is in no mood to ditch the Palestinians midway in Lebanon. It has rejected the demand from Sarkis for Syrian withdrawal on the ground that it was made under Israeli pressure. If the Israelis marched into western Beirut, the Syrian forces in Lebanon would fight alongside those of the Palestinians and the Lebanese nationalist movement. But eventually, when the crunch comes, the Syrian leadership would have to decide the lines on which relations with the PLO will have to develop. because it now looks as if the Palestinians will be willy-nilly forced by the compulsion of circumstances to forge accommodation with the Syrians.

When the Israelis attacked Lebanon, Syria did not anticipate it would either be forced to involve itself in the war or that the day would come when it would have to resign itself to a loss of influence in Lebanon. The day came the moment the missile batteries were destroyed and the Israeli troops had crossed the Litany river and driven beyond the Zaharani river. As for the

Arab world, the Israeli invasion has brought home lessons of its vulnerability to US-Israeli manipulations, but the time has not yet come when it will calculate the advantages or disadvantages of using oil as a weapon to end such manipulations.

Admittedly, the first impulse of the Palestinians in Lebanon was to fight to the last breath, but as the human misery and destruction in Tyre, Sidon and Damour testified to their helplessness, the defiant stand seems to have been diluted somewhat. Yasser Arafat reportedly told the Lebanese Premier that the PLO would lay down its arms in Lebanon on various conditions including Israeli withdrawal, direct negotiations with the United States, safe conduct for its leaders from Beirut and Israeli commitment to hold the cease-fire. The PLO needs to cut its losses and arrive at a modus vivendi which will permit it to continue to remain in Lebanon on the basis of a workable understanding with the Lebanese leadership or get out of western Beirut as honourably as it can.

Easier said than done. Not all factions in Lebanon love the Palestinians, but there are still some among them who would not subscribe to the current US-Israeli machinations to rid the country of both Palestinians and Syrians under humiliating conditions. Even otherwise, while the PLO might be disarmed, it is doubtful if it can be crushed, for the Palestinian "spirit" is something that has not been shaken even by the heavy toll the invasion has resulted in. Its alliance with the Lebanese nationalist movement has not yet broken. This was quite apparent when Sarkis found that his attempt, with the blessings of Philip Habib and the Israelis, to set up a National Salvation Council ran into rough weather. Waild Jumblatt, who has proved as popular as his late father as leader of both of Lebanon's Druzes and of the Left-wing National Front, refused to cooperate with Sarkis. He has said that he will neither associate himself with any attempt to settle Lebanon's political future as long as Israeli troops were in the country nor with any factions supporting the Israelis. He had Bashir Gemayal's tough Maronite Phalangists in mind. Gemayal wants the Palestinians to quit, but he is unable to help Sarkis push them into Syria which will not have them for the present. He has his eyes on the Presidency, but finds American and Israeli support for his ambitions wanting. Another faction leader who refused to cooperate with the Salvation Board was Nabeh Berri, the head of the Shia militia, Amal, which has till now resisted Israeli aggression out of deference to Iran's Ayatullah Khomeini.

Both Jumblatt and Berri lead their own militias, and if they ultimately stay out of the Salvation Council, it may prove a non-starter. Sarkis, himself a Christian Maronite, has set his sights on another six-year term as President, but seems to have been caught in the net spread by Habib and the Israelis. He is reluctant to play their game to the hilt because it would lose him the support of the Muslim population, which is almost half the total Lebanese population. Israeli tanks surrounded his palace in Baabda and attempted to force him to declare an emergency in the name of the Salvation Council, order the Syrians out of Lebanon and assign the army to cleanse western Beirut of the PLO guerillas. Sarkis went along up to the point of constituting the Council but refused to go beyond. Now he is in touch with King Fahd, asking for Saudi Arabian intervention with the Americans to compel the Israelis to withdraw.

It is amazing that cease-fires do not hold in Lebanon. A 48-hour cease-fire was negotiated by Habib to enable him to negotiate terms with the Lebanese and Israeli leaders; it was extended once of twice, but Israelis have gone into action once again, bombing suspected Palestinian positions and residential areas in encircled western Beirut in apparent retaliation for the ambush of an Israeli patrol. The Israelis are proving to be quite touchy where their dead and injured are concerned, but seem incapable of any humanity where the Palestinians are involved. They have no qualms in treating the 6,000-odd Palestinian prisoners not as prisoners of war but as terrorist criminals under arrest awaiting trial. Hardly a handful of these men could be guilty of terrorism inside Israeli territory, but Defence Minister Ariel Sharon has no compunction in disregarding international conventions and ordinary rules of decency in treating them as criminals. Israel seems to be having its way everywhere, thanks to its mentor and backer, the United States. Speaking at a New Delhi function the other day, External Affairs Minister Narasimha Rao said that those who fail to learn from history are destined to be condemned by it as Time brings its own bitter fruit. For the Israelis, Time is yet to come.

Meanwhile, in another West Asian war theatre, there have been developments whose consequences it is difficult to foresee at present. Iraq's Saddam Hussein has announced the commencement of withdrawal of Iraqi forces from all occupied Iranian territories to be completed within ten days and his willingness to accept a mediated settlement with Iran. Khomeini is having none of this. Teheran has made it clear that it wants Saddam to be removed. Additionally, it has demanded war damages amounting to 150 billion dollars, administration of Karbala and other holy shrines by Shia religious authorities, return to Iraq of 700,000 Shia Muslims expelled to Iran during the last two decades, and much more.

The first offer of Iraqi withdrawal was made by the Revolutionary Council in the absence of Saddam. Whether the Revolutionary Council is so deeply interested in the end of the Gulf war as to accept some, if not all, the Iranian conditions for settlement is a moot point. In the meantime, Saddam's political future hangs in the balance, and till Saddam's survival or exit is sorted out internally, any speculation on the ending of the war will be clearly out of place. (*June 22*)

Tragedy of Lebanon

EDWARD MORTIMER

WHAT will be the effect on Lebanon of the new Israeli invasion? The immediate answer is easy: yet more death, destruction and misery. Beyond that, the Israelis have said they do not intend to withdraw until a political settlement satisfactory to them has been reached, meaning one ensuring that south Lebanon can no longer be used as a base for 'terrorism' — a term used by Israel to cover any Palestinian military activity. In practice, the aim of the invasion is to destroy the Palestine Liberation Organisation as a military, and if possible also a political force. The political arrangement Israel will seek is, therefore, one that can prevent that force from being recreated.

It has been suggested that the solution could be the introduction of a much larger United Nations force occupying a much thicker band of territory and capable of enforcing its demilitarisation. That suggestion will bring a grim smile to the lips of those who have served with the existing UN force (UNIFIL), most of whom quickly became convinced that the activities of Israel itself and its proteges — the militia of Major Saad Haddad — were the main obstacle to their carrying out their mandate effectively. Haddad's forces in fact prevented UNIFIL from even occupying a large part of the territory assigned to it. Its headquarters at An-Naqura was surrounded by the militia and its troops subjected to constant harassment.

The Israelis make no secret of their dislike and distrust of the UN which they regard as being composed mainly of nations hostile to them. (In fact it is striking that even soldiers from countries which are *a priori* very pro-Israeli, such as Holland and Norway, often acquire a pronounced anti-Israeli bias during their service with UN forces in the Middle East: they find Israeli officers both smug and dishonest, while the latter regard them as a set of marijuana-smoking layabouts). The suggestion of an expanded UNIFIL can hardly be more than a diplomatic ploy, since Israel would set conditions for handing over territory to it which the UN could not accept, since they would amount, in a well-worn phrase, to 'rewarding the aggressor'.

Israel's next suggestion, therefore, is for a non-UN 'multinational force' on the Sinai model. In Sinai, this solution was adopted formally as second-best after it became clear that a Soviet veto would prevent the constitution of the UN force stipulated in the Egypt-Israel peace treaty. But from the Israeli point of view such a force, with its strong American flavour, is actually far preferably to a UN one.

However, the Americans would be likely to have even greater difficulty persuading their allies to give token participation than they did in the Sinai case. In that instance, European anxiety not to offend other Arab states was eventually overcome by the argument that Egypt, the Arab state whose territory they were being asked to police, was positively and insistently urging them to do so. Similarly, the decisive factor in the Lebanese case would almost certainly be the attitude of the Labanese government.

WHAT Lebanese government, you may ask, and there indeed lies the rub. Implausible as it may seem, there is at present an internationally recognised Lebanese government, headed by President Elias Sarkis. At the time of his election, at the very climax of the 1975-76 Lebanese war, he was generally regarded as a Syrian stooge. But since the brutal Syrian shelling of the Christian sector of Beirut in 1978 — which effectively destroyed Syria's pretentions to be a 'peacekeeping' or 'deterrent' force in Lebanon — Sarkis has been trying, gradually and timidly, to reassert Lebanon's independence.

His stock has risen with the Lebanese forces — the mainly Maronite coalition headed by Shaikh Bashir Gemayel, which controls East Beirut and the coastal enclave to the north of it — without being too adversely affected among the Muslims and Arab nationalists, many of whom have themselves become thoroughly disenchanted with the Syrian occupation. The chances were gradually improving that he would get Syria's Arab paymasters to force Syria out of Lebanon, in return for a clear breach between the Lebanese forces and Israel and their agreement to co-operate in restoring a genuine Lebanese state. It was that process which Mr Philip Habib was supposed to encourage, according to the plan announced by Mr Haig ten days before the Israeli invasion.

Nevertheless, it was a process of extraordinary delicacy, so intensely suspicious of each other are the various Lebanese parties and so dependent on various external forces. The Israeli invasion has probably shattered it beyond hope.

Sarkis's six-year mandate is in any case about to expire, and the Israel invasion has to be seen partly in the context of the battle for the succession. Syria has its own candidate in the shape of ex-President Sulaiman Franjieh, a colourful old thug. His family, whose fief is in the northern mountains around Zghorta, have a bitter and long-standing blood-feud with the Gemayels, an upstart and more urban dynasty which now rules the Maronite enclave with ruthless efficiency, inspiring the envy of many Muslims who still live in the anarchy of PLO-dominated West Beirut. Bashir Gemayel, the militia commander and dominant Maronite figure, is said to be ready to declare officially as a candidate in next month's presidential election. It could be that Bashir actually hopes to ride to the presidency on Israeli tanks and thus be in a position to negotiate

(*Continued on page 34*)

In the context of the current special UN session on Disarmament, focussing attention on the use of nuclear weapons, it is worth noting that a group of fourteen specialised scientists from various parts of the world met on October 7-8, 1981, at the Vatican City and examined the deadly consequences of the use of nuclear weapons on the health and survival of humanity. The scientists were from Rome; Moscow; Boston; Paris; Cambridge; Mass; and Rio de Janeiro; and they unanimously approved the following statement. The **Unesco Courier** *(May 1982) from where this is reproduced here, in its introductory note, observed: "Although most of these consequences would appear obvious, it seems that they are not adequately appreciated. The conditions of life following a nuclear attack would be so severe that the only hope for humanity is prevention of any form of nuclear war. Universal dissemination and acceptance of this knowledge would make it apparent that nuclear weapons must not be used at all in warfare and that their number should be progressively reduced in a balanced way".* — Editor

Hazards of Nuclear Weaponry

SCIENTISTS WARNING

Recent talk about winning or even surviving a nuclear war must reflect a failure to appreciate a medical reality: any nuclear war would inevitably cause death, disease and suffering of pandemic proportions and without the possibility of effective medical intervention. That reality leads to the same conclusion physicians have reached for life-threatening epidemics throughout history: prevention is essential for control.

In contrast to widespread belief, much is known about the catastrophe that would follow the use of nuclear weapons. Much is known too about the limitations of medical assistance. If this knowledge is presented to people and their leaders everywhere, it might help interrupt the nuclear arms race. This in turn would help prevent what could be the last epidemic our civilisation will know.

The devastation wrought by an atomic weapon on Hiroshima and Nagasaki provides direct evidence of the consequences of nuclear warfare, but there are many theoretical appraisals on which we may also draw. Two years ago, an assessment undertaken by a responsible official agency described the effect of nuclear attacks on cities of about two million inhabitants. If a one-million-ton nuclear weapon (the Hiroshima bomb approximated 15,000 tons of explosive power) exploded in the central area of such cities, it would result, as calculated, in 180 km^2 of property destruction, 250,000 fatalities and 500,000 severely injured. These would include blast injuries, such as fractures and severe lacerations of soft tissues, thermal injuries such as surface burns, retinal burns and respiratory tract damage and radiation injuries, both acute radiation syndrome and delayed effects.

Even under optimal conditions, care of such casualties would present a medical task of unimaginable magnitude. The study projected that if 18,000 hospital beds were available in and around one of these cities, no more than 5,000 would remain relatively undamaged. These would accommodate only 1 per cent of the human beings injured, but it must be stressed that in any case no one could deliver the medical service required by even a few of the severely burned the crushed and the radiated victims.

The hopelessness of the medical task is readily apparent if we consider what is required for the care of the severely injured patients. We shall cite one case history, that of a severely burned twenty-year-old man who was taken to the burn unit of a Boston Hospital after an automobile accident in which the gasoline tank had exploded. During his hospitalisation he received 140 litres of fresh-frozen plasma, 147 litres of fresh-frozen red blood cells, 180 millilitres of platelets and 180 millilitres of albumin. He underwent six operative procedures during which wounds involving 85 per cent of his body surface were closed with various types of grafts, including artificial skin. Throughout his hospitalisation, he required mechanical ventilation. Despite these and many other heroic measures, which stretched the resources of one of the world's most comprehensive institutions, he died on his thirty-third hospital day. His injuries were likened by the doctor who supervised his care to those described for many of the victims of Hiroshima. Had twenty score of such partients been presented at the same time to all of Boston's hospitals the medical capabilities of the city would have been overwhelmed. Now, consider the situation if, along with the injuries to many thousands of people, most of the medical emergency facilities had been destroyed.

A Japanese physician, Professor M. Ichimaru, published an eyewitness account of the effects of the Nagasaki bomb. He reported: "I tried to go to my medical school in Urakami which was 500 meters from the hypocentre. I met many people coming back from Urakami. Their clothes were in rags and shreds of skin hung from their bodies. They looked like ghosts with vacant stares. The next day I was able to enter Urakami on foot and all that I knew had disappeared. Only the concrete and iron skeletons of the buildings remained. There were dead bodies everywhere. On each street corner, we had tubs of water used for putting out fires after air raids. In one of these small tubs, scarcely large enough for one person, was the body of a desperate man who sought cool water. There was foam coming from his mouth, but he was not alive. I cannot get rid of the sounds of the crying women in the destroyed fields. As I got nearer to the school there were black, charred bodies with the white edges of bones showing in the arms and legs. When I arrived some were still alive. They were unable to move their bodies. The strongest were so weak that they were slumped over on the ground. I talked with them and they thought that they would be OK but all of them would eventually die within two weeks. I cannot forget the way their eyes looked at me and their voices spoke to me forever..."

It should be noted that the bomb dropped on Nagasaki had a power of about 20,000 tons of TNT, not much larger than the so-called "tactical bombs" designed for battlefield use.

But even these grim pictures are inadequate to describe the human disaster that would result from an attack on a country by today's stockpiles of nuclear weapons, which contain thousands of bombs with the force of one million tons of TNT or greater.

The suffering of the surviving population would be without parallel. There would be complete interruption of communications, of food supplies and of water. Help would be given only at the risk of mortal danger from radiation for those venturing outside buildings in the first days. The social disruption following such an attack would be unimaginable.

The exposure to large doses of radiation would lower immunity to bacteria and viruses and could, therefore, open the way for widespread infection. Rediation would cause irreversible brain damage and mental deficiency in many of the exposed in utero. It would greatly increase the incidence of many forms of cencer in survivors. Genetic damage would be passed on to future generations, should there be any.

In addition, large areas of soil and forests as well as livestock, would be contaminated reducing food resources. Many other harmful biological and even geophysical effects would be likely, but we do not have enough knowledge to predict with confidence what they would be.

Even a nuclear attack directed only at military facilities would be devastating to the country as a whole. This is because military facilities are widespread rather than concentrated at only a few points. Thus, many nuclear weapons would be exploded. Furthermore, the spread of radiation due to the natural winds and atmospheric mixing would kill vast numbers of people and contaminate large areas. The medical facilities of any nation would be inadequate to care for the survivors. An objective examination of the medical situation that would follow a nuclear war leads to but one conclusion: prevention is our only recourse.

The consequences of nuclear war are not, of course, only medical in nature. But those that are compel us to pay heed to the inescapable lesson of contemporary medicine: where treatment of a given disease is ineffective or where costs are insupportable, attention must be turned to prevention. Both conditions apply to the effects of nuclear war. Treatment would be virtually impossible and the costs would be staggering. Can any stronger argument be marshalled for a preventive strategy?

Prevention of any disease requires an effective prescription. We recognise that such a prescription must both prevent nuclear war and safeguard security. Our knowledge and credentials as scientists and physicians do not, of course, permit us to discuss security issues with expertise. However, if political and military leaders have based their strategic planning on mistaken assumptions concerning the medical aspects of nuclear war, we feel that we do have a responsibility. We must inform them and people everywhere of the full clinical picture that would follow a nuclear attack and of the impotence of the medical community to offer a meaningful response. If we remain silent, we risk betraying ourselves and our civilisation.☐

Wages of an Unnecessary War

M.V. DESAI

WAR simplifies matters—but only while it lasts. So has the British war over the Falklands, small and distant islands about which few Britons knew or cared until two months ago. Among this war's simplicities, the past is unknown territory and all seem to agree that Argentina is aggressor. Hasty as it was as a response to the heat of some emotional moments, the dispatch of the British naval task force has been looked upon as self-defence. It has been welcomed in many places as preferable to the appeasement of another dictator and to inaction. But is Britain in a position to protect the interests of the 2000 Falklanders and to see that their aspirations are fulfilled? Will the war end happily with self-determination for Falklanders?

The author is former Director, Indian Institute of Mass Communication.

Falklands are not all barren (unlike parts of Ladakh) where not a blade of grass grows. But distance and climate rule out the prospect of the British army digging in and settling down. It cannot for long sit out thousands of kilometres away from home without water, electricity, roads and sewage. Obviously, reoccupation by Britain can be neither prolonged nor permanent. Militarily and economically it is an impossible burden. So, how to bring peace (or an imperial withdrawal) with honour?

In the behind-the-scenes search for an acceptable face-saving device, the Brits seem to be unhappy that initial advantages went to Argies in the propaganda war. That is why there was great pressure on the BBC to be less than accurate, honest and dispassionate in its war reports and analyses. Happily England is still a plural society and a democracy. So the critics were silenced with a strong and true statement: "The journalists of the BBC need no lessons in patriotism from anyone in the House of Commons...They were keen that truth should not be the first casualty of the war." Not surprising, then, that Argies should jam the BBC's Latin American services.

A UN trusteeship, a tripartite administration, a condominium—all this can be examined for acceptability. It is a pity that Alexander Haig, once a disciple of Kissinger, has lost his chance for the Nobel Peace Prize. A greater pity that American-Peruvian proposals were rejected. Will the UN Secretary-General be luckier? At home as much in art and literature as in international diplomacy, Javier Perez de Cuellar y Guerra (who spent an afternoon in bookshops looking for translations of Tagore when last in India), knows wars solve no problems: they only leave a trail of bitterness and injustices. The sceptical intellectual in de Cuellar cannot have forgotten the words of the Pope who has just completed his historic visit to the non-Catholic United Kingdom. In his very first Encyclical, John Paul II condemned the arms trade and added: "Do not prepare destruction and extermination. Think of your brothers and sisters suffering hunger and misery. Respect each other's dignity and freedom."

In the meantime we have faced the peril of escalation in a most unnecessary and calamitous war. It has put paid to the history of hemispheric solidarity in the Americas. What remains now of the Monroe Doctrine? Torn to shreds is the understanding which bound the United States in friendship and mutual help with Latin American states. Two nations with special ties with it are at war. So much for the North Atlantic Treaty and the Rio pact. The United Nations must now help.

Argentina cannot be forced to submit and surrender by British bombing of military targets or the silos storing thousands of tonnes of grain for export to the Soviet Union. Nor can Britain move on to the Argentinian mainland and do what China did in 1962—humiliate India militarily and withdraw to prove that China does not regard the McMahon line inviolate and Indian sovereignty impregnable unless its geopolitical interests in Ladakh are recognised. As an alternative plan of action, the Pym blockade of Argentina has also not been so easy to contrive and sustain.

The irony of all this cannot be lost on those now gathered for discussions at the UN on disarmament. To them the Anglo-Argentinian war must present a strange spectacle. Both North and the Soviet Union, as affluent peddlers of sophisticated arms, have rightly lectured for the best part of a generation on the wages of war. And at various times they thus put to shame the Japanese and Chinese, South and North Koreans, Somalis and Euthiopians, Russians and Chinese, Egyptians and Israelis, Indians and Pakistanis, Iraqis and Iranians, even the Malays and Filipinos with their internal insurgencies. Now the lecturers on evils of fighting have turned war-mongers. Yet, we all know wars solve no problems. They leave wounds.

For all of them, the Falklands war has provided valuable lessons. Even the short span of eight weeks' fighting makes it too expensive. If England can still raise a fighting force, it is not the consequence of economic or uneconomic policies which leave three million Brits unemployed and therefore in need of a job in situations where the wages are death.

Actual fighting is even more costly. Some time ago an expert like John Keegan concluded that "Israelis and Arabs between them lost two years' worth of combined American and Soviet tank production in two weeks of fighting in 1973 ... Modern tanks now cost over $ 2 million and yet can be destroyed by a missile costing less than ten thousand dollars." Soon there will be enough cheap hardware everywhere to sink the mightiest ships. Perhaps a not too unhappy off-shoot of the race in selling lethal weapons now run by the Western "democracies" and the Soviet Union, with the possible future exception of France where the Socialist in Mitterrand is having open reservations on sale of sophisticated weaponry in the Third World.

After the sinking of HMS Sheffield (Admirals of the Indian Navy, serving as well as retired, would do well to note), there is a shift even in the Pentagon on Reagan's $ 96 billion shipbuilding programme for the US Navy which also provides for two more and bigger aircraft-carriers at $ 3.4 billion each. For what the $ 200,000 French missile Exocet did to the destroyer Sheffield (which would require more than $ 100 million to replace) is to expose more than a chink in Britain's naval armour. Disembowelment of the Sheffield must make one revise the received wisdom even on conventional combat, not to speak of a nuclear war.

Thanks to the salesmanship of France's Aerospatiale, Exocet is now on order from 211 countries. Mounted on a Super Etendard — also manufactured by France — fighter plane, Exocet was fired from some 30 km away and therefore from the outer edge of the Sheffield's radar horizon. Flying just two metres above the waves, it travels at supersonic speed. Its guidance system enabled it to locate and bury itself in the destroyer's fighting brain, thus stifling all operations — mechanical, detection, weaponry, lighting, broadcasting and fire-fighting. Once inside the ship, Exocet's 5-metre long flying bomb exploded its 160 kg high explosive warhead. Within 20 seconds of the missile hit, the Sheffield was filled with "black, acrid, pungent" smoke. The destroyer had no real defence because it was not equipped with an anti-missile (like the Sea Wolf) or with electronic devices to jam the Exocet's homing radar by broadcasting on the missile's own frequency.

The South Atlantic war will be ended soon — by exhausted combatants, UN's good offices, and British and world opinion. Thoughts and action then must turn to disarmament. It can never be general and complete, because a good part of the armed forces is everywhere in use for maintaining internal order. Yet the unnecessary war over Falklands has lessons for Britain as well as others like India. First comes the expense of a modern though conventional war. The second and more important lesson is that modern defence preparedness, assuring at best an uneasy peace, has also become too expensive for carefree — or trigger-happy — pursuit. For it does little beyond adding to mutual distrust and poverty among the arming nations.☐

(June 17)

Why Power Crisis ?

GIRISH MISHRA

SOON after Soviet power was stabilised and attention was given to building a socialist economy, one of the first items on the agenda was the electrification of the entire country. The importance of this task can be guessed from what Lenin said in his report to the eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets on December 22, 1920: "*Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country.* Otherwise the country will remain a small-peasant country, and we must clearly realise that. We are weaker than capitalism, not only on the world scale, but also within the country. That is common knowledge. We have realised it, and we shall see to it that the economic basis is transformed from a small-peasant basis into a large-scale basis. Only when the country has been electrified, and industry, agriculture and transport have been placed on the technical basis of modern large-scale industry, only then shall we be fully victorious."

The resolution adopted on the subject underlined the important task of involving the entire population in the realisation of the plan in the shortest possible time. Lenin wrote in the resolution: "Every electric power station and every tolerably well-organised factory and state farm must become a centre for teaching the principles of electricity and modern industry, a centre for propaganda for the plan of electrification, and of its systematic study. All persons possessing sufficient scientific or practical knowledge must be mobilised for the purpose of conducting propaganda for the electrification plan and for imparting to others the knowledge necessary to understand it ... "all Soviet institutions, all soviets, and all industrial workers and working peasants will exert every effort and shrink from no sacrifice to carry out the plan for the electrification of Russia at all costs, and despite obstacles."

India should have taken a lesson from it. But it did not and the result is that since the beginning of planned economic development, the country has been all the time facing power shortages, breakdowns and load-shedding. With the passage of the time the problem has been becoming more and more acute. Even after more than three decades the entire country is not electrified and in rural areas of many States which are claimed to have been electrified electric supply comes only rarely. If anyone has any doubt it will be worthwhile visiting North Bihar. In Calcutta which was once called the industrial capital of the country 12 to 14 hours load-shedding has become a regular feature. The same situation more or less prevails in most States.

In Bihar the four-hour cut imposed on industrial consumers continues. Gujarat has imposed 15 per cent power cut and Haryana continues with restrictions on peak load demand of industries between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. in addition to their observing one day weekly off. In Jammu and Kashmir 5-hour daily cut on small industrial units and 6-hour daily cut on domestic consumers have been imposed. In Karnataka the Government has imposed 45 per cent power cut for consumers with contract demand of 1001 KVA and above, 33.3 per cent power cut on those having contract demand of 501 to 1001 KVA and 10 per cent cut on those having contract demand of 251 to 500 KVA. Madhya Pradesh has been suffering from interruptions in power supply and load-shedding for quite some time. In Maharashtra the situation is worse. The State Government has imposed 30 per cent demand cut and 35 per cent energy cut on general industries and 22.5 per cent demand cut and 30 per cent energy cut on continuous process industries. In the Thane-Belapur industrial belt alone production loss due to shortage of power during April and May was estimated at Rs 100 to 150 crores. In Orissa 22 major industries have to put up with 60 to 66 per cent power cut. Continuous process industries and mini steel plants in Punjab have to face 25 per cent power cut. Tubewells can be worked only for six hours a day, and for general purposes electric power is available only for 16 hours. In Rajasthan the situation is critical. On May 26 both the units of Rajasthan Atomic Power Plant went out of commission. The availability of electric power dropped to only 70 lakh units as against the daily requirement of 165 lakh units. On a number of industries 100 per cent power cut was imposed. Tamilnadu has imposed 45 per cent power cut on peak demand of high tension textile industries using generators and 25 per cent cut on other high tension industries other than those in rural areas, whose connected load was more than 2 MVA. Consequently the textile industry has to face 6 to 12 hour power cut daily. In UP, peak hour restrictions on the use of power continue. In the last week of May the situation took a turn for the worse when workers struck work in Panki (Kanpur) leading to the disruption of train services and plunging Lucknow into darkness.

Now let us look briefly into the development of the power sector and the reasons for the present crisis and the prospects in the near future.

In 1950 the country had a total generating capacity of only 2,300 MW which rose to 3,104.71 MW by the end of March 1980 when the Sixth Five Year Plan commenced. In March 1980 the major share in the installed capacity was claimed by thermal power. Total thermal power capacity was 19,000.93 MWA and then came hydro power with 11,383.78 MW. The share of nuclear power in the installed capacity was only 640 MW. It is claimed that during 1970-80 the installed capacity increased by an annual average rate of 7.2 per cent.

It is also claimed that there has been a steady expansion of the transmission and distribution networks and the construction of inter-State and inter-regional lines to facilitate grid operation and transfer of power from surplus to deficit areas.

In spite of this progress, the Planning Commission has admitted: "Substantial as the growth of the power sector has been, power shortages have become almost endemic in various parts of the country." The reasons for this have been many.

Firstly, the rate of growth of power generation has always been below the growth of installed capacity, and far below the growth of demand for electricity.

Secondly, in the words of the Planning Commission itself, "There have been persistent delays in construction of projects, the commissioning of new capacity falling short of targets year after year. In the five-year period 1974-79, the shortfall in the addition of new generating capacity compared with the target was as high as 40 per cent. Delays in equipment delivery by manufacturers, inadequacies in the organisational capabilities of State Electricity Boards in regard to investigation, project formulation, project implementation and management, and in a few cases, mismatch between actual flow of funds to Electricity Boards and project requirements, have been the major factors responsible for the time and cost over-runs of power projects. The slippages in commissioning schedules have been aggravated by deterioration in the performance of thermal power stations, whose plant load factor came down to 45 per cent in 1979-80 as against the peak level of 56 per cent achieved in 1976-77. The abnormal time taken for stabilisation of new generating units, deficiencies in operation and maintenance and inadequacies in coal supply and deterioration of quality of coal, have been identified as the major factors responsible for the sub-optimal performance of thermal power units in recent years."

Thirdly, there is a heavy loss of electricity in the transmission and distribution process. The loss has been estimated at around 20 per cent. This is partly due to the non-availability of aluminium, steel, insulators, etc., and partly due to careless maintenance. There is large-scale pilferage of power too. This takes place with the connivance and active assistance of employees and officials of electricity boards. Illegal connections may be running into several millions throughout the country. Industrialists grease the plams of the inspectors and officials and use electricity without paying anything to the supplying authorities. Defective meters are supplied by the boards and then devices are installed by which even with legal connections power is used but meters do not record the consumption. It is estimated that the pilferage is to the extent of 52 per cent in Jammu and Kashmir and 36 per cent in Himachal Pradesh. Almost all the electricity boards are in the grip of corruption and mismanagement. According to a recent report, in Jammu and Kashmir a Rs 17-lakh contract was executed only on paper!

The total loss of the SEBs was Rs 1,400 crores in 1979-80 and during 1982-83 it is expected to reach around Rs 2,000 crores. In Tamilnadu alone the loss amounted to Rs 51 crores in 1981-82.

According to the estimates made by the Planning Commission, the all-India consumption of electricity by the end of the Sixth Plan is to reach 148 Twh for which a generation of 191 Twh compared with the actual generation of 112 Twh in 1979-80 is required. In other words, the generation of electricity in the country has to increase by 11.3 per cent per annum during the Sixth Plan. The target is to commission 19,666 MW capacity by the end of the Sixth Plan period. This is to comprise 13.846 MW of thermal, 5130 MW of hydro and 690 MW of nuclear power. It is wise to increase the proportion of thermal units in installed capacity to 65 per cent. The indications are that this target may not be realised. The likely realisation is to be around 15,000 MW. The overall generation of power by the end of the Plan period will not be more than 173 billion units against the target of 191 billion units. Thus, in the years to come, the country will have to put up with a minimum shortage of 10 per cent per annum. In certain States the extent of shortage may be much more. It is feared that Jammu and Kashmir will have to put up with power shortage to the extent of over 36 per cent, and West Bengal, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Tamilnadu may have to face shortages to the extent of 28 per cent, 26 per cent, 22 per cent and 20 per cent respectively. Industrial units will have to suffer power cuts to the extent of 20 to 30 per cent. On the basis of estimates of power generation in other States, there does not seem to be much room for the inter-State transfer. On the basis of a 10 per cent shortage of power, the direct production loss may amount to Rs 19,000 crores.

Many steps are being thought of to solve the problem of power shortage. One is the establishment of an energy development corporation with an initial fund of Rs 600 crores to 1,000 crores and a bank to solve the problem of finances. The second is to permit large industrial units to have captive power plants.

In view of the continuing power shortage, it is difficult to increase the tempo of industrial and agricultural development, raise the efficiency and productivity of labour and ameliorate the living conditions of the people. It is almost impossible to increase the opportunities for additional employment and incomes in rural areas and induce technical personnel like doctors, engineers, etc., to go to work in rural areas. The gap between town and country is bound to grow.

It is high time to give thought to what Lenin did in the matter of electrification. □ *(June 20)*

Take Our Ganpat ....

G.N. ACHARYA

MAINSTREAM is perhaps not exactly the right journal to tell old wives' tales in. But the dead past is rarely dead. It is not even past. It keeps bobbing up its drowning head, calling perhaps for some pitiful attention and more of idle curiosity. Rashly then, I like to recall some fading memories before I am called to the vast, illimitable void.

Long ago, even before something called Independence came creeping in symbolically at midnight, we had a government of our own for Bombay, which then covered most of Maharashtra, fragments of Gujarat and a chunk of Karnataka. The Chief Minister was a weak, voluble and amiable gentleman called Balasaheb Kher (B.G. Kher). He was so learned that he could recite verses in English, Sanskrit, Urdu, Persian (maybe) at the fall of a hat. So the mischievous tribe of gallery reporters always referred to him as Kalasaheb Bore. There, there, I have already started an upakatha before coming to the katha.

This Kher had been picked up by the shrewd Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel to be the Chief Minister, perhaps to keep smarter operators like Morarji Desai and K.M. Munshi in their proper places. But Cabinet-making (as at present) was not a simple affair. For instance, they had to find a Muslim and a Harijan. There was not an abundance of nationalist-minded Muslims (not suitable for Ministership, at any rate) or of qualified Harijans. In this connection it must be remembered that in those days a Ministership was a poorly paid job. Perquisites by today's standards were contemptible. Side-incomes there were, of course, to be honest. But it was the smartest who could dare to make it; because there was a man called Gandhi still alive. He ran a paper called *Harijan* which printed no advertisement, but was loath to miss the slightest scandal. He had at hand even a battery of in-depth investigators who all worked free for him. Maybe they even paid him for the honour of being called his servants.

There was a difficulty about finding a Harijan worthy. The consultations reached a venerable old gentleman, a veteran Congressman called Bhausaheb Soman. He was an advocate at Satara. He was courageous, and commanded respect. In the autumn of 1946, a rash of violence broke out in Satara — an offshoot of the Patri Sarkar of 1942-43. That kind of thing is now a matter of daily experience along the highways of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh — and is rapidly spreading to other areas.

A bus-load of passengers on their way from Poona to Satara had been held, a few of them selected, dragged into the sugarcane fields and shot dead after allowing the bus to proceed with the rest. When reports came into Poona where the legislature was in session, none dared to go to find out what had happened — not even the young MLA from Satara, who was later to be briefly hailed as Shivaji II — the now paunchy Y.B. Chavan.

It was then that Bhausaheb Soman said: "I shall go; who will want to do any harm to me?". And he went.

Who could say "no" to that kind of person? There was a young Harijan BA, LLB. So far it was easy. But the problem of the thereafter was solved by Bhausaheb Soman taking him under his wing and making him an assistant in his law office. So when it came to the question of a Harijan Minister he said: "Take, take our Ganpat" (G.D. Tapase). When Ganpat was taken to the Chief Minister, he asked what he was supposed to do as a Minister. The Chief Minister advised him not to try to do anything very much. Government officials would put up papers. He had only to write "yes" or "no" in the margin and put down his initials. Easy, easy, Nosey. It still is as far as legitimate administration is concerned. It is in regard to extra-curricular activities that the new breed of Ministers have learned to use the phone. The phone speaks, and marvels happen. They baffle commissions of inquiry.

Back to Ganpat. It happened that the first set of papers to reach him was a bulky thing from the Department of Fisheries. The Director of Fisheries had been asked by the Government to draw up alternative plans for the development of fisheries. There were three such plans. Ganpat had a glance, remembered the first lesson taught to him by the Chief Minister, and wrote "yes", "yes", "yes" on all three and appended his signature with a flourish. It was the Director of Fisheries who was puzzled and perplexed. He took the matter to the Secretary, who took it to his Minister, who took it to the Chief Minister, who called Ganpat. Let us put the curtain down on what happened after that because I want to display just another scene or two before crying off.

This one is cast in the Assembly chamber. Ganpat performing about what, I am sorry, I fail to recall. But somewhere along the way he said: "the late Henry VIII." I admit the English language is baffling. We cannot even say "the late Gandhi" or "the late Nehru". A titter went round the hall. Ganpat was put out. Arms akimbo, he turned round on the audience, and announced: "I know I am right. I have read English history. The late Henry VIII..."

The next scene is some sort of

(*Continued on page 34*)

DISCUSSION

Scientific Temper

A Statement on Scientific Temper signed by outstanding intellectuals, released by P.N. Haksar at the Nehru Centre in Bombay (*Mainstream*, July 25, 1981), has touched off rethinking in a broad spectrum of our national life. Twelve comments on the Statement have so far been published in *Mainstream* (August 29, October 10, November 14 and December 19, 1981, January 2 and 16, February 6, April 17 and May 22, 1982). We publish here two more contributions, the first by H.K. Chaturvedi, formerly on the staff of the Indian Statistical Institute, and the second a rejoinder by Ashis Nandy, whose Counter-Statement (October 10, 1981) provoked a lively discussion as part of the general debate.—*Editor*

Physician, Heal Thyself

H.K. CHATURVEDI

In one of its paragraphs the Statement of Scientific Temper (*Mainstream*, July 25, 1981) laments, 'The gravity of our predicament is increasing day by day. While India ranks high among the industrialised countries in the world and is the third largest country in the world in regard to stock of manpower trained in science and technology, we are close to the bottom of the list in terms of per capita life. We have all the technology available right now in the country to give water, food, shelter and basic health care to our millions. And yet we do not. Something has gone wrong. The logic of our planning and the logic of our socio-economic structure are at variance. Hence our failures and disappointments'. Scattered in the Statement are other laments such as, 'Mere slogans tend to be used as a substitute for action and for creating an illusion of achievement. Dramatic crash programmes are launched. These, inevitably, crash', and so on.

It is not much of a thesis to say that behind any action or non-action there is man, individual or collective, wielding power who can be located and held responsible for the above situation in the country. Apply the three suggested levers of scientific temper, the 'How', the 'What', and the 'Why' and locate this 'Who', the source of his power and his instruments. Take this knowledge to the millions who need redemption so that they can act against the correct target, the fountain-head of their miseries. But the Statement just does not suggest this. In our democracy the power of the installed political leader is immense and also immeasurable because the overwhelming majority of the people, the 70 per cent illiterates, are called to enact democracy only once in five years in the polling booths under constraints of threats and temptation. So it is of the leader of the caste, community and religion to whom unquestioned allegiance is the price the faithful has to pay for his social existence. It is these leaders, political primarily, who make the laws and set the pattern for the rest to conform to or get rejected. Their values, their character influences society. The silence of the authors on the 'who' is ominous. The role of the individual is not a non-issue in history, in society and in its institutions. In science too.

At a meeting of the Royal Society to felicitate Einstein, Bernard Shaw said with irony, 'If he were to greet Napoleon he would say that it would have been better for mankind if this man was not born.' But man is born for he has no choice of his birth, though he has choice of action, for good or for evil. The scientists too. Is it not deliberate when the scientists dedicate themselves to manufacture instruments of mass destruction and misery, the nuclear, the chemical, the conventional? Did they not invent methods for cheap and fast extermination of millions of Jews in Hitler Germany? What happens to their enlightenment, a virtue of scientific temper? Science too has criminals on its conscience. If scientific temper were a value-system at all cherished by the scientists in the service of mankind, they would in protest refuse their services to the political powers-that-be and face the consequences.

If not that, they could commit suicide, some of them to set an example, to make themselves non-available for the dirty job and assuage their conscience. Neither happened, and the world has to live in a nightmare with the products of their genius. Science has lost its invigorating rationality for serving the overwhelming part of mankind, having chosen to be the servant of the state, the multinational, the national tycoon or any other suitable bidder. It would not be news when the Indian counterpart jumps at the first call to produce the atom bomb in this country. Yet we have known some men of agricultural science who committed suicide for having been denied opportunity to serve the country better with their talents. A paradox of scientific temper. No, science is no more humane. It is dedicated to the cause of profit makers.

The SST extols Nehru for his scientific policy. Without being irreverent to him one can point to its consequences witnessed today. Nehru had a weakness for grandiose schemes, and people took advantage of this. So we came to have a plethora of National Laboratories, Institutes, Academies, specialised Universities, Statistical Agencies, Centres of this and that, etc., living a charmed life not of much consequence in the life of the people, and also the third largest stock of scientists and technologist, more than two million, in the world. Yet we cannot produce anything, even cosmetics, without foreign collaboration and blessings. Our IIT graduates become dignified salesman for them, as do the medical graduates for drug companies. Some of the members of this stock drift to lower levels and reach the benefit of physics and chemistry to the fish and vegetable markets, where rotten fish is treated with a chemical solution to make it look fresh, green fruit gets treated with carbide to give it the contours of ripeness, and stale vegetable is put under red, pink or green shade, as need be, to impart the desired look of freshness. Then there is the whole range of synthetics and adulterants wildly used at the higher levels of production, distribution and management throughout the country and for goods of mass consumption. For this too our scientists and technologists should be thanked. All this should be known to the authors of the Statement.

If the assembly of the 28 at Coonoor aimed at intervening in the life of the country effectively, it should have set the target lower, at its own community — the community of intellectuals — to begin with, and examined the state of its temper, its health and its role in the life of the country. Some questions could be asked. What is the myth that sustains the farce of the Indian Science Congress and its annual ritual, with the Prime Minister of the day partificating, irrespective of whether he or she is literate in sciecce or not? Every PM is not Nehru.

What is one to make of the innumerable conferences, symposiums, seminars, and now the American coinage workshop (even on Tagore) which go on round the year with a crusader's zeal? The intellectual community would seem to have developed a booming small-scale industry of these activities to keep itself in self-employment. The products are the 'papers'; some of them are read, the majority are taken as read, and all of them are forgotten. What social purpose do these 'paper' activities serve and at what cost? What is the substance of self-righteousness of this community and what is the anatomy of its exuberance? It is not only the old dogmas that are troublesome. Modern dogmas have come to flourish and co-exist with the old. Both together have a free run of the country and have led to the present impasse. The intellectual community should analyse itself first, establish its credentials before the people if it is to be taken seriously.

In the life of our country it is a perverted value system that glorifies erection of show-pieces like atomic power plants or sending toys into orbit with imported materials, technology and borrowed money, even if these were to provide a luxurious sense of fulfilment to some scientists and ministers, living or no more so. What temper is it of our medical men to specialise in costly methods of healing which only moneyed men can afford, lament the lack of sophisticated equipment used in the West, and escape to UK, USA and Canada for career and money, having got equipped for it at the cost of the tax-payers of this country? What a medical man can accomplish in conditions worse than we have today was shown by Norman Bethune, the Canadian doctor who volunteered to work in China during the civil war and saved thousands of lives with improvisations because he had the will for it. He did not wail for import of equipment. His was the temper humane before it could be scientific. His book, *The Scalpel and the Sword*, would make profitable reading in our medical colleges. What values do men in this so-called noble profession uphold, when almost all of them seek the comforts of urban life and go in for private practice to spin money and evade taxes? Some do not hesitate even to perform illegal abortions and protect criminals for money or caste considerations. Their organisation, the Indian Medical Association, must be aware of the mental health of the profession and must have reasons for remaining silent. Laying bare the anatomy of this important segment of intellectuals and its organisations, and of other segments, one by one, would remove the barriers to correct understanding of our problems and the temper of those who guide the destiny of the nation. Correct knowledge is a prerequisite to correct action. What would one say of the profound revelation a prominent Ayurvedic physician of Bombay, who after running from one seminar to another had, on his return from abroad, said that the Ayurvedic system would develop in India only when it reimports it after being processed in the USA?

Yes, something has gone wrong; and it is the dominant value system. It was said that man does not live by bread alone. Man now, of the upper strata of society, lives for money alone. He does not even earn it, he makes it. It is the dominant passion and norm, for it is set by the leader, the head of whatever you have. Self-aggrandisement, interests of family, caste, community take precedence in that order. The scientific community is not immune to this temptation, the role of scientific temper notwithstanding. The value system which puts self before society was ever there. It turned the fruits of freedom more sour for the majority of the people, and it was this that made for the tragedy of Gandhi and Gandhism. Then came the time for the now coveted second renaissance, but it ran amuck even before it got started under the very nose of Nehru. Like Gandhi, Nehru too died a man of sorrow. Their men had betrayed the faith.

Thereafter, the people who mattered ceased suffering from qualms of conscience – the people who governed the country, its institutions, its political, social, economic and cultural life. Politics, crime, corruption and race for soft living fused into what is the nation's life today. No, it is not the lack of scientific temper which has led to this degeneration. It is the lack of character and integrity. Man has to be humane, has to acquire integrity and character to keep faith with those who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of the country. Scientific Temper is not the password for the challenge before us. Rather its excessive zeal in the race for superiority needs curbing. Science itself needs rescuing from its course of destruction of natural resources for ensuring profits to armament makers the world over.

The need is to root out the value system obtaining today and reverse the order so that *Society is given priority over Self.* A society dominated by people who live more by perquisites than their wages of sweat, from the President down to the unionised peon, can hardly be expected to make the turn on its own. Only those who feel the pain of the tyranny of extant values will have the urge to take up the challenge. If the intellectual community feels this responsibility to society, it has to begin with cleaning its own Augean stables and settle accounts with its own temper before it will be heard with respect and deference by the people. Will it dare? If not, let it not make a fetish of scientific temper and provide an alibi for the status quo. The Statement, an exercise in piety, will at best remain a subject of drawing-room talk of intellectuals and not be a manifesto for action. They owe a confession to the people, not a sermon.

India for its regeneration even today needs hermits of ancient lore in the corridors of power, learning and laboratories, and not jetpropelled politicians and intellectuals, the creatures of luxury in life and thought, the apes of the methods and culture of the affluent West, who abound in the country today.

The Temper that achieve this is needed by the country. Call it by any name. And the physician needs the healing first. ☐

Science for Unafraid

ASHIS NANDY

I would have allowed the 'Statement on Scientific Temper' (*Mainstream*, July 25, 1981) to gracefully sink into oblivion but for the chance it gave one to rethink some of the basic tenets of the dominant culture of science. It is a pity that the critical part of my Counter-Statement (*Mainstream*, October 10, 1981) has attracted more notice than the operative part which proposes an alternative set of norms for science. This note reaffirms three aspects of the basic framework of the Counter-Statement, which seem to have been bypassed by many.

A few caveats must be entered at the beginning. First, criticism of modern science is not criticism of all science. The Defenders of the Faith may believe that the only science they know is the only science in existence; I have no reason to do so. From this debate itself have emerged intimations of alternative structures of rationality and knowledge and their links with man-made suffering. The fact that these alternatives have been condemned as primitivisms and politically cornered does not make them invalid or irrational. Human beings have lived with a plurality of sciences for nine-tenth of the life-span of civilisation, a large proportion of them are still living with non-modern sciences, and many of us may survive the demise of modern science and its culture, however immortal that culture may seem to our science bureaucracy. Dominance is not the proof of finality.

This idea of a plural world of sciences will confirm the suspicion of the official scientists and official Marxists that I am no modernist. I plead guilty. My critique of modern science is a part of a critique of modernity and it parallels my rejection of the modern ideas of progress and history. I am concerned with the immediacy of oppression and the role of human knowledge in conveying or reifying the sense of that immediacy. The Counter-Statement is written from that point of view. It ought to be unpalatable to those who accept the ruling ideology of modernity and criticise the ruling powers only for being unable or unwilling to modernise their societies. The intellectual wizards of Marxist officialdom — R. Prasad (*Mainstream*, April 17, 1982) seems to be one of them — have no alternative vision of a desirable society; they have only an alternative pathway to the European post-Enlightement values. They are of course welcome to their faith; all one can say is that if they were not operating with school-text concepts of Indian civilisation, science and Marxism, they would not have tried to sell such supine conformism as all of Marx. Not being a Marxist I shall leave it at that.

Second, even if I was providing an internal critique of modern science, I would have argued that a plea for an attenuated status for modern science was not a plea for the demolition of it. Rather it could be seen as an attempt to (1) save modern science from the wrath of its victims, and (2) protect the majority of modern scientists from the operation of Robert Michels' Iron Law of Oligarchy, one version of which says that the larger an organisation grows in size, the more it oppresses its members. It is however a feature of many idea systems that once you challenge their monopoly in the market-place of ideas, they begin to see it as an attack on their survival. Like some of the modern democracies, these idea systems sustain a large part of their internal democracy by being oppressive and authoritarian vis-a-vis other idea systems and outsiders. Thus, the partisans of modern science are not happy if one says that 40 per cent of scientists are doing constructive science, as the Counter-Statement explicitly says. One must surrender fully and give science a one hundred per cent clean chit to avoid being called anti-science.

Thirdly, it is remarkable that none of the scientists who have joined issue with me have done so on the empirical content of the Counter-Statement. I had said that a majority of scientists today are engaged in destructive technology. No one has produced an iota of evidence to prove me wrong. I had claimed that most epidemics have been eliminated by social welfare measures and not by modern medicine, I had in mind data amassed by epidemiologists and historians of medicine on cholera, plague, tuberculosis, dysentery and typhoid. One or two have doubted this claim but, again, the doubt is based on intuition, not data. Likewise, Vandana Shiva's examples (*Mainstream*, December 19, 1981) from the area of food technology and agronomy, too, have gone unchallenged. All one has, at the end of six months of debate, are a series of testimonials to science, written by a galaxy of public men who have specialised in rhetoric.

II

SO much for the scientific temper of the flag-bearers of scientific temper. Now, about the three organising principles of the Counter-Statement I want to explicate. They parallel the issues which have been neatly framed by Paul Gregorios (*Mainstream*, February 6, 1982) except to the extent that I try to defend less politely the logic behind some of the more 'bizarre', 'irrational' and 'retrograde' elements of the Counter-Statement.

The first principle which informs some of the proposals in the Counter-Statement can be called *the principle of escaping schizoid legitimation*. The principle has two sides, and both seek to force an ideology to own up some responsibility for whatever is done in its name. The principle invites us to see through those sophisticated, ornate, theoretical developments within an ideology which help the ideology shed its embarrassing partisans either as false followers of the ideology or as hidden followers of competing ideologies (who, for that reason, should be an embarrassment to the competing systems, not to the ideology the partisans profess).

The first side of the principle applies when some quick-witted academics and radicals shed tears that I blame the ill-uses of science partly on science and the scientists and deny them the right to pass all of it on to vicious politicians, impersonal production relations or conspiratorial monopoly capitalists. I find this lament dishonest. We give all credit to modern science for discovering relativity and organic inheritence, neither to the Weimar Republic nor to American capitalism which provided the social context of Einstein's work, nor to the Catholic Church which employed Mendel. Similarly, the credit for the use of nuclear technology in medicine and achievements of plant genetics in producing new strains in agronomy go to modern science. I do not see why I should blame only the society, the politician or big business when the fruits of modern science go sour, why for instance I shall have to say that science did not build the nuclear bomb, only the military-industrial complex did, and that modern science did not build the gas pellets used in Nazi extermination camps, only the Nazi state did. It is for refusing to provide such schizoid legitimation to modern science that some have charmingly accused me of 'libel' and others have politely called me an 'opportunist' and a man gone 'berserk'.

One correspondent, G. Narayanan, has helped me generalise this problem in the form of a dilemma. If modern science is *intrinsically* value-laden, where do the intrinsic values go when the monopoly capitalist, the fascists or the war-mongers catch hold of science? On the other hand, if modern science is only a beautiful method or a mass of value-free knowledge which can be easily misused by the ungodly, how dare modern science legislate values in the name of scientific temper?

Let us for a moment turn to the other facet of the split legitimation of modern science. I meant it seriously when I said that you could not explain the misuse of others' ideologies as intrinsic to their ideologies and explain away the misuse of your ideology as only a vulgarisation of your ideology. You cannot argue that religion divides because there are inter-religious quarrels and caste factions, and in the same breath declare that science unites, when we see all around us new conflicts, new classes and violence opened up by science. If one is given the right to argue that only some scientists are nasty and they vulgarise science, commonsense demands that the same right be given to those who argue that some unworthy men of religion give a bad name to religion.

Hence, the safer thing to do is to accept the principle that every idea system must own up as an intrinsic part of itself whatever is done in its name. Such self-acceptance could be particularly useful in the case of modern science because it is a system which works on the assumption of its own absolute commitment to truth and to self-criticism, whereas such a claim itself is the first step towards cultural hegemony, imperialism of categories, and downright enthnocentrism. No wonder, the slogans about the universalism and tolerance of science do not charm the citizens of Hiroshima or the peasants of Vietnam or for that matter those at the receiving end of modern science in India. Public memory may be short but it has a way of catching up with the games played by ruling ideologies.

The second principle which implicitly scaffolds the Counter-Statement can be called *the principle of three oppressions*. I believe that there is an isomorphism between what modern science does to the laity and what the establishment of modern science does to the ordinary scientists within the estate of science. And what modern science does to its subjects — and what the science bosses do to their underlings — is also what the modern scientist does to a part of himself. The idea of scientific temper or, speaking generally, the ideology of modern science (1) reduces the non-scientist to the stature of one with an inferior cognition who deserves to be the subject of — and subject to — experimentation, improvement and even sacrifice at the altar of his own 'welfare' or liberation; (2) it applies the same logic to oppress the foot-soldiers of modern science whose fate, survival and future are controlled by a small coterie of super-scientists who do not do any science but sell the ideology of science; and (3) it brutalizes the scientist himself by affirming the superiority of his cognitive self over his ethical and compassionate selves and the superiority of his over-socialised self over his imaginative and intuitive selves. I would like to interpret the Biblical and Mahabharatic injunctions differently: 'Do not do unto others what you would that they do not do unto you, lest you do unto yourself what you do unto others'. I suspect that this principle could be generalised to all situations of oppression.

The principle of isomorphic oppression is the ultimate clue to the relationship between modern science and oppression, and more specifically, between modern knowledge systems and the bureaucratised and 'banal' oppression in which our age has specialised. As Hannah Arendt would argue, the super-clerk Adolf Eichmann, who scientifically killed millions by efficiently pushing files in his office, is the prototypical killer in our age, not the knights who fought the Crusades and were willing to die for a cause, nor the religious fanatics willing to kill for a faith.

Finally, *the principle of contaminated text* which says that science and technology is not a cumulative, a political mass of knowledge with a political context; rather, it is a text with its built-in politics. In other words, the present crisis of science is not only a matter of wrong applications but also of the very conception and content of modern science. When Lenin imported Fredrick Taylor's science of management, he thought that the Soviet system would tame and use the 'apolitical' science creatively, by altering its social context. Actually, the science of management proved more resilient; it had its own culture and it dutifully reproduced itself in Russia. The Soviet system altered itself to adjust to modern management.

As I write these lines, I see in the newspapers the story of Robert Koch who in March 1882 reported the discovery of the bacillus responsible for tuberculosis. Yet, we find from Ivan Illich that in New York death from TB had declined from 700 (per 10,000) in 1812 to 370 by 1882 when Koch reported his discovery. By 1910, when the first sanatorium was opened, it was 180, and before antibiotics entered the scene, the death rate was already down to 48. With all due respect to Koch, and to the discoverers of the drugs for TB, I wonder if the discoverers would have received the public acclaim they have done if we recognised that more than 93 per cent of the deaths from TB could be eliminated in an area without any of the discoveries of modern medicine. What seems a scientific feat often turns out to be, on closer scrutiny, a socio-political miracle. That miracle in turn may be built on the misery of those who, one hundred years after Koch and forty years after the discovery of the miracle drugs, still have a death rate of 3 million per year from TB. One is tempted to say that TB should be first taught in courses of political sociology and secondarily in medical colleges.

By the way, I often wonder what would have happened if Koch had discovered a bacillus for biological warfare. I am sure we would have tried to forget him and to blame British colonialism which employed him for the discovery. (*See Note*).

III

A CRUCIAL question, raised in a slightly different from by T.G. Vaidyanathan (*Mainstream*, May 22, 1982) still remains unanswered. Can we not sometimes use modern science as a tool of social criticism in the Indian context? The answer is, yes, but *only* when the dominant structure of consciousness — the ruling ideology — is not interwined with modern science, and *only* when the ideology of modern science does not seek to pre-empt all alternatives to it in the future. Such situations have obtained in the past and they may obtain again. (The delightful ultra-scientism of F.N. Souza in *Secular Democracy*, January 1982, suggests that one may create such a situation in fantasy, too. I hope I never become so heartless as to analyse threadbare the fragile beauty of Souza's private theory of science).

The present debate itself illustrates what games can be played when such qualifications are not borne in mind. The R. Prasads reject both the original Statement and the Counter-Statement but their criticism of the Counter-Statement is more severe than that of the former. Now, I would have thought that if there were two false statements, one signed by the who's who of India's academic power elite and the other by *one* individual, any serious criticism would concentrate its attack on the first because it is likely to be the ruling ideology and the more influential. But the R. Prasads of the world always, alas always, know that while all false consciousnesses are equal, those held by the powerful are more equal than the others.

The comparison between science and astrology in the Counter-Statement was based on exactly this awareness of the relationship between power, knowledge and critical consciousness. It challenges the cheap tendency in arrogant, middle-class radicalism to believe that its preference for modern science (the myth by which the powerful live) over astrology or religion (the myths by which the less powerful live) is not shaped by self-interest. Some have seen this as my attempt to whitewash the astro-politics of public figures in India. Frankly, their argument shocks me. Neither in the academia nor in the political economy of India and the world is astrology powerful. Modern science is. Does anyone seriously believe that astrology interferes with the pursuit of self-interest or the reality-testing of the powerful? Why should one believe that it interferes with that of the weak, unless of course one is a social Darwinist and believes that the politically weak are also the intellectually weak? If anything, astrology keeps alive the value of human intervention in social processes and in one's control over one's own fate in groups in which such values are sought to be destroyed. Criticise the non-modern belief systems like astrology or religion by all means, the Counter-Statement says, but be more protective towards them than towards the idea systems globally associated with the powerful, the wealthy and the prestigious. Particularly so, when empirical evidence suggests that religious faiths and traditions could be as much allies as enemies of creativity in the arts and the sciences, and that scientific education itself could hamper the acquisition of a critical, enquiring spirit, Dipankar Gupta's touching *faith* to the contrary notwithstanding (*Mainstream,* March 6, 1982).

This in turn raises two general questions which are not directly related to the present argument. Does a criticism remain a criticism when it tries to foreclose a criticism of the criticism? How to keep open the option of a criticism of the criticism? In response, one is forced to examine the fate of not only modern science as a means of social criticism but also that of the more explicit critical theories from Vico to Marx to Freud, with some of which I have flirted for the last twenty years. Is it accidental that each of them tends to develop hardened coronaries (1) by explaining all dissent from it as a conspiracy or as a motivated dissent from rationality and humanness, as the present debate itself clearly shows, (2) by legitimising a new class or stratum of experts whose prerogative it becomes to provide a 'proper' criticism and leadership in progress, and (3) by choking all criticism once the 'base' has been reached (production relations in Marxism, psychosexuality in psychoanalysis, 'body-language' in modern medicine)? Is it accidental that all further criticism is then defined as retrogressive, ego-defensive, counter-revolutionary or non-scientific? I do not have the space to attempt an answer but I must draw the attention of readers to the idea of unending criticism which, it seems to me, is implied both in Madhyamika and in the idea of *neti* (The Paul Feyerabends I see as a modern subsect of these traditions of criticism).

Such an approach to social criticism has to presume that oppression never ends, that it may diminish or it may asymptotically approach zero but there emerge in new guises new forms of institutionalised suffering which have to be fought from new vantage grounds. At one time modern science had promised such a vantage ground; today it is in league with the powerful. In such a situation, a criticism of criticism — of modern science in this instance — becomes not merely a cognitive task but also a moral and political responsibility. It is the only means of fighting the tendency to lose the feel of immediacy of oppression in an age which has refined the science — yes, the science — of unleashing new forms of oppression under the guise of theories of liberation. ☐

NOTE

Though it is not directly relevant, I must briefly mention here a counter-principle which the modern science lobby in India uses to own up persons who have operated from outside the world view of modern science and to disown others that clearly fall within the estate of modern science. In the first category fall people like Iswarchandra Vidyasagar who, though critical of their traditions, operated from the baseline of alternative traditions. Vidyasagar was, in modern terms, a rationalist and an agnostic. Yet he used the Parashar Sutra against Manusamhita, neither Hume nor Locke. He lived, dressed, ate and died a Brahmin pandit. The modernists like to see all this as a compromise with a backward society. I find it unbelievable that Vidyasagar, who died with the sounds of bands celebrating his oncoming death ringing in his ears, did not have the courage of his convictions to opt for an alternative ideology less acceptable to his society. By trying to own him up on behalf of the modern idea of scientific rationalism, the science lobby only manages to trivialise him and his kind.

On the other hand, the protagonists of modern science disown our modern yogis, maharishis and acharyas because they supposedly represent the traditional world view. This is sheer nonsense. Many of these worthies have swallowed the values of modern science hook, line and sinker. They legitimise their cosmology with the help of modern science (such as the latest research in physics and psychology) and they claim their *siddhis* extend the authority and the laws of modern science. They are pathetically dependent on modern communications and modern management for their public relations and for their organisational structures, and their appeal is primarily to those partly or wholly in the modern world. I do not see why these people should be accused of representing non-modern world views when their sanctions, reference points and technologies are all from modern science. It is often argued that these 'men of religion' use false data and faulty experimental designs. But then, cheating in research is not unknown in modern science. We do not call such a cheat a false acharya or a rishi, we call him a bad scientist. And that is what a modern guru is.

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India's Security: Geo-political Dimensions

SHAH MANZOOR ALAM

SOUTH Asia has emerged as one of the major foci of international politics, despite Sir James Hackett's predictions to the contrary (*Third World War*), because of the intensification of the rivalry between the super-powers in the Indian Ocean region and in Afghanistan. The increasing naval presence of the USA in the Indian Ocean, the presence of Russian armed forces in Afghanistan, the massive US military aid to Pakistan, and the presence of not very friendly, if not positively hostile China pose a real threat to the security of India and call for vigilance and adequate defence preparations.

For purposes of security and defence India can be divided into four sectors, each with its own distinctive socio economic and politico-military problems. These four sectors are the Karakoram-Himalayan sector, the land-locked north-east, the sub-continental heartland with Pakistan on the west and Bangladesh on the east and the peninsular south with a coastline over 3,000 km. long. Let us examine the geo-political implications of each sector and the socio-economic and political problems they generate.

In the Karakoram — Himalayan sector the Indian armed forces helped by the Himalayas can successfully face the Chinese challenge. The Chinese are not likely to indulge in any 1962-type military aberration, firstly because India is prepared to meet the challenge and secondly because the Chinese must have realised the folly of invasion through treacherous and tortuous terrain which is open to military actions for extremely short durations during summer and autumn. Nonetheless, we must be vigilant and strengthen further our social and economic interaction with Nepal and Bhutan which have a key role to play in Indian defence of the Eastern Himalayas.

The land-locked north-east — including Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram and Tripura — with its distinctive ethnic character, is one of the most tender spots in the defence of India (Bandopadhyay, 1980). Its linkage with the rest of India is extremely weak. The disruption of India's transportation link with the north-east after the formation of East Pakistan — now Bangladesh — slowed down the process of its integration and assimilation with the rest of the country. The people of the entire region do not yet fully constitute a part of the national ethos.

We have not been able to accelerate the pace of their economic development despite potentialities. We have failed to close the gap in their social and cultural isolation from the rest of the country even after 35 years of Independence. We have failed to solve some of their basic problems such as scarcity of water, inadequate transport network, etc. Our emphasis on military as against socio-economic solutions to the problems of the region is rather reflective of a colonial attitude. The strong presence of security forces contributes to such a perception among the local people. Consequently, a feeling of distrust has been generated between them and the authorities. The defence of the north-east thus presents a delicate socio-economic politico-military problem and has to be dealt with tactfully. I would like to stress the need to speed up the process of the area's social, cultural and economic integration with the rest of the country by developing a powerful television network linked with Delhi, Calcutta and other State capitals wherever feasible and accelerate the process of economic development through a higher dose of investment and adequate development of social and economic infrastructure. The geo-political imperatives of the region demand all this without delay.

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In the defence of the north-east, the role of Bangladesh can be crucial. Prior to partition, the north-east was physically integrated with Calcutta and the rest of India through East Bengal which is now Bangladesh. An unfriendly or hostile Bangladesh can be dangerous to the defence of this sector. On the one hand, it can abet and encourage insurgents, and with the military aid of China and one of the super-powers can develop enough striking capability to pose a serious threat to the Siliguri neck, Calcutta and other major centres of production in the east and the north-east. The disruption of the Siliguri road and rail link with the north-east can be disastrous politically and from point of view of defence strategy.

The signals for war have always sparked from the western flank of the sub-continental heartland and still continue to threaten us from the same direction because of the massive military aid which the Americans provide to Pakistan. The military rulers of Pakistan will be committing *hara kiri* if they decide to trigger another war with India. They should have realised by now that each successive war has induced India to improve its striking power with a greater degree of sophistication. The Indo-Pak war did temporarily stifle the pace of India's economic progress, but Pakistan suffered most politically and economically. This eventually culminated in the loss of territory and the total surrender of Pakistan's armed forces in the erstwhile East Pakistan. The rulers of Pakistan ought to understand that excessive dependence on a borrowed arsenal is disastrous for the national economy. It kills the instinct for self-reliance and stultifies the entire process of national growth.

The Pakistanis should also realise that they have temporarily acquired geo-political relevance in the global strategy of defence of American interests, whereas on account of geographical contiguity and cultural links between India and Pakistan the geo-political significance of the two countries to each other is permanent, stable and inalienable. It is in the interests of India and Pakistan that they cultivate friendly relations with each other. It is a tragedy of the contemporary history of the sub-continent that despite mutuality of interests and geographical affinity, Pakistan and India have failed to cultivate a relationship of abiding friendship on the lines developed by Canada and the USA.

With the advance of the Russian forces in Afghanistan, the geo-political scenario has radically changed in Pakistan. There is now a growing realisation among Pakistani scholars that confrontation with India has always been counter-productive and in the present context of international politics is harmful to the national interests of Pakistan. Their perception of the security problem of Pakistan was expressed at a seminar on Pakistan and Regional Security held in Karachi in November 1980. Most of the scholars expressed the fear that even the US Rapid Deployment Force, however well equipped it may be, cannot prevent the Russians from moving into Pakistan if they so desire. Consequently, they echoed the view of Kissinger that "the continued advance of Russia in Central Asia is as certain as movement in the heaven. Russia will continue to move onwards ... till arrested by a barrier which she cannot remove or overstep". One scholar made the point that Russian control of Afghanistan has terminated her status as a buffer state and a direct zone of military contact has been established between Pakistan and Russia which they view as a serious threat to the security of Pakistan (Rizvi, 1980). It is interesting to note that they now consider Pakistan as the gateway to the security of India and stress that "if Pakistan falls nothing can stop the Russian lava from flowing in the direction of the Indian Ocean" — and have consequently come to realise that "confrontation with any neighbouring country is neither possible nor desirable" (Ahsan Chowdhry, 1980).

The Pakistanis may be slightly exaggerating the danger of Russian presence in Afghanistan, but we cannot ignore the Pakistani perception of the danger to the security of the sub-continent caused by the presence of Russian armed forces in Afghanistan.

Although the west coast of India up to Bombay is within striking range of the Pakistani Air Force, the peninsular sector with its long exposed coastline along the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal presents essentially problems of naval defence. The security and defence of the Indian coastline is of grave concern because it involves the protection of our foreign trade and other vital economic interests. During the last twenty years there has been a gradual shift of economic activity to the coastline and its vicinity which is reflected in the rapid urban development all along the coastal belt. In a 100 km belt along the western and the eastern coast of the peninsula, there are 299 small, medium and large urban settlements, and of these 212 are located either on the coastline or within a narrow belt of 50 km. During the decade 1971-81, the number of medium and large urban centres along the coastline has increased from 86 in 1971 to 112 in 1981. These settlements have grown at a rate faster than the average national urban growth rate of 3.6 per cent per annum. The clustering of large and small urban settlements along the coastal belt is best exemplified in the Kutch and Kathiawar region. The trend is likely to intensify with the increasing exploitation and use of oceanic resources and provision of tax incentive for the development of export-oriented enterprises. One can visualise that by the end of this century a substantial portion of India's economically active population would have gravitated to the coastline. In the light of all this, the coastal defence of India assumes great significance, and hence the need to have a powerful navy capable of protecting our economic interests (exploitation of oceanic resources within the 200-mile oceanic economic zone, foreign trade and other economic activities being pursued along the coastline).

The coastal defence of India is endangered by the presence of powerful US naval forces in the region. Although apparently Diego Garcia and the Rapid Deployment Force which the Americans have built up are meant to protect the interests of the industrialised West in the Gulf, their presence in the Indian Ocean is a grave security risk to India. If Pakistan wants us to appreciate that Russians in Afghanistan are as great a security risk to India as to Pakistan, she must be equally cognisant of the fact that the presence of American naval forces in the Indian Ocean is a security risk both to Pakistan and India.

Among the countries of the Indian Ocean region, India has the highest potential to emerge as a major economic and military force (Alam, 1975), and our emphasis should be on both if India has to defend herself against any attack on her oceanic lifeline and territorial integrity. The accent in our military preparation should be on a nuclear arsenal because that alone can act as a real deterrent and can guarantee our security. No nuclear power has the right to ask us to sign a nuclear non-proliferation treaty so long as it is not prepared to destroy its own nuclear arsenal and renounce preparation of nuclear weapons. We have to protect the frontiers of India and defend the territorial integrity of the country. In order to do so, we should avail of the best technology available including nuclear technology.

In view of the present shift of the line of tension between the two super-powers to South Asia and the Indian Ocean, it would be desirable to evolve a diplomacy of co-operation with neighbouring countries. The geo-political compulsions warrant that India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka should help each other in defence against any common external danger. Pakistan has already paid the price of dismemberment by ignoring these geo-political compulsions. She will pay far more heavily if she resorts to confrontation with India. The Americans cannot protect Pakistan from a Russian invasion if the USSR decides to launch one, but the entry of Russians into Pakistan will be against the national interests of India.

In view of these facts, the time has come for a joint regional security and mutual defence pact including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. This will usher in a new era and set in a new trend of mutual trust and cooperation among them. If South Asia can be established as an *arc of peace* as proposed by T.N. Kaul, it will constitute a landmark in the geopolitics of the region. If China also agrees to join this arc of peace and commits herself to cooperate in peace or war with the South Asian countries against the super-powers, that will perhaps be the greatest commitment to peace and deterrent to war.

To meet external aggression we must be strong and united on the domestic front where unfortunately the situation is far from reassuring. There has been a total erosion of our value system. The politics of principles and of policies of the Gandhi-Nehru era has been replaced by the politics of convenience, opportunism and black money. Because of the control of purse on politics, corruption is rampant in every aspect of our political, social and economic life. Regionalism, communalism and divisive tendencies are undermining the national ethos. There is hardly any respect for law and order. The bureaucracy is shaken and has lost self-confidence. The universities are in shambles and the intellectuals servile. The youth who symbolise the hope for tomorrow lack direction and idealism and are completely demoralised. Our politicians lack a sense of service and courage of conviction. These symptoms of decay in our national system call for radical preventive and curative measure; otherwise the spreading internal chaos has tremendous potentiality to endanger our security.☐

Depreciation during Inflation

R.K. SACHDEVA

INDUSTRIES use capital assets like plant and machinery in the process of production. These capital assets are not consumed during a single financial year and generally last a number of years. In determining the cost of production or the profit earned by the industrial organisation during a financial year, the cost of such capital assets cannot be debited to production in a single financial year. Generally accepted principles of accounting require that this cost be spread over the expected useful life of the asset in an equitable manner. International Accounting Standard on depreciation accounting defines depreciation as "the allocation of the depreciable amount of an asset over its estimated useful life".

The Indian Income-tax Act provides for depreciation to be debited to cost of production on the basis of a fixed percentage of "written down value" of the asset. The written down value is the balance shown in the books of the company on the basis of the original cost of the asset at the time of purchase less depreciation so far charged from year to year. The original purchase price is the only relevant amount for purposes of depreciation as per income-tax rules. The tax rules do not provide for increase in the price of the asset due to general inflation in the economy.

The country has witnessed unprecedentedly high rates of inflation during the last decade in general and during the financial years 1979-80 and 1980-81 in particular. Arguments have been put forward from amongst the business community that the depreciation provided for in the Income-tax Act is not adequate during periods of inflation, since the cost of assets keeps rising in nominal terms and the replacement cost of the asset is much higher while the tax rules allow for depreciation on the basis of historical cost which is no more relevant. Demands have been made, consistently, to amend the income-tax rules and provide for depreciation on the basis of replacement cost instead of historical purchase cost. In case this is not allowed, at least accelerated depreciation should be permitted to debit the cost of the asset in a short period of 2-3 years, the amount of depreciation claimed in each financial year to be left to the discretion of the company.

Demand for depreciation on the basis of replacement cost or accelerated depreciation, though they may appear to be logical, are at best partial and at worst motivated. They are not based on the complete picture of the impact of inflation. It is common knowledge that companies take loans against the cost of capital assets from various financial institutions and the general public in the form of debentures etc. Most of the capital assets of the companies are maintained through borrowed capital from these sources at fixed rates of interest. The impact of inflation on the nominal cost of assets cannot be viewed in isolation from the corresponding effect on the loan or debt associated with the asset.

Let us examine the combined effect of inflation on the depreciation of the asset and the corresponding loan associated with the asset. The loan is obtained by the company at a certain rate of interest. In periods of expected inflation, market rates of interest go up to offset the erosion in the real value of the outstanding loan caused by inflation. For example, if the rate of interest during the period of static prices is 5 per cent, it may go up to 15 per cent in response to an expected rate of inflation of 10 per cent per annum during the repayment period of the loan in order to neutralise the effect of 10 per cent reduction in the real value of the outstanding loan every year. While the expected rate of inflation

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may be reflected in the rate of interest on loan, the actual rate of inflation may turn out to be different from the expected rate. The actual rate of inflation during the repayment period of the loan can be conceived as consisting of two components, the first being the expected rate of inflation at the time of contracting the loan which is incorporated in the rate of interest for the loan, and the second, the unexpected rate of inflation not reflected in the interest rate.

In the following paragraphs we analyse the cash flow for a company using asset purchased for Rs 1,00,000 against borrowed capital in three different cases: (1) when there is no inflation; (2) when the actual rate of inflation is the same as the expected rate of inflation at 10 per cent; and (3) when the actual rate of inflation is much higher at 20 per cent against an expectation of 10 per cent. The rate of interest is assumed as 5 per cent with no inflation and 15 per cent with an expectation of 10 per cent inflation. The rate of depreciation on written down value prescribed in the income-tax rules is assumed as 15 per cent which is the usual rate for plant and machinery. The loan is repayable in ten equal annual instalments.

The interest payable at the rate of 15 per cent is in nominal terms. The real value of interest payable will diminish every year due to the erosion in the purchasing value of the rupee as a consequence of inflation. This interest also includes an amortisation component of the loan since the real value of the outstanding loan also diminishes with the fall in the purchasing value of the rupee. However, the imcome-tax rules provide for debiting the entire interest in nominal terms to cost of production.

So, the companies actually claim three components of cost as expenses: (1) the real interest paid on loan; (2) the amortisation component of loan paid as a part of nominal interest; and (3) depreciation. The first two components are parts of nominal interest paid and claimed as expenses, and the third is claimed as depreciation.

Table 1 shows the cash flow and the real value of total expenses claimed by the company during a period of no inflation. Table 2 shows the corresponding analysis for an actual and expected inflation of 10 per cent. Table 3 shows the corresponding position with an actual inflation rate of 20 per cent against an anticipated inflation of 10 per cent.

Table 1

End of Year	*Nominal Interest* (*1*)	*Real Interest* (*2*)	*Amortisation of loan* (*3*)	*Depreciation* (*4*)	*Total expenses claimed* (*5*)=(*1*)+(*4*)
1	5,000	5,000	10,000	15,000	20,000
2	4,500	4,500	10,000	12,750	17,750
3	4,000	4,000	10,000	10,837	15,837
4	3,500	3,500	10,000	9,212	14,212
5	3,000	3,000	10,000	7,830	12,830
6	2,500	2,500	10,000	6,655	11,655
7	2,000	2,000	10,000	5,657	10,657
8	1,500	1,500	10,000	4,808	9,808
9	1,000	1,000	10,000	4,087	9,087
10	500	500	10,000	3,474	8,474
Total	27,500	27,500	1,00,000	80,310	1,30,310

The above analysis shows that during the period of no inflation (Table 1), the interest liability during ten years is Rs 27,500 and the total depreciation claimed works out to Rs 80,210. So, a total of Rs 1,17,710 is claimed as expenses during the period of ten years. About 80.2 per cent of the cost of the asset has been debited to expenses during the first ten years life of the asset.

During the period of 10 per cent inflation and 15 per cent rate of interest (Table 2), the nominal interest paid works out to Rs 82,500. But this rate of interest was determined with an expectation of inflation at the rate of 10 per cent. So, it also includes a component of amortisation of loan. The nominal amortisation during this period of ten years is Rs 1,00,000 but the real value (reduced to constant prices) of this amortisation after accounting for the loss in the value of the rupee at the time of amortisation, works out to Rs 61,445. The balance of Rs 38,555 is the amortisation component in interest. The real value of nominal interest paid is only Rs. 57,829. Excluding the amortisation component from this interest, the real interest paid is only Rs 19,274. The company has claimed a nominal interest of Rs 82,500 and nominal depreciation of Rs 80,210, making a total of Rs 1,62,710 as expenses. The real value of these total expenses claimed works out to Rs 1,13,217. Out of these total expenses claimed, the real value of the interest is only Rs 19,274. The balance of Rs 93,943 is the real depreciation claimed by the company.

Against an allocation of about 80.2 per cent of the cost of the asset during the period of no inflation, in the first ten years, during the period of 10 per cent inflation the company has allocated a real depreciation of about 93.9 per cent of the cost of the asset in the same duration. So, in fact, inflation has helped the company in recovering the cost of the asset faster by accelerating depreciation allocation.

The situation becomes far more favourable if the actual inflation happens to be 20 per cent against an expectation of 10 per cent (Table 3). During this period, the real interest paid by the company works out to be negative (— 14,519). This appears obvious as the rate of interest is less than the rate of inflation. Secondly, the real depreciation claimed by the company works out to Rs 99,535 or 99.5 per cent of purchase cost. Higher rate of inflation has further accelerated the allocation of real depreciation.

In conclusion, inflation helps the business organisations maintaining physical assets in two significant ways. First, the real value of their interest liability goes down and may even become negative. Even with a point-for-point increase in the rate of interest in response to expected inflation, the real interest liability of the company went down from Rs 27,500 to Rs 19,274. This shows that a single percentage point increase in the rate of interest does not compensate fully for a single percentage point increase in the rate of inflation. In other words, the rate of interest must rise faster than the

Table 2

End of year	Price index (1)	Nominal interest (2)	Real value of nominal interest (3)=(2)/(1)	Nominal Amortisation (4)	Real value of nominal Amortisation (5)=(4)/(1)	Amortisation component in interest (6)=(4)−(5)	Real interest (7)= (3)−(6)	Nominal depreciation (8)	Total expenses claimed (9)= (2)+(8)	Real value of total expenses claimed (10)= (9)/(1)	Real depreciation claimed (11)= (10)−(7)
1	1.100	15,000	13,636	10,000	9,091	909	12,727	15,000	30,000	27,273	14,546
2	1.210	13,500	11,156	10,000	8,264	1,736	9,420	12,750	26,250	21,693	12,273
3	1.331	12,000	9,016	10,000	7,513	2,487	6,529	10,837	22,837	17,157	10,628
4	1.464	10,500	7,171	10,000	6,830	3,170	4,001	9,212	19,712	13,463	9,462
5	1.611	9,000	5,588	10,000	6,209	3,791	1,797	7,830	16,830	10,450	8,653
6	1.771	7,500	4,234	10,000	5,645	4,355	−121	6,555	14,055	7,934	8,055
7	1.949	6,000	3,079	10,000	5,132	4,868	−1,789	5,657	11,657	5,982	7,771
8	2.144	4,500	2,099	10,000	4,665	5,335	−3,236	4,808	9,308	4,342	7,578
9	2.358	3,000	1,272	10,000	4,241	5,759	−4,487	4,087	7,087	3,006	7,493
10	2.594	1,500	578	10,000	3,855	6,145	−5,567	3,474	4,974	1,917	7,484
		82,500	57,829	1,00,000	61,445	38,855	19,274	80,210	1,62,710	1,13,217	93,943

Table 3

End of year	Price index (1)	Nominal interest (2)	Real value of nominal interest (3)=(2)/(1)	Nominal amortisation (4)	Real value of nominal amortisation (5)=(4)/(1)	Amortisation component in interest (6)=(4)−(5)	Real interest (7=) (3)−(6)	Nominal depreciation (8)	Total expenses claimed. (9)= (2)+(8)	Real value of total expenses claimed (10)= (9)/(1)	Real depreciation claimed (11)= (10)−(7)
1	1.200	15,000	12,500	1,0000	8,333	1,667	10,833	15,000	30,000	25,000	14,167
2	1.440	13,500	9,374	10,000	6,944	3,056	6,318	12,750	25,250	18,228	11,910
3	1.728	12,000	6,944	10,000	5,787	4,213	2,731	10,837	22,837	13,216	10,485
4	2.073	10,500	5,064	10,000	4,823	5,177	− 113	9,212	19,712	9,507	9,620
5	2.488	9,000	3,617	10,000	4,019	5,981	−2,364	7,830	16,830	6,764	9,128
6	2.986	7,500	2,512	10,000	3,349	6,651	−4,139	6,555	14,055	4,707	8,846
7	3.583	6,000	1,675	10,000	2,791	7,209	−5,534	5,657	11,657	3,253	8,787
8	4.299	4,500	1,047	10,000	2,326	7,674	−6,627	4,808	9,308	2,165	8,792
9	5.160	3,000	581	10,000	1,938	8,062	−7,481	4,087	7,087	1,373	8,854
10	6.192	1,500	242	10,000	1,615	8,385	−8,143	3,474	4,974	803	8,946
		82,500	43,556	1,00,000	41,925	58,075	−14,519	80,210	1,62,710	85,016	99,535

rate of inflation in order to fully neutralise its effect.

Secondly, inflation has an implicit effect of accelerating the allocation of depreciation for assets. The allocation at the rate of 15 per cent of written down value in the first ten years of life of the asset works out to 80.2 per cent with no inflation but goes up to 93.9 per cent during 10 per cent rate of inflation and further to 99.5 per cent during 20 per cent rate of inflation.

There is, therefore, no justification for providing for depreciation either on replacement value basis or acclerated rate of depreciation. Business organisations are more than compensated for the loss in the value of nominal depreciation claimed, by the gain due to the reduction in real value of their interest and outstanding loan liabilities. The real sufferers in a situation of inflation are the creditors who lend their savings to business organisations either directly or indirectly through financial institutions, for the maintenance of their assets, at fixed rates of interest. There is, however, a clear justification for linking the rate of interest with inflation, so that with every percentage point increase in the rate of inflation there is more than single percentage point increase in the rate of interest.☐

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Major Features of National Scene

Important features of the national scene in India today were highlighted at a round table conference on "Elections and Direction of Development — Social, Economic and Political" held under the auspices of the Krishna Menon Society in New Delhi on June 5, 1982. Following is the official summing up of the highlights prepared by the sponsors:

SOCIAL, economic and political development during the period of thirty-five years after Independence has made profound changes in the social structures of our society in every State. Various segments the working class, the peasantry and the middle classes have developed their own limited sectional ambitions. No basis has yet been provided to unite them all on the basis of a national consensus to sustain a united national effort.

The process of fragmentation became visible in 1965 and in 1967 the Congress lost power in nine States which led to coalitions of discordant Opposition parties assuming power in those States. Ever since then, opportunistic and unprincipled alignments have been visible in various forms. In 1977 the Congress was ousted from power at the Centre and the Janata Party assumed power as a coalition of several pressure groups.

The problems, however, have remained unsolved. Fundamental solutions are needed to sustain development in the direction of the declared goals. Populism in this regard has its inherent limitations.

The value framework is showing signs of breaking down under the impact of new pressures developed in the course of development hitherto followed.

Money has become a necessary input in creating legitimacy for power to rule, and no political formation was an exception to the use of money for claiming its share of power. Ideological commitments have been systematically eroded and no longer govern the actions of our leaders. Without re-creating the moral commitment for a just order, the democratic fight against growing inequalities would become increasingly more difficult and the democratic process itself will be in peril.

It is not an accident that large areas of India seem to be condemned to endemic isolation from the mainstream of national life. The developments in Assam and the North-east, in Tamilnadu and now in Punjab and in Kashmir, are a pointer in this direction. These areas are systematically sought to be isolated from the national mainstream. No serious efforts are being made to bring them back to the national mainstream on the basis of accepted common politics based on Indian patriotism. This neglect has put the integrity and unity of India in peril and is being exploited by the enemies of the country.

The rise of Hindu, Sikh and Muslim communalism has assumed dangerous dimensions. Communalism of one community sustains and feeds the communalism of the other. The situation in Punjab and in Kashmir is deteriorating and will continue to aggravate the problems of communalism throughout the country.

Casteism is no less dangerous. It has assumed even more dangerous proportions as can be witnessed in Haryana, UP and Bihar. Every political party finds it necessary to compromise with casteism in one form or another.

Divisive forces of communalism and casteism are being used to disintegrate this nation and dissipate our national will.

Various political parties have developed a vested interest in communalism and casteism. Even secular parties no longer feel inhibited against making common cause with rank communalists and casteists. Their claims to "save democracy" or to "fight authoritarianism" sound hollow. Such facile alternatives prove sterile. They provide no answers to the critical problems of the people. These trends distort the course of development.

However, recent experience in Rajasthan has shown that Hindu communalism can be defeated in its strongholds where the leadership fights against a backward feudal order. But communalism could not be defeated in Madhya Pradesh where the ruling party compromised with the forces of feudalism and accepted their leadership. The same experience repeats itself in Haryana and in Himachal Pradesh. No serious attempt was made there to fight communalism or casteism. Authentic leaders of communal and caste forces have retained their strongholds in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh.

In Kerala the Left Front did not lose except that it lost its caste and communal allies. The Congress(I) and the Congress(S) together had not won except with the aid of communal and casteist forces. Neither the Congress nor the Left had made any serious attempt to fight the communal and casteist forces in Kerala. The result is that no secular democratic party or force can think today of ruling Kerala without compromising with Hindu, Muslim and Christian communalism at various levels. If this trend is not reversed, stability in Kerala will continue to elude us.

In West Bengal the Left Front has maintained its massive majority, in the rural areas in particular, possibly because they had carried forward the distribution of land above the ceiling. The loss of the Left in the working class areas and in towns requires serious analysis.

Questions were asked: Had not the Left pursued policies in the past which had isolated it from the national mainstream? How was it that the workers who were with the Left in the trade unions, did not vote for the Left at the elections?

The urban middle classes felt frustrated because there was visible lack of discipline in every walk of life. That possibly explained the alienation of the urban middle classes from the Left.

People expected Left Governments to give a different account of themselves. But the behaviour patterns of the Left Governments in West Bengal or in Kerala left much to be desired.

In Kerala it was a mistake to treat the headload workers in the same way as if they were organised workers in factories. The emphasis on their exaggerated demands created resentment in the trading community and the inconvenience caused to the urban middle classes by the paralysis of trade had led to the alienation of the middle classes. In answer it was said that despite all this the Left Front had maintained its support in Kerala because it had lost only by a lakh of votes although its major alliance partners had gone over to the other side.

The opinion was that India had developed considerable potential in agriculture and in industry which, to be realised, requires structural changes, including a reorganisation of the present agrarian set-up. While India has developed a considerable degree of self-reliance, in order to deepen it further, major improvements will be called for, including sustained productivity, growth in key sectors of industry under public ownership to offset shocks and pressures of a fluctuating international economy. The steep rise in price of oil, its effect on the balance of payments is sufficiently indicative of the need for improvements in this regard.

In assessing future prospects for growth with equity, important changes of an economic and demographic nature must be fully taken account of. This includes labour force explosion, large growth of unproductive labour, non-functional urbanisation and several other "demographic rationalities". These developments have to affect the growth of social compensation of the working class and have posed new problems for mobilising working class consciousness as a national force for sustained progressive development. The patriotic forces can no longer ignore these developments.

For this we require alternative politics and not merely an alternative set of alignments and alliances. Equally essential is the need to build political parties with deeper roots in the masses with dedicated cadres to educate the masses politically about the national commitments to build a strong, self-reliant India based on justice and equality for all.

All political parties without exception have singularly neglected the need to develop art and culture as a part of our united secular rich culture and heritage. This neglect is intolerable and must be remedied fast if divisive forces are to be fought and defeated.

The results of elections must be viewed in the background of growing mass awakening, generated in the last thirty-five years of freedom, with roused hopes which can be used as a powerful force to give a new direction to our development. Meaningful politics must be based on deep awareness of this positive possibility to create a new idealism based on patriotism.

Crisis in the developed countries of the West was of a profound nature as is clear from a close study of the situation in USA, Britain, West Germany and Japan. India being linked with these countries has to bear the brunt of their crises which are deep and unprecedented in this atomic and space age of Science and Technology.

India must develop new initiatives to create the climate for collective self-reliance to establish a New International Economic Order and to meet the new dangers of nuclear war and intensifying threats to our own freedom.

The intellectuals must provide the patriotic answers to national challenges. Leaders of all secular democratic progressive parties must reach the masses to create principled understanding of the problems and their solutions.

In the end it was felt that respect for constitutional institutions and parliamentary democracy must be sustained and reinforced. Democracy is the only way of life which can sustain the unity of India and consolidate our freedom. For this we must reinforce the constitutional order and our democratic institutions — Parliament, the Executive and the Judiciary — in their respective spheres functioning without one overstepping or interfering with the other. To sustain the constitutional order we must maintain a social and economic order to fight against inequalities and injustice. No social and economic order can last if not sustained by a moral order. Corruption and violence must not be allowed to become decisive to capture power. That is the surest way of destabilisation of this nation.

Dangers of war and conspiracies of destabilisation will continue to be a threat to the direction of development in India in all spheres for a long time to come. This awareness must control our responses.

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P.N. Haksar, in his introductory presidential remarks, stressed the urgency of subjecting our contemporary social, political, cultural and economic life to the discipline of strict analysis. Instead, our political life is dominated by disembodied words. One such word is "authoritarianism." Instead of tracing the roots of authoritarian and anti-democratic tendencies in our system to social, economic and cultural factors of society, we are content to use the word as if its meaning and significance was clear. This has a baneful effect as it diverts our minds away from a critical examination of the programmes and policies of parties and their social and economic composition. Instead we fix our gaze on individuals. The search for alternative programmes and policies, in these circumstances, results in search for individuals and we then try to find out the merits and demerits of individuals. This approach inevitably produces all kinds of strange alliances in the area of electoral politics.

We need to restore a vision of India, Whatever the details of that vision might be, certain things are quite clear. We have to have a total commitment to fight all manifestations of communalism; we have to have an uncompromising position of fight against casteism. Since the vision also includes struggle for equality, there cannot be any compromise with social and economic injustices and growth of inequalities.

During the last 35 years, vast and varied developments have taken place in India. The main beneficiaries of these developments, namely, the rich farmers who have established their hegemony in the rural areas as well as some of the industrial houses, contractors, big traders and speculators who finance in a big way the electoral processes, constitute a power group with wide and varied connections with political parties occupying the central part of the political spectrum. Middle classes are in a squeeze. The growing army of urban unemployed are easy recruits for anti-social outbursts. In times of crisis, this combination of economic interests feeds authoritarianism of one sort or another. The process of preserving democracy would therefore require the broadening and widening of the social base, including in it the small and marginal farmers, the landless labourers, the share-croppers and small and medium scale industrialists as well as alienated middle classes and those sections of industrialists who might still have a vision of growth of capitalism within the country on a self-reliant and independent basis. The unorganised workers in our sweatshops need to be looked after. The entire scientific, technological and managerial community needs to be mobilised.

In the days of freedom struggle, there was a firm commitment against the feudal order — talukdars, jagirdars, princes, zamindars, etc. However, in the post-Independence era, this commitment was not systematically translated into policies and programmes in our social, cultural and economic and educational systems. The result was that even the abolition of zamindari system was thwarted and within the womb of this society, seeds of Green Revolution and Industrialism were sown. The beneficiaries of Green Revolution do not display any commitment to fighting inequality, nor, indeed, do they show any commitment to transformation of our society even in the sense that the Japanese feudal lords had a commitment to going through industrialisation of their country within the framework of capitalism for which they imposed taxes on their own land holdings and promoted with vigour universal education.

In the short and medium term, the issue before India was not a simple and clear-cut choice between socialism and capitalism. It was rather to generate new forces within our society who will have commitment to truly independent and self-reliant growth, through a rather more subtle and effective understanding of the role of our scientists and technologists who are, by and large, worshipped as icons rather than made active participants in changing our society.

India thus needs a new politics in which the participants will become the bearers of the values of honesty, integrity and social, economic and cultural change. The large number of our intelligentsia could help in creating an atmosphere in which the new value system, ideological commitments would acquire intellectual and moral dominance over the present value system which is corroding our society from within.

In the course of summing up the discussions, Haksar said he was optimistic about the future. The world outside India was passing through a period of profound historical changes and transition. The deep crisis in the world capitalistic system was becoming increasingly insoluble. The socialist system too had its problems, However, they were of a different sort. And one could see there the possibilities of internal reform and growth.

He endorsed strongly the ideas thrown up in the course of discussions about alternative politics as well as for finding new ways of conducting electoral politics which would free it, to the maximum extent possible, from the corrosive influence of money. It this context, it was worth investigating how elections could be made to centre around parties and their programmes rather than individuals.

Alternative politics would mean a very conscious revival of our nationalism and patriotism. It would mean our providing answers to specific and concrete questions as they arise. It would mean offering reasoned criticism of opportunistic, unprincipled alignments and realignments which take place. It would also mean a new intellectual moral leadership for India's resurgence. Considering that we have a country which is naturally endowed with natural and human resources we need to affirm confidently our faith in the future of our country.

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The Krishna Menon Society had invited eminent historians, social scientists and economists, judges and lawyers, leading journalists and political leaders representing a cross-section of public opinion to discuss the recently held elections in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and West Bengal and in that context to analyse the national scene in order to understand the direction of development — social, economic and political.

Among the participants were Professor Sukhamoy Chakravarty, Dr P.C. Joshi, Dr Bipan Chandra, Professor Nirmal Singh, Professor Rashiduddin Khan, Professor M.S. Iyenger, Mohan Upreti, Professor K. Seshadri, Dr Sulekh Gupta, D.R. Goyal, Subrata Banerjee, Bed Brat Barua, Subhadra Joshi, Krishan Kant, Yogendra Sharma, Mohit Sen. A number of other leading personalities were present. Messages were received from E.M.S. Namboodiripad, F.S. Nariman, and Inder Gujral, R.K. Garg, General Secretary of the Society outlined the [illegible]

Key Aspects of Housing in India

B.K. MUKHOPADHYAY

THE inordinate increase in population has made the housing problem more acute. This problem of housing is universal. Even the most advanced nations face it.

Millions of people in Asia live in slums squatter settlements. Bangkok alone was short of about 1,80,000 housing units in 1981 — an increase of 80,000 over 1974. In Iran, India, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam between 20 and 25 per cent of the urban population live in slums and squatter settlements.

The housing problem in India has assumed alarming magnitude and complexity. Housing shortage on the eve of the Fifth Plan was placed at 11.8 million units in rural areas and 3.8 million units in urban areas. In India, at present, there are about 83.3 million families without proper housing.

Uncontrolled urban growth, overcrowding, creation of slums and squatter settlements have been caused by significant disparities in living standards as well as in opportunities between one region and another and between urban and rural areas. The proportion of urban population to total population rose from about 10 per cent in 1901 to 17 per cent in 1951 and 19.0 per cent in 1961 and 19.9 per cent in 1971, with little increase in per capita income. Only a conscious national policy can arrest the over-urbanisation which India is facing today. In this context the problem of financing of urban housing construction deserves the special attention of our planners.

Investment in housing activity is found to have a significant impact on income and employment through multiplier linkages. Direct increments in income and employment take place due to construction activity. A World Bank report on Colombia found that the income multiplier for housing construction is about two and that about seven additional jobs are created for every US $ 10,000 spent on the construction of dwelling units. This rate of generation of employment was higher than that for manufacturing and close to that for the economy as a whole. For Korea the income multiplier was estimated at two and about 14 additional jobs are created for every US $ 10,000 investment in construction. For Pakistan, India, Mexico an almost similar result has been found.

Forward linkage effects are felt in the subsequent use of the house as input in commercial, service or other productive activities that generate income and employment. The other form of indirect effect refers to backward linkages. The backward linkages induce increased production of new construction materials as well as provide a market for second-hand materials. Supply or transport activities also get intensified. Increased employment is the natural outcome since increase in demand for industrial construction, production and transport services would mean an upward thrust to labour-intensive activities. Well-planned housing can lead to increasing national productivity, economising the use of urban space and minimising the cost of urban infrastructure.

The era of private investment in housing can be said to be almost over. Housing activity has now to rely heavily on public funds, financial institutions and the Government. The prominent institutions engaged in providing finance for housing are: LIC, HUDCO, State Housing Boards, Apex Housing Co-operatives and commercial banks.

The LIC is the only institution in India that has a large as well as a systematic frame in providing housing finance. It incorporates a special form of savings with little withdrawal possibility as well as known expenditures. For mortgage investment this is particularly suited. The LIC advances funds to various institutions for housing purposes. Its total contribution to housing development amounted to Rs 728.56 crores as on March 31, 1977. It is also operating an 'own your home scheme' with loans amounting to Rs 53.33 crores. There has also occurred a continuous increase in percentage of outstanding investment in housing to total outstanding investment of LIC. It is also pertinent to note that the LIC's socially-oriented investment increased continuously along with its other investment. It is also the institution which itself undertakes housing programmes on a mass scale as well as on an all-India basis.

The HUDCO is the chief source of finance for State Housing Boards and has had a prominent role in the field of promoting low-cost housing. It has been in existence mainly to coordinate efforts and offer technical advice regarding low-cost housing and also to channel Central assistance to State housing agencies. Thus, HUDCO, established in 1970 with a revolving fund of Rs 200 crores to accelerate the pace of housing and urban development programme, does not grant loans to individuals but provides finance to State Governments, local bodies and Housing Boards. During 1976-77 the total resources available amounted to Rs 47.40 crores, while total disbursement was placed at Rs 40.08 crores. HUDCO financed the 'sites and services' project by SIDCO in Bombay, and in Madhya Pradesh, where a plot, roof and supporting pillars are provided at a cost of Rs 2,500.

Functions of State Housing Boards (SHB) are like those of large construction agencies rather than financing agencies. SHBs rely on loans and grants from the State Governments concerned, issue of public debentures, loans from HUDCO, LIC and other sources, for financing capital expenditure. Most of the SHBs are found to be in financial crisis. They are also facing difficulty in attracting people from lower income bracket due mainly to increase in costs of construction, land and borrowed capital.

Apex housing co-operatives may enable the common man to have a dwelling of his own. These co-operatives are mainly financed by the LIC. They are not permitted to float debentures or accept deposits from the public. The co-operatives have a two-tier structure — the State-level society and primary societies. The working capital of the apex housing finance co-operatives, during 1960-61 to 1972-73, increased from Rs. 4 crores to Rs. 155 crores. The major part (Rs. 130 crores) of this was obtained through borrowings. Loans to primary societies outstanding with the apex societies increased from Rs. 3 crores in 1960-61 to Rs 143 crores in 1972-73.

Commercial banks also provide loans for housing. But loans for housing form less than 1 per cent of total bank credit in the country. The total financial assistance outstanding, both direct and indirect, for residential house construction by them can be placed at more than Rs 100 crores. With a view to attracting more deposits, loans for housing construction are offered by some banks under specific-saving schemes like Cumulative Deposit Housing Scheme of 5 to 10 years. Certain difficulties stand in the way of bank advances. Firstly, the many difficulties and greater risks in recovering loans did not encourage banks to advance money or mortgage on real estate in general. Secondly, granting of loans was considered a function of institutions specialising in housing finance, namely HUDCO, LIC, etc. Finally, legal technicalities (like title, valuation, etc.) in the matter of accepting immovable property as security, in the case of realising the amount from defaulters, etc., discourage commercial banks.

The Housing Development Finance Corporation Ltd. (HDFC) was promoted by the ICICI. The primary emphasis is on providing houses for middle and low-income groups and for industrial and rural workers. It has offered a facility which is completely new in India. It helps individuals and institutions (for their employees) to save for the provision of a house. This aids in the availability of funds rather than in respect of price. Unlike other existing institutions, the HDFC provides housing finance to individuals, corporations, co-operative societies and financial institutions, which wish to construct or buy accommodation.

There are also private house-building finance companies in India. A number of private limited companies are undertaking construction of residential buildings in cities for ultimate sale of flats on ownership basis. Among the construction companies, hardly a few public limited companies undertake residence construction. The majority of them are engaged in non-residential projects like construction of factories, commercial buildings, dams, etc.

As for expenditure on dwellings by Housing Boards, an interesting analysis was done by Samuel Paul. It was found that about 85 per cent of the expenditure had been for the benefit of the income group Rs 610-1,500 (per month), 8 per cent for the Rs 351-600 income group and only 7 per cent for the poorest section.

Investment in housing development occupies a low priority in India's Five-year Plans. The period 1970-71 to 1973-74 registered a decline of investment in urban housing.

The First Plan allotted Rs 38.5 crores for industrial housing. A programme of construction of 79,679 units was approved. The Second Plan allocated Rs 120 crores for housing programmes in the States. The Ministries of Works, Housing and Supply, Rehabilitation, Railways, Defence, Labour and the Central PWD took up housing programmes during this period. About 1.2 million dwelling unites were constructed by the public authorities, whereas private construction provided about a million units. During the Third Plan 9,00,000 homes were constructed under various industrial housing schemes and construction programmes of the Ministries, compared to 5,00,000 during the Second Plan.

Net investment on private building construction in the First Plan period was about Rs 900 crores. A total of Rs 1000 crores was invested during the Second Plan, while Rs 2,410 crores was invested during the Fourth Plan period.

Public sector investment in housing is about 3 per cent of total investment. Only 1 per cent of total outlay was on housing, urban and regional development, as against 1.7 per cent in the Fifth Plan. The actual expenditure during the Fourth Plan was 189.48 crores, compared to a Fifth Plan outlny of Rs 580.16 crores (Rs 1,030 crores of Central Government departmental financing for houses is included).

In the Fifth Plan about 7 million landless labourers were provided with housing sites, but no assistance was provided for building on these sites. In the Sixth Plan about 8 million landless workers are expected to benefit from a scheme for providing developed plots, a drinking water source for every 30 houses, sanitation and some assistance for materials. The scheme envisages all the manual work being contributed by the beneficiaries. The outlay for housing, urban development and works, which was placed at Rs 1,189 crores for the Fifth Plan, is Rs 2,540 crores for the Sixth Plan. In urban housing, the slum improvement programme will benefit about 13 million slum dwellers, leaving about 18 million to be covered in the next Plan.

An RBI study on financing of house construction in India finds that the share of housing in total gross capital formation increased to 27.2 per cent in 1968-69 from 15.9 per cent in 1960-61. As a percentage of national income it almost doubled from 2.9 to 5 per cent. This is found to have been mainly due to substantial growth in investment in urban housing in the private sector during this period. The share of housing in total gross capital formation came down to 11.8 per cent in 1973-74 (a decline by 2.1 per cent with respect to share in national income). Capital formation in urban housing declined from the peak level of Rs 1,185 crores in 1969-70 to Rs 549 crores in 1973-74, in absolute terms.

In some States the State Governments, in collaboration with commercial banks, operate housing finance schemes. In such a case individuals who keep a fixed deposit account for a stipulated period are given three times the amount saved to build houses. The loan is given through State housing boards. Commercial banks also subscribe to debentures issued by SHB and HUDCO.

The RBI has issued guidelines to commercial banks for financing housing schemes meant for the economically weaker sections, like: rural housing schemess, housing and hostels for SC/ST, slum clearance schemes, family planning clinics, rural health centres covered under public health programmes as well as urban housing schemes for low income groups. Bank credit will cover up to 40 per cent of the total cost of the housing scheme if arranged through a public body. It may be provided by way of direct term assistance and/or subscription to debentures/bonds, guaranteed by the Government. In case of direct loans, the credit component will be 80 per cent of the total cost of each tenement or house. The rate of interest charged is 10 to 11 per cent, excepting for schemes covered under differential rate of interest.

Organising research into practicable schemes of cheaper ways of building will go a long way towards meeting needs. The Central Building Research Institute is among institutions dedicated to this service. One of the research findings is that for low-cost housing under certain soil conditions the scope for cost reduction lies in foundation work. The National Building Organisation has suggested reduction of steel consumption in building construction. The use of deformed bars, tubular structures, light-gauge structural sections and substitute materials like reinforced cement concrete and timber. The organisation has also brought out a number of designs which, if adopted, will reduce total cost.

The efforts are mainly directed towards reducing the cost of house construction. It has been found that the cost of roofing can be reduced by the use of asphaltic corrugated sheets and cement pulp roofing sheets. The use of plastic and fittings instead of GI pipes and fittings will add to savings in internal and external plumbing and services. Recently, the corrugated paper sheet has been tested and found to be ideal inexpensive material. It can be used for roofing or even for walls. It's life-span is five years and it can be easily replaced. Moreover, it costs a third of the price asbestos sheets and a quarter of the commonly used RCC slabs.

Housing planning is to be viewed from the regional perspective. The housing problem in metropolitan areas will be eased if various agencies take up housing programmes in areas around these urban concentrations. This calls for easy and effective transportation for working people.

The Banking Commission Report, published in 1972, noted that "the most important lacuna in the existing state of affairs is that there are no countrywide institutions which combine regular saving schemes with provision for housing finance in adequate amounts and on reasonable terms." The Banking Commission also felt that "with the limited financial and personnel resources in India, specialised institutions may be set up only if there is a clearly identified credit gap, which, for some reason or the other, cannot be filled by existing institutions."

The study group on non-banking financial intermediaries recognised clearly the need for creation of a specialised institution to encourage savings and provide housing loans on reasonable terms. The report submitted by this study group (1971) noted that 'whereas there is a large unsatisfied demand for housing credit, the supply of institutional credit is likely to be inadequate unless special steps are taken to economise the flow of savings to this sector.' Further, the environment should be made more conducive to the grant of more housing finance through the development of a secondary mortgage market, the availability of insurance cover for risks involved, and so on. It suggested even an institutional structure akin to the saving and loans associations of the USA. Narasimham advocated the setting up of a specialised department for housing within the commercial banks with necessary arrangements with other existing housing finance institutions. Some fiscal incentives may be given to housing investment or investment in bonds or debentures issued to the public from sources like HDFC, etc. Next, auction-oriented housing programme and plot disbursement programme will prevent landlords from exploiting tenants. The market value of land and the rent of private houses will be brought down if plots are made available to individuals.

The World Bank in its sector policy paper on housing (1975) stressed the need for framing housing policies in accordance with the general income level and the ability to pay. It has observed that 'many housing programmes have met with little success because they have attempted to meet housing needs rather than effective demand for housing.' In contrast to estimations of need according to arbitrary standards, effective demand is derived from a household's ability and willingness to pay for housing.

Side by side, mass-scale housing should lay emphasis on certain vital aspects like space in layout, better use of area, durability, economic building materials, etc. In the context of low-cost housing, the importance of building materials like fly-ash, stone and lime needs to be recognised. Housing authorities should put up low-cost structures with a lot of open space. The suggestion for redefining specifications applicable to low-cost housing deserves mention. At present low-cost houses have to conform to the same exacting specifications as are applicable to middle-income and high-income houses. Labour-intensive technology, keeping in view the employment and income multipliers, for manufacturing light standardised components should get importance.

Unless attention is concentrated on rural development, including rural housing schemes, urban areas will continue to have an increasing housing backlog. Allotment of finance becomes the prime factor in such a situation. Housing investment, which is a strong motivator for mobilising personal savings, can be multiplied and accelerated if institutional finance is assured on a large scale. □

Australia's Defence: Quest for Self-reliance

RAJARAM PANDA

IN the 1980s, defence has become a burning diplomatic issue in Australian foreign policy. The Soviet presence in Afghanistan, the unresolved situation in Kampuchea, the Iran-Iraq war, and the more recent Polish crisis exaggerated by blown-up reports of imminent Soviet invasion — all contributed to the profound change in the perception of Australian strategic environment. As, a result the defence question has assumed a new importance in the minds of Australian policy-makers.

In the past and to some extent even now, the dominant element in Australian thinking about national and regional security has been that it can be best achieved through alliance on "great and powerful friends". Until 1942, Australia depended on the United Kingdom for its security. Australian confidence in Britain as an ally began to be eroded during World War II, leading later to the removal of the Commonwealth System of Preferences when Britain made its intentions known in the 1960s to enter the Eurobloc and finally joined the EEC in 1970. Thus the Australian focus during the post-War period was to seek security by encouraging the United States to remain militarily present in the Asia-Pacific region.

This was obtained in the signing of the ANZUS Pact of September 1951. The US assumed the role of Australia's main source of succour. The potential threat from its Pacific neighbour, Japan, and the more menacing potential threat from China drove home the urgency and need to tie Australia in a broadbased security framework with the United States. Australia always tried to emphasise the military aspect of the ANZUS for the sake of her own security in future, and the first meeting of the ANZUS Council in Honolulu in August 1952 was devoted primarily to military discussion and planning.

In the late 1960s, the decision of the British to withdraw from "East of Suez" and of the Americans to "de-escalate" the prosecution of the war in Vietnam led to a reappraisal of the policy of reliance on "great and powerful friends". It came to be widely acknowledged that whether or not Australia remained a close ally of the US, it would in future need to practise a greater degree of "self-reliance", both in defence and in diplomacy. The so-called doctrine of "maritime defence", a kind of hybrid between "forward defence" and "fortress Australia"; has gained precedence over "conventional defence" and is now advanced as the basis of Australian strategic planning and also makes bows in the direction of greater self-reliance. The 1972-75 Labour Government even considered alternative to alliance with the US by placing greater emphasis on the Asian states' rising sentiments of non-alignment, closer association with regional powers such as the ASEAN, or partnership with Japan.

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The Labour Government of Gough Whitlam, however, affirmed Australia's continued loyalty to the American alliance and resisted suggestions that the US strategic installations should be removed. But it did display a new willingness to act independently of the US in foreign policy, to replace the heavy emphasis of previous governments upon military means of attaining Austraila's objectives with a new emphasis on diplomatic initiative, and to seek to remove the somewhat racist image Australia had acquired in the eyes of Third World countries.

The steady erosion of Australian confidence in the US security guarantee has led to restructuring of Australian defence thinking. While Australia has the opportunity of defence in depth, it has also the problem of safeguarding bigger areas, a longer coastline, and larger air space. Australia has perceived five types of threat to its security: low-level violence, perhaps sub-national in character, threatened or applied to vulnerable targets such as major economic installations, airports and aircraft, ships and individuals such as diplomats, businessmen and political leaders; friction with or amongst Australia's neighbours; friction with a great power or power bloc; friction with a great power arising out of economic causes; and general friction in the conduct of international relations. It was feared in Australia that unless defence was given adequate priority to develop the additional capabilities required for a more independent defence policy, Australia would not be able to meet these contingencies.

Australia is concerned about its physical security. On the economic front, 99 per cent of its overseas trade depends on marine transport and follows four principal routes: across the Indian Ocean to Colombo and thereon to the Middle East; in the event of closure of the Suez Canal, via the Cape of Good Hope; across the Pacific to North America; and northwards to Southeast Asia, China and Japan. Australia's interest is to prevent possible disruptions and protect its sea routes. Australia's defence responsibilities assume even larger proportions as many maritime countries are taking growing interest in exploiting submarine resources, especially oil, fish and other sea-food. Therefore, the Pacific and the Indian Ocean area are pregnant with possibilities of future conflicts.

Australia lacks a logistical system which can supply the basic operational needs of the Services — ammunition, weapons, food, transport, petrol, oil and repair and maintenance facilities. A basic operational capacity demands new ships, aircraft, and armoured vehicles. Other capacities are support weapons systems, telecommunication and surveillance. Moreover, Australia is handicapped by short supply of manpower. The infrastructural facilities that are essential to any attempt to defend Australia such as roads, railways, airfields, protected storages, water points and naval shore facilities are inadequate.

A considerable section of concerned opinion in Australia is agreed on the utility of maintaining the alliance with the USA. The difficulty of constructing a credible national defence based primarily on indigenous resources reinforces such rationalisations. Many Australians see relevance in seeking US assistance, particularly in the naval sphere, in the event of a direct attack on Australia without reverting to fundamental dependence on the US.

National self-interest suggests that Australia adopt a defence posture satisfying the requirements of the physical environment of the continent of Australia, accompanied by a limited ability to contribute to military support from some reliable friends and allies in areas that less directly serve its security. The uncertainty of the ANZUS alliance makes it inescapable for Australia to look for defence preparedness. Unlike the NATO Treaty documents which refer to an attack on one party being an attack on all, ANZUS refers only to an obligation to consult. But the problem faced by Australian military planners is compounded by the political conflict in outlook towards military commitment in areas external to Australia and by some ambiguity or uncertainty in each of the political parties on these matters.

Diplomats or governments are often not inclined to see that defence planning concerns the future over a long time-scale. The conventional defence doctrine was entrenched by the belief at government level that Australia would be defended by the collective strength of greater powers prevailing over enemies at strategic points far from Australia. Australian diplomacy was therefore directed towards that end for obtaining that support. The warning given by President Nixon to its Pacific allies that the US will assume a diminished role as global policeman awakened Australia to the need for defence preparedness on its own.

At present, Australia has a defence force capable of small deployments of a variety of high skills and advanced equipment in a variety of locations. The Australian defence force is not indefinitely flexible as to the geographical and logistic environment in which it can fight and sustain itself.

No wonder, therefore, defence issue played a prominent role in the 1980 elections than before. The budget of August 1980 increased defence spending 7 per cent in real terms. Australia spends less than 3 per cent of the GNP on defence. In a ministerial statement on September 9, 1980, the Minister of Defence, Jim Killen, indicated that the Government had made decisions on some important defence issues. The first was the decision to replace Australia's aircraft carrier, HMAS *Melbourne*, with a purpose-designed ship to be equipped with helicopters for anti-submarine warfare, but with a potential for operating also short take-off and vertical landing (STOVL) aircraft. The Government was, however, not to make a decision on the acquisition of STOVL aircraft until 1983.

The Minister also announced a programme for the construction of a new generation of FFG destroyers, six in all, to be built in Australia. As regards the Mirage replacement, no firm decision was made between the F-16 and FA-18 aircraft. In order to bolster defences in the North-West, the Government decided Drawin as the base of a TFF squadron. Though Australia does not object the US conducting low-level training flights by B52 aircraft, it strongly resents the involvement of Australian territory in the storage, maintenance, or servicing of nuclear weapons.

Strategic considerations propelled the Australian Government towards the adoption of a policy of self-reliance in defence matters. This was based on the consideration that in any future conflict short of global war, Australia may have to rely, at least initially, on its own resources. It therefore required a defence force which (a) serves to deter potential aggressors from actions which threaten its national interests; (b) has the ability to cope with those lower level threats and contingencies which may arise with little warnings; and (c) can expand in time to handle those situations which might develop more slowly.

Geography and its reliance on seaborne trade dictate a special need for strong maritime forces to protect the country. With no land frontiers, it is an island continent with an extensive maritime resource area. In any defence centingency, Australian defence will be heavily dependent upon imported goods, both for essential defence requirements and for use in Australian defence manufacturing industry. Therefore, interference with its overseas trade could seriously affect its defence forces' ability to continue operating. Therefore, Australian policy formulation is directed towards structuring a maritime force which can defend its vital trade, both overseas and coastal, control the sea approaches to Australia, and contribute to detering aggression.

After considerable research and evaluation, the Government decided to acquire HMS *Invincible* in 1983 from the UK on the principal ground that it offers less capability than the IPH design and meets the requirements of the RAN. Moreover, the early delivery date of HMS *Invincible* would save money and resources otherwise necessary to keep HMS *Melbourne* operational. Less risk, both technical and cost, went in favour of *Invincible.*

Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser and Defence Minister Killen, have both been quite articulate in expressing the view over the past few years that Australia has to move to a higher level of self-reliance in its defence posture.

Defence policy and its implementation can only be effective if adequate public opinion is available, informed debate is encouraged, and all opportunity for full and proper Parliamentary scrutiny is provided. The present Ministry of Defence has spurned any suggestion of the need for a proper public scrutiny and justification of major decisions. Any attempt to protect defence planners justifying decisions, if in error, would not only endanger national security but is short-sighted and dangerous. □

BOOK REVIEW

India: A Perceptive Study

RANJAN GUPTA

THERE comes a time in the life of a nation, as in that of an individual, when a break with the past becomes necessary. Sometimes the break is complete and one looks back in anger or remorse, at other times it is merely a spurt, a chapter or an epoch before society lapses into its old ways and attitudes.

Australia under the Labour Party Government of Gough Whitlam heralded a brief break, if not with the way of life, then with attitudes both social and political. It was not a dramatic ushering in of a new dawn, no Allende changing things in Chile, no Red Star over China or charkha over India, but it was change all right. Australia, citadel of conservatism in the east, suddenly realised the hypocrisy and hollowness of its own outlook.

It is symbolic that among the first countries where Gough Whitlam wanted the new winds blowing through Australia to be felt was India. There was historical consistency in his wanting it so. Neither China nor any other country of Asia would understand the change the way India would. India was a nation committed to both change and moderation, here were a people who had through civilised means won their freedom, and both India, and Australia under Whitlam, subscribed to the ideals of a new Commonwealth, rather than the break-up of the Commonwealth or its continuance in its old antiquated mould.

Bruce Grant, who was Australian High Commissioner in New Delhi in 1973-76, the period corresponding to Whitlam's Prime Ministership, has written a sympathetic and understanding account of his years in Delhi and his visits to Nepal and Bhutan which were under his charge.

Whitlam chose Grant as a personal envoy to India because he wanted someone involved with the new thinking in Australia to represent him in India. Bruce Grant became symbolic of the new Australia and his office an institution through which India would interact with the Australian renaissance. Grant, journalist turned diplomat, did an excellent job during his short stint in India, particularly as he was working with a team of career diplomats schooled in old thought and with set ideas.

Whitlam's new policy was felt most in foreign affairs, particularly in regard to Asia. Australia, though in the Asian neighbourhood, had thought itself as European — an attitude which brought it into conflict with countries with strong national identities. Because not only did Australia not fit into the region, with its sense of being European, but it also meant that it had no national identity of its own, no Australian nationalism, only British nationalism. While Australia has yet to produce a strong independent nationalism of its own, Whitlam's awareness of the need for identifying with the region while keeping Australia's ethnic composition European has been followed up by his successor, Malcolm Fraser, who sponsored the idea of a regional commonwealth conference (Chogram) which has now became a regular event.

On one plane Bruce Grant's *Gods and Politicians* (Allen Lane, 1982, Rs 135) is a personal account of his years in India in the manner that former diplomats are so fond of writing, and India, in particular, seems a favourite topic for retired foreign service representatives. But where Grant scores over his colleagues is in his sensitive understanding of India and the book is mercifully free of the number of important people he knew and how many times he was invited to dinner by the Prime Minister and the President. Much of what Grant records and comments on with a shrewd Journalistic eye is already history. Jayaprakash Narayan, Emergency, Sanjay Gandhi and much more can only be seen with hindsight, reminding one how rapid is change in our society. But it is comments on Indian culture, attitudes, on people, Indira Gandhi among them, and how a foreigner is overawed by Indian civilisation of which Indians are rarely even conscious, that make the book refereshing. The book should be as much an eye-opener to Indians as to Australians.

Certainly Grant's report on India is quite a contrast to that of one who followed him, the present High Commissioner Gordon Upton. Upton's publicised report about a possible military takeover in India which was leaked to the press in Australia certainly shows how two Australians can look at India quite differently.

Bruce Grant sees India in epic size and in setting it on a huge canvas be gives to it the same proportions that others have given to China, the Soviet Union and Europe. He approaches his task as High Commissioner with a sense of history, and in doing so has been able to put things in perspective.

Grant's tongue-in-cheek description of Delhi's cocktail circuit and his categorisation of the Scotch elite into feudal and bourgeois is as interesting as it is correct. When will West-aping Indians learn that foreigners find them comically silly?

Having known Indira Gandhi well while in Delhi, Grant has written with insight about her. Some of his observations are not the normal "foreigner in India" conclusions. Take this example: "The importance of family to Mrs Gandhi, I discovered, was greater than it first appeared. It expressed her commitment to the Nehrus: it reflected also her lack of roots in Indian politics." Or: "When Mrs Gandhi had herself entered politics seriously, there was speculation whether her way had been prepared by her father, as his way had been prepared by Motilal Nehru. It seemed likely that it had, although perhaps not so much with the Prime Ministership in mind, as with an influential role in Congress and Government, keeping the Nehru flame alive, perhaps for one of Nehru's grandsons". He also says: "...although they became the dominant family in Indian politics, the Nehrus had no firm base in Indian society. Rather, they overrode it, becoming national and even international symbols..."

Bruce Grants *Gods and Politicians* may not be to India what Edgar Show's "Red Star" was to China. But it is certainly one of the best and most comprehensive accounts of contemporary India.●

Best of Both Worlds

K. SARADAMONI

Destination Man — Towards a New World: by S.K. Dey: Vikas, 1982, Rs. 75.

THE emergence of a large number of countries as independent sovereign nations, breaking away from centuries-old colonial bondage is without doubt a significant development of the post World War II period. But there has been another, though not equally visible, development during the same period. The colonial powers do not simultaneously emerge as losers. They and their allies in power and wealth have already been able to establish a superiority in material wealth, technological achievements and control over mass media. And they become the object of emulation and admiration for many a "freed colony". In a country like ours it is not difficult to give all kinds of philosophical explanations for this kind of phenomenon. But in simple words it is mental servitude. This comes out clearly in S.K. Dey's 154-page book which in parts is autobiographical and in parts a world overview.

Dey is known to many Indians as one-time Minister for Community Development and Panchayati Raj. But few know his background. As he was a Minister under Prime Minister Nehru early in the post-Independence era, there is every possibility of people mistaking him to be a Gandhian (most probably) freedom-fighter. In his book Dey has cleared all such wrong notions. He was born in Sylhet now in Bangladesh, in 1906. The Twentieth Century which stirred up the national sentiments or feelings of human dignity and justice in many others of his generation cannot be said to have offered him much of patriotic zeal. His early memories of his home town which happened to be a confluence of three rivers were the stories which sailors from the villages narrated. And the most dominating one was the story of America — "the world on the opposite side of ours, where poverty was not known, fear and unemployment were not known, where man was respected for being born a man, irrespective of the status he held in life, where all work was sacred, and complete equality prevailed not merely between man and man but also between man and woman." Dey lived to see that all this was not true; yet what he heard as a boy had a tremendous influence on him. America had a perpetual appeal to him, and he could never resist it. To reach America and get an engineering degree was no doubt a challenge for a person of his beginnings. But the rest of the story of his American experience — whether it be his love (or loves) or the cleverness and smartness which America could teach him to get along in life — did not bode well for India.

The chapters 'Quest for a New World' and 'Pilgrimage Across a Sub-continent' should make all students of the phenomena of social change think seriously. How did he become the architect of community development at a time when we had thrown away the yoke of British colonial rule and were seeking to extend political freedom to economic freedom and social justice? In simple terms, the people at large wanted a better life. What was the involvement of the people themselves in this attempt? To what extent did the authorities try to learn or assess the yearnings of the people, their strength and weakness and instill in them a sense of community living or sharing, where everyone was to work and live so that all could benefit? Why did we need Albert Meyers, an American architect, Chester Bowles, the American Ambassador, and a host of others to tell us how we could bring about rural transformation?

This in fact was the beginning of our attempts at bringing about social change and economic growth in a planned way. We could never since then get out of the thirst for foreign advice, and imported models which had nothing to do with our genius. Both in his prologue and epilogue S.K. Dey talks of poverty and the poor. His book shows that he was no different from many others who have enjoyed the best of both worlds and who can talk of poverty without pain and anguish.

It is difficult to say for whom the book is written. It can be called the success story of an America-returned Indian, who had imbibed many of the qualities of the modern American. ●

Tragedy of Lebanon

(*from page 8*)

peace with Israel on behalf of official Lebanon.

This would certainly be the ideal solution from Israel's point of view. But the Arab states, and the Arab nationalist forces in Lebanon could not possibly accept as valid a presidential election held under such obvious and direct Israeli pressure. Probably a rival election would be held elsewhere, under Syrian 'protection', and the partition of Lebanon would thus be formally consecrated.

It may be that this is the Israelis' real aim. Mr Begin's remark to Saad Haddad — 'now the Beaufort is yours' — suggests the trend of his thought. From the Israeli point of view, 'Haddad-land' has worked well. Only it is not big enough. Now it will be expanded to include much of southern Lebanon, and perhaps formally linked up to Bashir Gemayel's enclave further north. (There are informal links already). The Syrians would be left in possession of the rest. The Gemayel-Haddad axis will act as the buffer between Israel and Syria, and will see to it that the PLO does not revive in military form. Lebanon as such would cease to exist, replaced by two rival puppet Lebanons.

It can be done, but no one should think it will be received in the Arab world as anything but yet another humiliation and amputation of Arab land. And no one should doubt who will be held responsible: the power which supplies Israel with money and weapons, and which sends its diplomats out to tidy up after each new Israeli eruption. The climate will not improve for those Arab rulers who are seen as friends of the United States. (*New Statesman*, June 11, 1982) ☐

Take Our Ganpat . . . .

(*from page 14*)

a committee meeting with Ganpat in the chair, naturally. X was saying something. Y rose to interrupt. Ganpat cut him short. "Let him finish first. We will finish you afterwards." Luckily he wasn't finished. He was another Harijan MLA. A prosperous one. He lived long after he told us this tale. Maybe he is still somewhere around. All I recall about him now is that he was the first one to get a licence to import a doughnut-making machine—and of course, the stuff with which doughnuts are made.

Now Ganpat had a long innings and then faded out. But there was somebody who remembered him and a lot of others. That was Morarji Desai who dragged him out of his obscurity and made him the Governor of Uttar Pradesh. Morarji also remembered a lot of others—Prabhudas Patwari, Raghukul Tilak, Sadiq Ali, Sharada Mukherji, and T.N. Singh—who was, however, not in the same category. All were made Governors, somewhere or the other. Indira Gandhi stood them all for some time, and still stands some others—mostly on transfer. There was some fear that after the dramatic performances with the Lals of Haryana (one Lal seems as good as another), the lurking fear that we may have to speak of our Ganpat as the "late" Governor of Haryana, and an esteemed citizen of Satara would fade into the background.

He will still be somebody, with pay and perquisites, and not just an actor in a comedy, who had one under the chin, and as he was gently stroking it for the pain, had it explained to him that he had only received an affectionate stroking. No doubt he is a fit and suitable subject for affectionate stroking. He always has been. The only pity is that he no longer stands alone; he is not unique. There are hundreds who should get daily doses of the "affectionate" one under the chin. ☐

A CORRECTION

In *Mainstream* last week (June 19, 1982) K.L. Mahendra, author of the article on trade union rights, p. 25, was inadvertently described as General Secretary, AITUC; he is General Secretary, Andhra Pradesh TUC. The error is regretted. *Editor*

As everyone knows, the choice today in this nuclear age is one of utter annihilation and destruction of civilisation or of some way to have peaceful coexistence between nations. There is no middle way.

It may not be possible to reach full disarmament in one step, though every step should be conditioned to that end.... (The) sands of time run out, and we dare not play about with this issue or delay its consideration. This, indeed, is the main duty of the United Nations today and if it fails in this, the United Nations fails in its main purpose....

—Jawaharlal Nehru at UN, 1960

LET US BUILD THE NATION AS A BULWARK OF PEACE, AND INVOLVE ALL THE PEOPLE IN THIS TASK

SAH BROTHERS

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The Green March الزحف الاخضر
AL-ZAHF AL-AKHDAR
THE WEEKLY IDEOLOGICAL JOURNAL THE WAY TO THE ERA OF THE MASSES OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES

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US Behind Israeli Blitz

Mainstream

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Stakes in Kashmir

THE cordiality generated during the Prime Minister's recent visit to Kashmir has far-reaching significance for Indian politics.

It is one of the futile by-products of low-level politicking — so widespread in the national scene today — that has led to the deplorable rift between Sheikh Abdullah's National Conference and the Congress-I. This estrangement, avoidable as well as unnecessary, has not only polluted the political atmosphere in Kashmir but has threatened to touch off a vicious chainreaction which could be exploited with profit by communalists of all shades all over the country.

It is time that we paused and pondered over what is at stake in Kashmir. Thirty-five years ago when we as a nation almost lost confidence in secular values, having been caught and outmanoeuvred in the colonial ruler's game of divide-and-rule leading to the partition of the country, it was Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah with his intrepid band of National Conference cadres who repudiated communal partitioning of the country and proclaimed Kashmir to be part of the Indian nation and thereby made short shrift of the dilly-dallyings of Maharaja Hari Singh who was left with no option but to sign for the accession of his princedom to the Indian Union.

At that dark hour in the history of independent India, Sheikh Abdullah's memorable role helped in no insignificant measure to nurture the cherished plant of secularism, a precious heritage of our freedom struggle. For Sheikh Abdullah it was the only natural course to take because, for years before, even while facing the persecution of the Maharaja's regime, he had doggedly fought the communal politics of the Muslim League. We need to remind ourselves that his National Conference was and has always been part of the national movement: in fact, its commitments on socio-economic issues in some aspects were far in advance of the accepted programme of the Congress, and

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in those days, it commanded the respect and admiration of all forward-looking elements in our freedom struggle.

It was unfortunate that out of a series of misunderstandings, Sheikh Abdullah was put in prison by the machinations of men who should have known better. A case was launched against Sheikh Abdullah implicating even his family which dragged on for months but could prove nothing, and it was finally dropped. Nobody knows why it was launched at all, but what everybody knows is that Sheikh Abdullah was kept in detention for eighteen long years — a sufficiently long period of political persecution in which iron could enter the soul of any mortal.

It was to the credit of Indira Gandhi that she over the years could realise this historic mistake and once that realisation came, took steps to undo the wrong and through painstaking efforts enabled Sheikh Abdullah to return to the mainstream of national politics. The understanding reached between her emissary and his resulted not only in Sheikh Abdullah's return to freedom but to office as well in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. And it was to the credit of Syed Mir Qasim to have voluntarily offered to step down from the post of Chief Minister — a self-denying ordinance so rare in our present-day political culture. It is indeed surprising that with such a record of service and dedication Syed Mir Qasim should have to face being left out in the cold for a considerable length of time now, particularly at a time when his mature sense of judgement could have provided a touch of wisdom in the deteriorating relationship between the Congress and the National Conference.

There is no gainsaying the fact that at the very first electoral contest after the rapprochement with Sheikh Abdullah, the petulant hotheads of the Jammu and Kashmir Congress, innocent of the far-reaching implications of the accord with the Sheikh, were allowed by the Congress High Command to go in for a trial of strength with Sheikh Abdullah's party, thereby seeking to destroy the very basis of the accord which envisaged an enduring entente between the Congress and the National Conference. The result was not only the Congress fare miserably but also negative elements could worm their way up in both camps.

In recent years, this unwholesome state of mutual acrimony between the Congress and the National Conference has been compounded by the mushrooming of a bunch of cronies and impetuous politicos who have done a lot of damage in vitiating Sheikh Abdullah's personal rapport with Indira Gandhi. The result has been that two basically secular forces in Jammu and Kashmir have been at loggerheads, which has opened up an alluring prospect for communal disruptors, both Hindu and Muslim.

A bizarre scenario unfolded when Sheikh Abdullah's Government mooted the much-talked-of bill for the resettlement of refugees from across the border from Pakistan. Certainly there was scope for sober and dispassionate discussion, and no doubt this would have happened had not the relations between the local Congress bosses and the National Conference had already touched a record low. The issue involved was not the constitutional authority of the State Government to pass such a legislation but a more fundamental political question: if hundreds of thousands of Hindu refugees could be accepted although many were legally citizens of Pakistan; if as recently as 1971, thirty thousand Sindhis could be admitted and settled within the Indian Union — ignoring the protests of the Jana Sangh, let it be noted — why should several thousand Kashmiri Muslims be denied that opening? By raising this hue and cry against the Jammu and Kashmir Bill, are we not unwittingly subscribing to the theory that the Hindus alone have a homeland in India and not the Muslims — a theory which Pakistan's military dictator flourishes to justify his warlike postures? With mutual respect for each other's point of view, there is still scope for serious discussion to settle this controversy over the Bill, and let it be hoped that better sense will prevail now that the atmosphere is cleared at least partially by the Prime Minister's visit to Kashmir and Sheikh Abdullah's endeavour from his sickbed to respond to the need for understanding — a response which could be read in the National Conference decision to support the Congress-I candidate for this month's Presidential poll.

The urgency of settling amicably with Sheikh Abdullah has to be realised for both short-term and long-term national interests. It is absurd for New

Delhi to enter into serious dialogue with Pakistan without mending fences with Sheikh Abdullah. Viewed in the wider context of the constant assault on the edifice of secularism by a frightening recrudescence of caste and communal violence in many parts of the country, the need for defending the bastion of secularism in Jammu and Kashmir assumes added importance. This can be ensured not by making a target of the National Conference but by enlisting it as an ally. It is tragic to find that the forces of the Left, expected to be forward-looking, have also often erred on this score.

The initiative taken by the Prime Minister for reforging links with Sheikh Abdullah has to be taken forward. Here lies the challenge to our statesmanship. By no means could secularism be upheld in Kashmir by sniping at Sheikh Abdullah whose secularist nationalism has held out like the towering *chinar* in all its majesty, through stress and storm for fifty long years. It is time that the nation recognised this and regarded this as a valuable asset in times like these.

N.C.

June 30

COMMENTARY

PLO: Down But Not Out

OUR DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

YASSER ARAFAT has bowed to the inevitable. The exit of Haig (reportedly consummated under Saudi Arabian threat of reprisals if Israel was not forced to cease fighting in Lebanon), the 127-2 condemnatory UN General Assembly resolution (only the US and Israel opposing) and various other pressures induced no second thoughts in Israeli determination to lay siege to western Beirut.

Rather than see the Lebanese capital totally devastated, Yasser Arafat decided to leave Lebanon and laid down three conditions: withdrawal by Israeli forces five kilometres from Beirut, partial surrender of arms by the PLO to Lebanese authorities, and safe conduct of the guerillas to a country of their choice under combined US-USSR guarantee. As this is written, (June 29) intense negotiations among Yasser Arafat, US envoy Philip Habib and Lebanese President Elias Sarkis were on to determine the logistics of orderly PLO withdrawal.

This must be deemed a mere formality; the truth is that the PLO had to choose between two alternatives, either to face Israeli blackmail with arms in western Beirut and invite the slaughter of many of its personnel and innocent Lebanese citizens, or negotiate an honourable retreat. Arafat chose the second, in the process yielding to the realities on the ground. The PLO has lost the battle but hopefully looks forward to survival to fight the war.

History perhaps affords no other example of an entity claiming the goodwill, support and sympathy of a majority of the world community, the friendship of its immediate neighbours and deep-rooted faith in its cause, being let down so badly at its hour of crisis. At the belatedly-convened Arab Foreign Ministers' Conference in Tunis, there seemed to be more sympathy for the plight of Lebanon than for the besieged PLO, and virtually no support for Yasser Arafat's demand for the withdrawal of Arab Ambassadors and bank deposits from the United States and the suspension of Arab dealings with American companies. Regardless of the Saudi Arabian threat of an oil embargo and other reprisals, it is clear that the prospect of a united Arab response in favour of the PLO has been reduced to wishful thinking. On the contrary, there was enough evidence of support for the demand that both the PLO and Syrian forces quit Lebanon.

The Tunis meeting was perhaps the last straw, and must have made Arafat abandon his earlier plans to convert Beirut into a miniature Stalingrad. The time had come for him to salvage what he could out of the wreckage. He also gave up the earlier plans to leave Lebanon by sea and instead has chosen to be escorted, to a destination he is yet to determine, by road in convoys of buses under the protection of a US-Soviet guarantee of safety for the guerillas. This is an arrangement which may meet the Israeli requirements and also save Beirut from further destruction.

It is not yet clear where Yasser Arafat proposes to lead his flock. The obvious destination is Syria, but even assuming that President Assad will let the guerillas in, it is going to be at best a tenuous kind of relationship with him which the PLO will face in the near future. The choice of Jordan as the immediate refuge is to be ruled out, given the circumstances under which the PLO were turned out of that kingdom in 1970. Where else? The logical (and perhaps in the long-term the ideal) destination would be the West Bank and Gaza which is after all the Palestinian homeland for which the PLO has fought diplomatically and militarily all these years. But before Arafat can march in that direction, Israel has to be forced by its mentor, the United States, to be more flexible in its definition of "autonomy" for the West Bank and the Gaza strip. The Israeli settlements there need to be dismantled as was done in the case of Sinai and Palestinian autonomy extended there as a prelude to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Israel has no doubt achieved more than what it set out to do, but after humbling the PLO and divesting it of its military infrastructure, if it hopes that the PLO will cease to exist, it will be mistaken. The PLO can lose its arms, but not its will to live. Its numerous subsidiary organisations, its widespread network of agencies, schools, technical training centres and worldwide student branches not only have the potential of survival but of infusing new breath of life into the body which for the present might show signs of helpless demoralisation. There is no sign yet of Yasser Arafat having lost morale so completely as to modify the long-held refusal to concede Israel's right to existence or to announce that the time has come for the Palestinians to live side by side with Israel in peace. Nearly five million restless souls cannot be put down that easily, nor can the Arabs, now seemingly indifferent to their cause, afford to ditch them for good.

By the same reasoning, the Arabs cannot afford to watch silently while Israel seeks, as it undoubtedly will in the wake of the Lebanese triumph, to formalise the annexation of the West Bank and the Gaza strip. It is precisely because eventual Arab resistance to such moves is within the realm of possibility that Israeli Defence Minister Ariel Sharon keeps insisting that the PLO's permanent home must be Jordan. If King Hussein is reluctant to absorb the Palestinians, the latter too are in no mood to go there, lest it be assumed by the world that they would settle for such an option as fulfilment of their cherished cause.

The immediate future in Lebanon can be predicted: American negotiator Philip Habib will not only be able to ensure the withdrawal of Syrian forces but also bring into being an administrative structure under Sarkis totally sympathetic to the Israelis. The Syrians will be told that they have no more *locus standi* in Lebanon after the departure of the PLO. It was to control the PLO from dominating the Lebanese Muslim and Christian forces that the Syrians were authorised in the first place to move their troops into Lebanon. As to when the Israelis will withdraw, no projections can be offered at this stage: it must be assumed that they are there to stay as long as they can or at least until such time as they feel that the "appropriate structures" that they will create in Lebanon will work to their permanent advantage.

Haig has been a casualty of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, but all the facts surrounding his exit are still unavailable. American collusion with Tel Aviv continues, irrespective of the show of annoyance by President Reagan with Israeli Premier Menachem Begin's insistence on "cleaning out" western Beirut also. Interestingly, the conscience of the Jewish lobby in the United States could not be stirred by the slaughter of thousands in Lebanon. At a fund-raising lunch for Begin at the Waldorf-Astoria, where a lunch plate was going for the tippance of 100,000 dollars, the Jewish hosts collected 27 million dollars for the "Israeli cause" in one hour! (*June 29*)

U.P: Carnage Culture

C.N. CHITTA RANJAN

Vishwanath Pratap Singh's resignation as Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh has not come as a surprise, though the timing and the swiftness of the action appear to have caused some annoyance to the Congress leadership. The immediate provocation was the massacre of innocent Yadava villagers in Kanpur district and of Harijans in Mainpuri district. But ever since August last year, and particularly after the Deoli butchery of November, V.P. Singh has been asking to be relieved. He was persuaded to stay on, and his pledge to end the dacoit menace was partly kept, though in the process the police appear to have staged many fake encounters and finished off all kinds of persons, losing some of their own men in genuine encounters. VP. Singh's brother, a judge, and nephew fell victim to dacoits' bullets, even if it is not clear whether they were killed according to plan or by chance.

What is clear is that gangs of desperados are active in UP as never before, and V.P. Singh's resignation is not likely to bring about a dramatic change in the law and order situation — unless some politicians who are said to be in league with the gangsters decide to lie low, in which case some temporary improvement is certainly possible. However, the murder-and-carnage culture that has been developing in that poverty-stricken State will be difficult to contain, whomsoever the central leadership of the Congress decides upon as Singh's successor. Nor, again, can any dramatic improvement in the working of the State's administrative apparatus — in respect of implementation of the Twenty Point Programme, for instance— be expected, so long as the ruling party is beset with warring factions, a situation which any goonda gang can explain. Narayan Dutt Tewari's name has figured as the possible choice for Chief Minister's post. He is certainly superior as an administrator to the others whose names are being bandied about, but can he honestly be expected to do much in such a sorry state of affairs?

Apart from the law and order problem and the gruesome killings that made Singh decide to step down immediately, the dissidence in the ruling party has been growing in UP, with quite a few demanding Singh's head. This is what should cause concern to the party's central leadership, for it is clear that whoever is chosen after the Presidential election to head the State Government will begin soon enough to face a similar situation. The acute shortage of leaders commanding wide respect is all too obvious. How this core problem will be tackled is not clear. Moves like the ones in Maharashtra or Andhra Pradesh can prove disastrous in the case of UP which has not had effective administration except for a brief spell under H.N. Bahuguna with all his faults.

One does not know whether it is true that Singh sent his resignation to the Governor without consulting the central leadership. Perhaps he had been asked to wait till the Presidential election, while the two monstrous massacres forced him to act quickly. To describe his resignation without consultation as an act of indiscipline is to indulge in irresponsible talk. His critics — as also friends turned critics now — are saying that in any case he was to have gone. Perhaps that is true, but let if not be forgotten that the spectacle of sending in his resignation on his own volition is indeed a rarity in Indian politics today. If UP has not been well governed, it is wrong to lay the blame only at V.P. Singh's door; his predecessors set the pace, and both his colleagues in the Legislature Party and members of the Opposition have contributed their mite to the sad situation.

The UP Congress and Government require leadership of high calibre, but thanks to the way candidates were selected that is precisely what is not in evidence. V.P. Singh himself had to be sent there because of this reason.

The Congress leadership needs to be aware that it cannot go on tinkering with administration, without showing worthwhile results; that can only mean trouble in the period ahead. V.P. Singh's resignation has given the Congress leaders a jolt but a new opportunity as well. (*June 30*)

Stop This Disgrace!

C.N.C.

The press report from Durban that thirtytwo top actors, singers and dancers from India have agreed to tour the ugly Apartheid country, mainly its "Bantustans", comes as a shock not only to those Indians and Africans who are directly fighting the oppressive and arrogant white minority regime in South Africa, but to all civilised human beings. From the last category of course Western arms manufacturers, their stooges, violators of UN-imposed sanctions and coloured bootlickers of the Pretoria regime stand automatically excluded.

If the report, issued by the major South African news agency and picked up by PTI, is correct, there is every reason for us to feel ashamed. Not only are certain wealthy Indians in South Africa ready to spend lavishly to help the racists in their frantic attempts to gain respectability, but some of our "cultural" performers seem to be ready to sell themselves to the highest bidder, no matter how crooked, perverse and immoral, for "very high fees" are mentioned as the main attraction, no doubt with side benefits thrown in. And this in 1982, a year proclaimed by the UN General Assembly as the International Year of Mobilisation for Sanctions against South Africa, a year designated by the African National Congress as the Year of Unity in Action, involving not only the people of South Africa but also all opponents of apartheid, colonialism and racism everywhere.

If these worthies are indeed accepting the invitation from the racists' collaborators, what is the kind of "culture" they purvey? From the distant days when Mahatma Gandhi organised a peaceful and powerful struggle against racist rule in South Africa, to the present time when the ANC is over seven decades old, there have been numerous martyrs in the cause of majority rule, there has been much bloodshed and brutal repression. The Africans have lost many leaders, killed in cold blood — like Steve Biko and Joe Gqabi — and many are rotting in jail, Walter Sisulu being an example. Is it to this country under racist jackboot that our culture-vultures should go to make money? Is there no other place in the wide world where they can try to make their pile?

Do they not remember the outcry the world over when cricketers Boycott and Cook were included in the England team for the Indian tour? Do they know for nineteen years now the UN Special Committee against Apartheid has been promoting concerted international action for the elimination of Apartheid, which UN Secretary-General de Cuellar has summed up as "a system which has been denounced by the entire membership of the United Nations as a crime against the conscience and dignity of mankind"? The UN General Assembly, in naming this year as the Year of Mobilisation, called for "an international campaign for the isolation of the Apartheid regime in South Africa". Even "culture" specialists who cannot offer help to the national liberation movement in South Africa, can at least refrain from assisting the racist regime in its propaganda drive and in its bid for respectability.

The Secretary of the Natal Indian Congress, Ramesar, has said that if Indian artistes arrived in South Africa they would be breaking the cultural and sports boycott against Pretoria. He has also said that the African majority in the country would see such a visit as recognition by India of the apartheid policies of the minority regime. India has for decades been committed to the South African people's struggle against Apartheid and minority racist rule, and after Independence we as a nation have been rendering feasible assistance to the cause of the African majority. We cannot allow our firm and consistent national stand to be vitiated by a bunch of greedy artistes or by stooges of the racist regime flourishing under Pretoria patronage.

Only hours before this report was published came the news that Pretoria has decided to shunt off about a million Blacks to neighbouring Swaziland in order to promote bloody battles between Zulus and the pro-Pretoria Swazi regime. That is only the latest sample. On the other side the regime has been offering crumbs to potential lackeys and flunkeys. But the African majority as well as the majority of people of Indian origin and coloured people are unitedly struggling, realising that Apartheid can be put to death only by the power of the oppressed people.

The Government of India will surely not allow a small group of so-called artistes to sully India's fair name or spoil its clean record on racial and colonial issues over long years. The visit, according to the report, is scheduled for August-September this year. The Government must act swiftly to stop it. No one can be allowed to offend national policy and defy UN resolutions with impunity.

The so-called stars shall not go to South Africa. There must be a limit even to harlotry. (*June 29*)

Productivity and Trade Unions

NARENDRA SHARMA

THE Productivity Year is already half-way through. The call for observing 1982 as Productivity Year was given by the Prime Minister on January 14. The Labour Ministry convened a tripartite meeting on June 15 specifically to discuss and identify the issues related to productivity — and primarily, to involve trade unions and managements in making the Productivity year a success. The meeting was meant as a preliminary step towards more fruitful meetings of the tripartite later.

From the attendance point of view the meeting was only partly successful, for six out of the ten trade union centres invited to attend the tripartite chose to boycott it, in protest against the labour policy of the Government. The AITUC, CITU, BMS, HMS (Vashist group) and UTUC signed the letter conveying the boycott decision; the UTUC (LS) did not attend the meeting but did not sign the boycott letter. On the other hand, the INTUC, NLO, NFITU and HMS (Kulkarni group) attended the meeting.

The boycotting trade unions felt that the Government was not keen on securing the cooperation of the trade unions. It was noted that the Prime Minister did not consult the trade unions before giving the call. It was also argued — and this appeared to be the real grouse — that the Labour Ministry had introduced a number of "anti-labour" bills in Parliament without consulting the trade unions or the Indian Labour Conference, in violation of the commitment made by the previous Labour Minister. And, lastly, the Indian Labour Conference had been twice postponed without any plausible reason. It was therefore concluded that no useful purpose would be served by the trade unions attending such a tripartite.

It can be justifiably argued that the Labour Ministry should have convened the tripartite much earlier or that some preparatory steps should have been taken before the call for the Productivity Year was given. The boycotting trade unions in their communication to the Labour Ministry did not raise any substantive objection regarding the question of productivity as such. Many such issues have been and are being debated between managements and trade unions at various levels.

The question of sharing the gains of productivity, for instance, has been debated for long, ever since the productivity movement was launched in the mid-fifties. It was then argued that productivity was the key to plenty, and employers, workers and consumers would all gain by increase in productivity, in terms of profits, wages and cheaper goods. However, over the years profits have risen and so have prices, while the workers have had to constantly wage struggles for improvement in wages and living conditions. The employers dispute the workers' claim to a share in increase in productivity, on the plea that higher production and productivity are largely due to better management techniques and improved technology and not so much to the workers' contribution. The responsibility for the growing phenomena of industrial sickness and closures, however, is conveniently attributed by the same employers to either strikes and violence or to lack of demand, shortages of raw materials, financial stringency — and *not* to mismanagement of industry. The employers and managements like to take the credit for all growth and pass the blame for any fall in production and productivity to others, including the workers.

The National Commission on Labour (1969) had discussed at length the whole question of productivity and wages and had noted the various "limitations" on assessing the changes in productivity and identifying the factors involved. However, taking into account the performance of industries the serial data for which were then available, the

NCL had pointed out that the value added by manufacture had increased from Rs 2113 in 1952 to Rs 4621 in 1964. Adjusting the increase in the net output for price changes during the same period — using the index number of wholesale prices for manufactures — the NCL found that production per worker had increased by 63 per cent.

What was the share of workers in the value added by manufacture? According to NCL, "the percentage of wages to the value added showed a decline from about 50 per cent in the period 1949-50 to about 40 per cent in 1958. This trend seems to have continued as revealed by the data from the ASI (Annual Survey of Industries)." For instance, wages as percentage of value added declined from 40 per cent in 1960 to 36.5 per cent in 1964. If the money value of benefits and privileges are also taken into account, the conclusion remained the same, with the only difference that the decline appeared less steep.

Summing up, the NCL observed that increases in money wages of industrial workers since Independence had not been associated with a rise in real wages nor had real wage increases been commensurate with improvements in productivity. Also, wage costs as a proportion of total costs of manufacture had registered a decline, and the same was true about workers' share in value added by manufacture. In this context it was also recorded that wages had continued to be the single most important cause of all disputes.

Increase in workload and reduction in job potential has been another issue of concern to the trade unions in the context of productivity. This was recently brought out clearly by the Bandyopadhyay committee set up by the West Bengal Government to go into the changes brought about in workload and work patterns in the jute industry in that State. The committee had found that between 1972 and 1979, due to these changes the man/loom ratio had declined from 3.1247 to 2.5175, resulting in increase in workload and reduction in the worker complement by 24.12 per cent. The reduction in the worker complement was estimated at 46/48 thousand hands.

There is no gainsaying the fact that these issues have to be carefully gone into in order to effectively involve the workers and the trade unions in raising productivity. This precisely should have been the job of the productivity tripartite, especially when it was convened by the Labour Ministry. The tripartite assumed importance also because in the recent period Government policy has been more and more directed towards linking wages, bonus, etc, with productivity, specially in public sector industries. Though belated, the productivity tripartite provided an excellent forum for the trade union centres to put forward their point of view on the entire question of productivity.

It is in this context doubtful if the boycott of the tripartite has served the interests of the workers. It has given the impression that the boycotting trade unions have sought to evade the question and not done the necessary homework so as to confront the employers and the Government with the realities. If their representatives can agree to discuss the question of improvement in production and productivity at the joint meeting convened by the Steel Authority of India on July 6, why should they have not joined the productivity tripartite convened by the Labour Ministry and projected their views on the all-India plane? The trade unions have been protesting against the "anti-labour" bills in their separate as well as joint forums, and they could well have raised this question at the tripartite along with other matters in the context of productivity.

The fact that the trade unions concerned did not spell out their views on productivity in their communication to the Labour Ministry can be interpreted to mean that though they agreed on boycott they were not agreed on their approach to productivity.

It may be recalled that the same six trade union centres had taken a similar decision to boycott the procedure earlier adopted by the Labour Ministry for verification of the strength of the central trade unions. Late last year they had jointly told the Labour Ministry that their cooperation for the verification procedure would be available only if the Ministry agreed to hold ballot in all cases of disputed membership. But as soon as the deadline set by the Ministry approached, four of the signatories rushed to meet the deadline and submitted their membership claims as desired by the Labour Department. As a result, the AITUC and the CITU, which stuck to the joint stand, were left out in the cold.

Each of them knows that with the majority of the ten trade unions having agreed to abide by the verification procedure that has been set in motion, the Indian Labour Conference can now be convened only after their respective strength has been determined. Which of the central trade unions are qualified to be represented on the Indian Labour Conference will be determined by the membership they command. After this development within the boycotting trade union centres, their objection to the postponement of the Indian Labour conference ceased to have the force it had earlier.

That the boycott of the tripartite will not serve the interests of those whom the trade union centres claim to represent can be seen from the memorandum of the employers which was circulated to the participants at the June 15 meeting. The employers have asked virtually for policing of industrial relations, in the name of industrial peace and harmony.

One of the proposals mooted at the tripartite was that the Constitution should be amended to provide for "fundamental obligation" of workers and trade unions. Another was to study the Japanese pattern of increasing productivity with a view to adopting it. Responsible trade unions cannot remain indifferent to such proposals, particularly when they are mooted at an official tripartite.

The trade union centres that claim to serve the interests of the working class can ill afford to miss any opportunity or forum to rebut such suggestions, whether from employers or from other quarters. Instead, they should be prepared to meet the challenge in these forums. (*June 28*).

US Behind Israeli Blitz

CLAUDIA WRIGHT

From Washington, *New Statesman* correspondent could get a ringside view of active US involvement in Israeli blitzkrieg against PLO in Lebanon. Last year also she had reported on American support for Israeli plans to smash PLO. This despatch here is reproduced from *New Statesman* (June 18, 1982).

THERE was only one reason why the Reagan Administration and the Israelis decided on the brief and phoney ceasefire on the fifth day of the Lebanon war — the Russians had threatened to intervene militarily, if the fighting did not stop.

In May, when the Israelis were making their final preparations for the Lebanese invasion, the White House decided to provide Israel with the naval protection of the Sixth Fleet. The hope was to deter Soviet intervention by sea in the impending battle. But, after one public hint of a threat against Israel at the United Nations in New York and several private communications from Moscow, Reagan and his advisers decided late on June 9 not to run the risk of Soviet intervention. The Lebanon war stopped, though plainly not for long.

The decisive event that set the Americans and Israelis together on the road to Beirut was General Sharon's visit to Washington from May 22 to 27. Sharon was preceded by a close associate, Arye Ganger. He got a clear American message that it was the *timing* of the move into Lebanon, not the move itself, that was troubling the President's political and military advisers. Ever since Reagan's inauguration, the White House has consistently regarded Israeli attacks across the Lebanese border as justifiable 'hot pursuit' and 'self-defence'. But there was scepticism that the list of 'incidents' and provocations' which Sharon had been producing at his press conferences in Israel would be enough, in public relations terms, to justify wholehearted American support if the Israeli army were to move north. Even this advice Sharon regarded as unreasonable American pressure. As he left for the US, 'Israel,' a spokesman told *Ma'ariv*, the leading Tel Aviv newspaper, 'will express willingness to strengthen politico-security coordination and cooperation with the United States, but on issues vital to its security, such as the policy towards Lebanon, Jerusalem wants to maintain complete freedom of action.'

Nothing Sharon was told during his meetings with General Haig, Weinberger, the Secretary of Defence, and White House national security advisers contradicted or threatened that position. Instead, the Americans did a great deal to encourage him. On May 24, the Administration sent an informal notice to Congress of its decision to sell Israel 75 F-16 jet fighters, worth roughly $ 3 billion. Two days later, an Administration offer to deliver another eleven F-15's, costing $ 510 million cleared the Congress. On the same day, May 26, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted to add $ 125 million to the $ 785 million in economic support funds already authorised for Israel in 1983 and to convert the entire $ 910 million total to a grant, dropping the Administration proposal that one-third be treated as a loan. The reason, according to the Senate Committee, was that 'Israel's qualitative edge' in weaponry 'continues to erode ... necessitating increased arms purchases', while heavy debts on past arms purchases were straining the Israeli economy.

On May 26, General Haig gave a speech in which, for the first time, he hinted at how far the US was prepared to go in finding a new political solution in Lebanon, and how far, therefore, the Israelis could go towards eliminating the Palestinian and Syrian presence in the Lebanon.

'The time has come', Haig said, 'to take concerted action in support of both Lebanon's territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and a strong central government capable of promoting a free, open, democratic, and traditionally pluralistic society'. To Sharon and the Israelis, there was no doubt what this 'concerted action' meant. The Pentagon made it even clearer that an Israeli drive to destroy the PLO forces and push the Syrians out of Beirut would have American protection. Orders were issued before Sharon left for several US Naval deployments.

The nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, *USS Ranger*, left San Diego, California, to sail into the Indian Ocean, relieving the *USS Kennedy*. The *Ranger* reached its duty station on June 1, two days before Israeli Ambassador Argov was shot in London. The *Kennedy* then headed for the Suez Canal, passing through immediately after the assassination attempt. By the time Israeli forces had begun their invasion, the *Kennedy* had taken up position off the Lebanese coast, where its surveillance and interceptor aircraft covered both Israel and Israeli naval operations off the Lebanon coast from surprise air or sea attack from the west.

On June 1, also, a second aircraft carrier, *USS Eisenhower*, and its escorts left Naples, sailing south-east to take up position within range of Soviet naval anchorages near Crete. Finally, over that weekend, a third US naval task force was ordered to sail from Rota in Spain, for the Lebanese coast. Pentagon spokesmen will give no details of the number or type of ships in the Rota force. Its mission, and that of the *USS Kennedy* are described as 'humanitarian — in case of the need of evacuation of Americans from Lebanon'.

ARAB representatives at the UN and in Washington were unaware of the American naval role, but they had no doubt that the Reagan Administration was prepared for the invasion and determined to buy time to allow the Israelis to reach Beirut.

In New York, there was an emergency Security Council meeting on June 5, the day of the first Israeli retaliation attacks. This resulted in a unanimous resolution (No 508), calling for an end to the violence and a restoration of the July 1981 ceasefire. The US voted in favour. The following day, as the invasion itself began, the Council met again. This time the US Ambassador. Jeane Kirkpatrick, deliberately stalled for over 12 hours, blaming the French telephone system for a failure of communications with General Haig and the President, then at Versailles. By the end of the day, however, a second resolution (No 509) was passed, with US support, demanding that Israel withdraw from Lebanon.

For the next day and a half, when it was obvious that Israel had no intention of complying, the American delegation stalled again over a third draft resolution. This was modified at American insistence to soften the accusation against Israel and defer to yet another Council meeting the question of possible sanctions against Israel for refusal to comply with the earlier resolutions. This time, Mrs Kirkpatrick said, the language was 'unbalanced'. Israelis could not be obliged to withdraw, she said in the negotiations, if the Palestinian forces and Syrians were not withdrawn as well. This had never been the Americans' position before, in public or in private.

In Washington, a group of Arab ambassadors had separate meetings with Acting Secretary of State, Walter Stoessel, Defence Secretary Weinberger, and Vice-President George Bush, who was chairing the National Security Council's committee on the war. 'They had an orchestrated position', says the group's leader, Saul Al-Sabah, the Kuwait ambassador. 'They told us there would be no sanctions or condemnations of Israel. We were told the Israelis had given the Administration a guarantee not to go further than 25 miles into Lebanon. The Israelis had gone further, but the tactics the Americans used to deny their involvement in that have been child's play'.

American reporters were told by White House spokesmen that, unlike earlier Israeli attacks on Arab territory, this time there was 'nothing in the pipeline', 'no handle on Israel' — no military supplies that could be halted as a sanction for continuing the war to Beirut. In fact, on top of the F-15 and F-16 contracts that had just been initiated, there was at least $ 1 billion of military supplies waiting to be delivered — including M-60 tanks, armoured personnel carriers, howitzers, Sidewinder missiles and ammunition, all being used in Lebanon and waiting for delivery within days or weeks. General Sharon had also demanded, and received, Pentagon approval for talks to start on a scheme for the US to purchase hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of its equipment from Israel's defence industries. If the administration had wanted to stop the Israeli invasion at the 25-mile line, it had the leverage to do so, but chose not to.

The President's decision to call for a ceasefire came only after the Soviets began to act. On June 8, in a public statement at the UN, the Soviet Ambassador warned that the Israeli invasion was 'an adventure that could cost Israel and its people dear.' President Brezhnev despatched two letters to Reagan. The second warned that, if Israel tried to capture Beirut, annihilate the Palestinians there, or threaten to defeat Syrian forces by taking the battle over the Syrian border, then the Soviet Union would intervene militarily.

According to American intelligence officials, the threats were 'all very generalised — the Russians didn't want to tie their hands. There were several signs like 1973, but less ambitious'. The most credible threat, they say, is the possibility of Moscow deploying regular troops or 'volunteers' to reinforce the Syrians.

The Israelis were keen to call Brezhnev's bluff, according to the Americans, because they did not believe that the Soviets wanted to commit themselves to the PLO bunkers in Beirut, or to a losing battle with the Syrians along the Damascus-Beirut road. Reagan initially agreed with that assessment, but was not willing to run the risk without first trying to appear the peacemaker. So he backed down and the ceasefire between Israel and Syria was the result.

In White House eyes, the Israelis could continue their drive against the PLO and the bombardment of Beirut. Reagan can be sure of one thing — there is virtually no demand in Congress for stopping the Israelis before Beirut, nor for sanctions against them. The only resolutions so far proposed are facsimiles of the Israeli Prime Minister's terms for a peace settlement.

There are a few American officials who remember what President Eisenhower told Prime Minister Ben Gurion on February 20, 1957: 'No nation should be allowed to occupy foreign territory and be permitted to impose conditions on its own withdrawal'. However, the general view in Washington, expressed editorially by the *Washington Post*, is that 'Israel is doing a nasty job that almost every other nation, including the United States, wanted done but did not have the heart to do itself.'

WHAT are the US's objectives now?

They are as General Haig foreshadowed on May 26. The Lebanese presidential election due by August — an indirect parliamentary process, not a direct popular ballot — must produce a candidate who has American, Israeli and Christian Lebanese support. No one previously aligned with Syria, the PLO, or the Moslem Lebanese factions would be acceptable. The candidate whom Washington appears to favour is Camille Chamoun, the old Maronite chieftain, who as president called for the American intervention of 1958, after giving his family jewels to a CIA agent for safekeeping at the American Embassy. Dory Chamoun, his son, was in Washington as Israeli forces entered Beirut.

If Chamoun is installed as President, the next step will be peace talks between Lebanon and Israel. Reagan will get his chance to play host at a second Camp David peace conference. Begin will return to the same stage and the Lebanese president will play the part of President Sadat. The Administration intends that the result of that process will be a peace treaty between Lebanon and Israel, providing for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the southern half of Lebanon in stages and their replacement by a multinational non-UN force. President Mitterrand has already offered to provide troops if asked by the Lebanese Government.

When the ink of the signatures is dry and the flourishes of White House trumpeters are done, the White House thinks that it will be able to present Reagan as having upstaged former President Carter's Camp David success and secured Israel from the only other border that currently threatens it. He will have sent the 'Russian Catspaws' scurrying into their holes in Damascus, where their movements, along with every flight by a Syrian aircraft, can be picked up by the American AWACS shortly to be deployed in Southern Turkey, by Israeli radars on Mount Hermon, and by the multinational peace-keepers in southern Lebanon. If Anwar Sadat were alive today, this outcome to the fifth Arab-Israeli war might produce a wry smile.

Very Special Session, But Disarmament?

JOHAN GALTUNG

The author is a distinguished Norwegian specialist on international affairs with wide experience of teaching and research in many countries including India (at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, 1971). He was the founder-Director of International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, and is a consultant to many United Nations agencies. In this special contribution he reviews with insight and comprehension the the disartment debate at the Second Special Session of the *UN* General Assembly, roughly at the midway stage. *—Editor*

After the first two weeks of presentations at the United Nations in New York — by heads of state and governments and by foreign ministers — of how governments view disarmament, the major dividing lines are quite clear.

At the very core is, of course, the super-power conflict and nuclear arms race. The contrast between the Soviet and the US statements will be the lasting message of SSD II. On the one hand the unilateral pledge of not being the first to use nuclear arms (following a similar declaration from China already in October 1964), thunderously applauded; on the other hand a highly belligerent, cold war oriented US statement with not a single pledge to reduce some of the enormous destructive capacity at the hands of the President — politely but tepidly applauded. Both ran the gamut of accusations, most of them correct, some disputable — neither of them very helpful. But the fact remains that the Soviet Union stands out as being on the disarmament offensive — in the view of most delegations, most peoples, and in the very important transnational peace movement. Had Reagan followed up this invitation and issued the same pledge (after a hurried emergency NATO meeting with pledges to increase conventional defence, no doubt), then the UN would have been in business. A disarmament race could have started. It did not. History will, I feel strongly, put the blame on the USA.

And on her allies — the US-USSR rift is faithfully mirrored by the client governments on either side. Norway and Bulgaria, for instance, are somewhat less belligerent than their super-powers; but their major task is to echo the line of the super-powers. Interesting also was the Hungarian emphasis on a symmetric freeze and a zone in the Balkans, and the West German emphasis on the significance of the peace movement as a moral inspiration and expression of doubt in their leaders. If both of them practised what they said in their national policies it would have been more credible. Incidentally, in a class all by itself stands France with by far the worst statement in the whole conference, openly defending nuclear deterrence, to some extent mirrored by the Vatican statement, a strange indication that deterrence (and we are talking about nuclear deterrence here) could be morally valid.

This was strongly attacked by Third World delegates, and that is the second dividing line. India denounced the doctrine unequivocally. Burma had two arguments against it: deterrence is based on the assumption that nuclear arms might be used, but the use would be clearly against the UN Charter and UN resolutions stamping out use of weapons of mass destruction as a crime against humanity. Second, it leads to endless arms races. The Soviet approach, the no-first-use pledge, and the no use against non-nuclear states, with a cautious support for the nuclear freeze approach, are all very far from nuclear disarmament; but they are even further removed from the US position.

It should be remembered that this meeting takes place under the impact of the revelation (*New York Times*, May 30, or *Time*, June 14) of the new US strategic doctrine, the need for capacity to fight a protracted war — a war that could even last years — with nuclear weapons, with all that implies in terms of additional arms — and the order to deploy anti-satellite weapons within five years. So, not so strange that the Third World delegates' speeches often became not only anti-super-power, but anti-US. This also showed up in vivid description of the effects of nuclear war, the toll of lives, social destruction (but not destruction of the environment, that was forgotten by practically everybody). No NATO country did this, which is not strange as it is NATO doctrine to keep open the option of using nuclear arms, first. This did not pass unnoticed. Most people hate nuclear arms and see them as criminal — Brezhnev's pledge knowledges this at least verbally. The approach taken by Reagan and NATO endorses them and their use.

The weakness of the Third World, however, is also clear. The moral stance, the focus on human needs and development, the condemnation of the arms race are all very fine. But there is often a lack of knowledge that could relate the proposals more concretely to the disarmament efforts made. More importantly: the Third World countries, like all others, talk very much about disarming others, or in vague terms that "we should all disarm". With the very poor record of Geneva disarmament conferences under the ritualistic heading of "balanced, mutual and verifiable" it would have been helpful if Third World countries could come forward saying "My country will never acquire offensive weapons", "My country will never permit any bases", "My country is dismantling the bases there are", etc. Disarmament, like most virtuous things, starts at home, not around a negotiation table. One more reason why there was History in the General Assembly Hall when Gromyko made public Brezhnev's unilateral pledge.

And the Western countries had to go around in the Delegates Lounge mumbling about "clever political manoeuvre", etc. But not the Western non-aligned, however Western their mentality in other fields. By far the best speeches have been made by Sweden, Finland, Yugoslavia, Austria, Ireland and Malta — particularly the latter, combining a deep moral commitment that can be openly expressed, unimpeded by alliance commitments and mental distortion, with factual knowledge. Thus, Austria was the only one to mention a key dimension in any approach to alternative security: the distinction between offensive and defensive technology, in the from of electronic fences. No doubt it is in these countries that the source of moral and political leadership, if there is any, can be found — the many good if not exactly new proposals made by the Palme Commission being an example (mentioned by several non-aligned conutries and by social democratic Denmark).

But there is still a fourth dividing line, very clearly seen in New York these days: between self-congratulating diplomats and UN officials one the one hand, and the peace movement exemplified by the rally of close to one million in Central Park on June 12 — another historic day. Of course it is partly a question of language: the grim faces particularly of NATO diplomats, well expressed in the sour face of US Ambassador Kirkpatrick when she passed the Japanese Buddhist monks with their chants and drums and mild but determined faces outside the US mission. It is emotive versus bureaucratic language, although many of the speeches have also been quite emotional.

But there is another point that is far more important. It is so barren, so sterile in terms of proposals what goes on inside; so rich, so imaginative, so much more down to the ground and realistic much of what can be heard outside, except if one takes as a definition of "realistic" that which an average foreign office delegate can understand. The nuclear freeze approach of the US movement, and the nuclear zone approach of the European movement, have just as good or better experts behind them than what governments can muster. So does the no-first use approach, which by now has split the Washington expert community wide open in a way quite entertaining to observers. If the UN Special Session was not by consensus but by voting, it has been estimated that a good nuclear freeze resolution could get at least 125 our of 157 votes, isolating the Western powers (and with some others abstaining). That would be helpful — the UN cannot bind governments in this field any-how, so it might be just as useful to get a clear image of who favour real steps and who do not.

How long can this go on? The counter-demonstrations against the peace movement mobilise very few people, so there is no doubt where the active population in the West stands. If their views coincide with those of governments in the socialist countries and in the Third World, then how long can the Western governments continue in their sterile way of thinking? What they will do now is to water down, dilute all that has come forth, take the teeth out of it, send it back to the totally impotent Committee of Disarmament in Geneva (the report of which for this session is a landmark in non-achievement), combining cold war rhetoric with further armament, including the installation of Pershing II and Cruise so much wanted by the USA and some of the people high up in the NATO governments.

Result? Highly Predictable The Soviet Union will develop and deploy the same arms. The Soviet Union *may* also see this as their Cuba 1962, and deploy intermediate missiles close to the USA (in Cuba, Nicaragua — or on surface ships off the US Pacific coast). Or — they may see the deployment, particularly on German soil, as a *casus belli.* In which case most of us do not have to worry about death from cancer or heart attack any longer. ☐

(June 21)

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France: "Socialist Austerity"?

SCHOFIELD CORYELL

THE Mitterrand Government has just officially entered its anticipated "second phase" with the announcement of a series of new economic measures that do not entirely spare the industrialists and higher-income brackets but also adversely affect wage-earners generally, with the exception of those at the very bottom of the scale.

The new economic package — involving, among other things, an across-the-board wage and price freeze for the next four months — accompanies a moderate devaluation of the franc, the second in a year, that the Government hopes will give a boost to the French economy by making its products more competitive on the world market.

The purpose of the whole operation — which Economics Minister Jacques Delors described as an "electric shock treatment" — is, in the reasoning of the Government at its present stage, to try to cope simultaneously with the linked problems of inflation and unemployment by combining "economy" measures with those of "social justice".

The nature of the economic package was already hinted at in the press conference Mitterrand held in the immediate aftermath of the fruitless and disappointing economic Summit Conference at Versailles, where the leaders of the "seven richest countries" of the capitalist world reviewed their conflicting interests and diverging policies with respect to the common problems of stagnation and inflation.

Mitterrand began the part of his statement devoted to economic questions with a reference to the "world crisis", stressing the problems caused by excessively high US interest rates that result in higher prices for the French consumers and impede all efforts at recovery in Europe.

He then launched into a description of the negative "heritage" the conservative government of Giscard d'Estaing had left behind: the steady decline of the franc, an inflation rate of 14 per cent, the rapid increase of unemployment figures until they reached the two million mark, the rising foreign trade deficit, the decay of the productive apparatus, the "loss of the domestic market" to foreign competition, especially Japanese and American.

In the hope of reversing the trend toward economic deterioration in every area, Mitterrand explained that the Socialist Government, from the outset, put the emphasis on the effort to "reconquer the domestic market" by restructuring French industry, nationalising vital sectors of the economy and thereby enabling the state to promote an extensive programme of research and investment that private industrialists would not have been willing to undertake.

Mitterrand defined the economic objectives of the present Government as "growth with security", adding that, to achieve this end, "increasing consumption is not enough by itself. It could even be dangerous to the extent that inflationist factors could come into play unless counterbalanced. The economic recovery policy must be complemented by expanding investment."

It was clear that, while Mitterrand was talking about public investment as the principal "motor" of the economy in the coming period, he also hopes to see an increase of investment by private business. All the members of the present Government are visibly worried by the stagnation of such investment at the present time and the large-scale "flight of capital" out of the country.

Mitterrand went on to point out that, in his view, the two problems of unemployment and inflation have to be handled together. "Nothing is more inflationist than an unemployed person and we cannot try to cure one of these diseases without making an effort to cure the other." He explained that, in the first year of the Socialist Government, unemployment remained considerable but did not increase with the same rapidity as under previous administrations — a meagre boast, but better than nothing!

In this connection, the President stressed the importance of not falling into the economic trap of Reagan's America, for example, "where each point of reduced inflation is paid for by adding hundreds of thousands to the ranks of the unemployed."

The fight for economic recovery, Mitterrand argued, would be waged not only through a policy of expanding investments but also by an effort to "master the budget" and particularly to reduce the chronic and inflationary Social Security deficit. Since the Socialist Government has no intention of curtailing payments to the old and the sick, this budget-balancing operation can only be carried out through an increase in contributions not only from the employers but also from workers with steady jobs at reasonably good pay. "That is where solidarity comes into play," said Mitterrand.

These words were obviously intended to prepare the public for the economic package that was announced in mid-June by Prime Minister Mauroy. The new measures include, first of all, a price freeze effective until October 31. Both industrial and commercial prices are to be held at their present levels, but with the important exceptions of energy prices (oil, gas and electricity), farm prices and the prices of fresh fruits and vegetables. At the same time, incomes of all kinds are to be frozen for the same period — a measure that applies to wages but also to retail and wholesale profit margins and to dividends. Minimum wages will be slightly increased during that brief experimental period and the buying power of the recipients of the main social services — old age pensions, sickness and unemployment allowances — will be maintained intact. The national budget deficit will be limited to 3 per cent of the gross domestic product for the years 1982 and 1983 and social security dues will be increased.

In presenting and commending these measures, Prime Minister Mauroy began by explaining that the economic recovery policies of the Government over the past year — mainly those aimed at increasing the buying power of the lower-income groups — have been largely successful in that they have resulted in a growth rate of slightly over two per cent, as contrasted with a zero growth rate for most other European countries. But at the same time, he said, France's inflation rate has been significantly higher than that of her neighbours, a situation requiring an "adaptation" of the country's economic policies to new and difficult conditions.

The devaluation of the franc — or, as Mauroy put it, the "new monetary parities" — was decided upon in the context of a general realignment of the European Monetary System, whereby the franc was depreciated by 5.75 per cent and the Italian lira by 2.75 per cent, while the West German mark and the Dutch florin were upgraded by 4.25 per cent.

Mauroy declared that he was "counting on the dynamism of our employers" and that the "new monetary parities would create new opportunities for the development of our industries and trade, for the reconquest of various areas of our domestic market, for the expansion of our exports." At the same time, the unusual freezing of prices, wages and other incomes would hopefully close the gap between the French price level and that of other European countries by reducing the inflation rate to around 10 per cent.

The bulk of the Socialist Party — with its various tendencies — is in substantial agreement with the basic features of this new package of economic measures. The question is to what extent the Communist Party and the various labour unions on the one hand and the employers on the other will go along with this general belt-tightening policy that includes elements more or less disagreeable for all sides.

A hint of the Official Communist Party attitude was provided in a carefully-worded analysis by Philippe Herzog, one of the Party's leading economists, that was printed in *l'Humanite* the day following the announcement of the new measures.

Under the title, "Rigour where it is needed", Herzog generally accepted the overall concept of the plan but clearly indicated that, in the details and implementation of it, more emphasis should be placed on "making the rich pay" — though he did not employ such an oversimplified expression.

After admitting the "inevitability" of the devaluation and expressing approval of Mauroy's announced aim of combating inflation and unemployment simultaneously, Herzog proposed a series of additional "rigorous measures" designed to "reduce inequalities" and prevent the burden of the necessary readjustments from falling once again on the backs of the country's blue-collar workers.

His proposals included substantial tax increases on profits and other forms of capital income as well as on the "highest salaries", measures calculated to penalise speculation and the flight of capital, to bring down interest rates and decrease imports: a policy of encouraging "national production".

Since the Communist Party is closely associated with the Mitterrand Government and has four Ministers in the predominantly-Socialist Cabinet, not much opposition can be expected from that quarter to these "Left-wing austerity" measures. Herzog's implied criticism undoubtedly contains a large dose of demagogy intended to keep up the party's image as "sole defender of working-class interests."

Of more significance, perhaps, is the reticent attitude of the trade-unions, reflecting the feelings of the rank-and-file, who obviously do not relish sacrificing what have already been negotiated with the companies or are expected within the next few weeks.

Thus, when Prime Minister Mauroy himself addressed the CGT convention in the northern industrial centre of Lille, his words about freezing prices were enthusiastically applauded, while his proposals for an accompanying freezing of wages evoked a storm of boos and hisses. The CGT General Secretary Henri Krasucki scored a hit with the audience of delegates when he declared that "it is not against the victims of yesterday's policies but against the profiteers of yesterday that the necessary policy of rigour should be applied."

The public attitude of the CFDT — the country's second largest trade union federation — was similarly ambiguous in its mixture of approval and indirect criticism. In an official declaration, the CFDT executive sounded a note of warning: "The struggle against inflation is necessary but should not overshadow the struggle against unemployment." The CFDT National Secretary, Pierre Heritier, also expressed reservations when he said: "The proclamation of a wage freeze should not become an obstacle to on-going negotiations or to the indispensable raising of low wages."

The independent Left-wing daily, *Liberation*, pointed out that, as various public opinion polls seem to indicate, a substantial majority of the French people are ready to accept the concept of "austerity" — on condition that it be applied to everyone who can afford it — and roughly the same proportion (around 60 per cent) have confidence in Mitterrand's leadership.

"The fact is that, for all its defects, the present Government is not that of the powerful and the wealthy, and this is what people vaguely feel and what gives confidence to the famous "sociological majority' that emerged victorious on May 10, 1981".

But the editorialist goes on to say that, up to now, Mitterrand has not sufficiently taken advantage of this favourable situation by explaining frankly and convincingly what the problems and issues are and thereby winning enthusiastic popular backing for a complex and difficult policy of social reform and economic recovery.

Such backing will be necessary to counteract the fierce opposition and systematic obstructionism of the employers against the moderate concessions they are being asked to make. In an emergency meeting of the National Centre of French Employers, the mood was ugly and negative — so much so that the President of this powerful organisation, Yvon Gattaz, switched from his initially somewhat conciliatory position to an attitude of adamant rejection of the reformist aspects of the Government's new economic measures.

Thus, the employers' leader — assuming a stance *Liberation* described as one of "blackmail" — served notice that the price freeze was unacceptable to the employers generally. He called for drastic cut-backs in state welfare expenditures and for substantial reductions in employers' contributions to Social Security and in business taxes. He denounced as "costly" and "useless" the concept of "workers' new rights" — including the right to be informed of the firm's operations, the right to negotiate terms with the employer, the right to participate in the decision-making process — that is now in the process of being enacted into law.

While the Government has made it clear that the basic content of the new economic measures is "not negotiable", the details are being worked out in consultation with the main forces concerned — the employers and the trade unions, with each side trying hard to bend the announced policy in a direction favourable to its own interests. The key word used in the French press is "compensation" — both sides want as much "compensation" as possible for the concessions they are required to make.

The Government of Francois Mitterrand is engaged in a typically social-democratic attempt to rectify partially some of the more blatant injustices and inequalities of capitalism without challenging the basic logic and mechanisms of existing system. The continuation of extensive French arms sales to repressive Third World regimes and the strange political alliance between Socialist France and Reagan's America — whose economic policies Mitterrand rejects — are the flagrant external manifestations of the internal contradictions of the French political scene. Such contradictions can be overcome, if at all, only by a vast and energetic popular mobilisation to support the Government against its powerful and enraged Right-wing enemies while pushing it further to the Left than Mitterrand originally intended to go. ☐

How Real is Recession in Indian Economy?

GIRISH MISHRA

INDUSTRIALISTS and their press have been claiming for some time that the economy is in the grip of acute recession and with every passing day the situation is going from bad to worse. In support they cite data and facts to show the increasing difficulty being experienced in marketing industrial products. They point out that inventories have been accumulating in a number of important industries. Take, for example, cotton textiles. In spite of a prolonged strike in Bombay, which will soon complete six months, mills elsewhere in the country still carry huge stocks of cloth and yarn. According to a newspaper report: "The all-India stocks in January 1981 were 302.8 million metres compared to 360.6 million metres in January 1982, which was on the high side. During the period February-March 1981, the stocks, however, had dwindled to 267.6 million metres owing to pre-Budget clearance sales following rumours of a contemplated increase in excise duty. Then onwards the inventories steadily increased to a level of 360.6 million metres by January 1982. What was worse, even the festival season — September-November 1981 — could not bring any relief to the industry.

"Notwithstanding the loss of production in some Bombay and Kerala mills towards the end of 1981, the movement of stocks piled up with mills at other centres, could not also be stimulated."

Sixty mills of Bombay have not been carrying on production for almost six months and have cleared accumulated stocks worth Rs 100 crore, but even this has not lessened the marketing difficulties of other mills. To quote another report: "The all-India figures of stocks with the mills, excluding those in Bombay, stood at 265 million metres towards January-end. The stocks increased to 278 million metres in February. "Thereafter, though the stocks declined to 252 million metres in April on account of marriages and the purchases for the summer season, the figures remained considerably higher as compared to the figure for the corresponding period last year.

It is pointed out that recession in the textile industry has adversely affected those industries that supply inputs to it. Manufacturers of textile machinery, dyes and chemicals and stores are feeling the pinch. They are receiving no new orders. Even the old orders are being sought to be kept under suspension or cancelled.

The inventories of manufactured items with tractor companies have been rising. The total number of tractors with manufacturers and dealers was 9,500 in January this year which increased and reached 14,500 in April. This happened notwithstanding the fact that the monthly production of tractors declined by more than 2,000 in January and by 5,000 in April.

The same is the story with refrigerator manufacturers. Even though the price of the medium-size refrigerator has been reduced by more than Rs 1.000, sale has not improved. It is estimated that the number of refrigerators with manufacturers and dealers may be more than one lakh or so.

Jute industry is facing recession both inside and outside the country. Sales have declined sharply. It is said that the exports of jute and carpet-backing cloth have come down to 4,000 tonnes a month from the normal average monthly exports of 8,000 tonnes.

The Government has placed an order for two lakh bales of jute goods but this has not brought much relief to the industry.

According to a study by a big business organisation, 61 per cent of 246 industrial units of 23 industry groups covered are experiencing difficulties in sustaining the tempo of their activities because of lack of sufficient effective demand.

Engineering industrial units are hard hit by recession. Those located in West Bengal are facing grave difficulties and they may have to down their shutters if the situation does not improve. According to a survey conducted by the Calcutta-based Indian Chamber of Commerce, 60 per cent of the industries located in the eastern zone are experiencing the impact of demand recession. Tea companies are compelled to sell their stocks at low prices because they cannot get sufficient bank credit to hold them and the demand is so sluggish that they cannot hope to get better prices.

It is pointed out that 31 industries registered a negative rate of growth during April 1981 to February 1982 and after that the rate has further gone down. To give some more examples, the rate of growth for nitrogenous fertilisers was 48.2 per cent during the first eleven months of 1981-82 but during January-February 1982 it came down to only 23.1 per cent. The rate of growth of cement production was 14.3 per cent during the first eleven months of 1981-82, which slumped to only 3 per cent towards the end of this period. The same is the story with cigarettes (the rates of growth for corresponding periods were 9.3 and 7.7 per cent), steel castings (the growth rate declined from 5.5 per cent to 1.6 per cent), structurals from 5.6 per cent to (—) 5.6 per cent), black and galvanised steel pipes (from 1.6 per cent to (—) 0.5 per cent), aluminium (from 4.4 per cent to (—) 11.6 per cent), welding electrodes (from 6.1 per cent to 3.3 per cent), machine tools (from 28.6 to 8.1 per cent), railway wagons (from 34.5 to 20 per cent), commercial vehicles (from 28.5 to 19.1 per cent) and cars (from 38.9 per cent to (—) 2.9 per cent).

The blame for this situation is being put on the Government's policies. It is said that high indirect taxation and stringent credit policy have led to escalation in prices and consumers are not prepared to buy at high prices. It is pointed out that on a refrigerator of medium size the total incidence of taxes comes to more than 80 per cent, excise duty alone alone accounting for 42 per cent.

The Reserve Bank has liberalised its credit policy by bringing down the cash reserve ratio from 7.75 per cent to 7 per cent, but even then industrialists have been making a noise about the difficulties in borrowing funds. It is pointed out by industrialists that if they have enough bank credit they can hold the stocks and better the prices in the market, and at the same time carry on production. Thus they press for drastic changes in Government policies which will include reduction in the incidence of indirect taxation and further liberalisation of credit policy.

The Government denies that there is recession in the economy. The Secretary to the Department of Economic Affairs, R.N. Malhotra, recently held a press conference to refute tbe propaganda of the private sector. According to him, what appears to be recession in several industries is in fact just an adjustment between demand and supply. In support of this contention, he has referred to commercial vehicles and tractors and denied that there has been any real decline in their production. The troubles have arisen because a number of people registered themselves with dealers and thought they would get tractors and trucks after 18 months when they would be able to sell them at a premium, but what happened was that as a result of increased production the waiting period as well as the resale price declined and these people declined to take delivery and this led to an increase in stocks. In the case of fertilisers the demand has increased by 11 per cent. The Reserve Bank has refuted the charge that tight credit policy has led to the paucity of funds with industry. The total volume of bank credit to the commercial sector has increased. According to available data, the total volume of bank credit during the week ending on May 7, 1982, was Rs 42,888 crores which was Rs 5,980 crores more than during the corresponding period last year.

Nobody denies that in certain industries some difficulties are being experienced but they are not due to the factors cited by the industrialists. They are the result of the pattern of economic development and policies adopted by the Government in recent times. Since no radical change has been brought about in property relations and the pattern of income distribution in the economy, industries have developed on the basis of a narrrow demand base. Only about 40 per cent of the population counts in the market and even of this a microscopic minority goes in for luxury items. Whenever the narrow demand base fluctuates it creates tremors for private manufacturers. The latter think that they can go on inflating the prices of luxury products without any impact on sales, and here lies their folly. In five years they have increased the price of a car by 115 to 135 per cent, of a ceiling fan by 25 per cent and of fine and superfine cloth and of synthetic fibres by 200 per cent or more. The private sector does not care to improve the quality of products or to increase the efficiency of production by reducing costs of production. It thinks that the demand is almost inelastic because black money holders and the rural rich have no alternative way of spending their money. But this is not in conformity with the realities.

With the plan in jeopardy, public spending in real terms has not been increasing and developmental activities and the expansion of the public sector are neglected, and the result is that employment opportunities are not increasing and income generation is at a very low level. This is restraining demand.

The liberalised import policy has enabled foreign companies to flood the Indian market with their unsold goods. Since there is recession in the Western countries, manufacturers there have been looking for outlets in countries like India to solve their marketing problem. It is admitted even by

Finance Minister, Pranab Mukherjee that by taking advantage of the expanded list under the OGL, a number of Western companies with the help of their friends here have started dumping their goods in India. The imports of four product groups — namely steel, aluminium, chemicals and non-ferrous metals — together account for an annual outgo of Rs 2,000 crores in foreign exchange and there is criminal wastage of capacity created with huge investments. It may be recalled in this connection that a liberalised import policy is one of the conditions of the IMF loan.

It follows that the present situation requires deep thinking and far-reaching changes in the pattern of economic development and policies. ☐

(*June 27*)

Smallpox : Prevention Is Still Best Cure

VIMAL BALASUBRAHMANYAN

THE article 'What if smallpox reappears' (*Mainstream*, February 13) reportedly caused a flurry in Government and medical circles. While experts at Calcutta's School of Tropical Medicine say that, as far as scientific parameters go they do not dispute the 'smallpox zero' claim, they also admit that the possible use of the virus in warfare is not something that scientists are competent to rule out. Their view is that discontinuation of primary vaccination is justified provided it is backed by an alert machinery which will act immediately, commando fashion, if smallpox is ever re-introduced by accident or design. Some very valid questions therefore are: Knowing the kind of public health network we have in this country, can this kind of zooming into action be reasonably expected of the personnel concerned? Has the Government even realised the need to maintain such a task force? And as long as this criterion remains unsatisfied, does the Government have the moral right to deny the Indian population the benefit of continued immunity?

First, a quote from Indira Gandhi. In a message dated July 30, 1975, she had said: "Smallpox is a disease of economic backwardness. Its eradication is an important event. It is important now to ensure that there is no relapse through complacence or negligence." Incidentally, smallpox can attack anyone regardless of social, economic, nutritional or health status — unlike TB or cholera which are truly diseases of economic backwardness. But the persistence of smallpox in this country, decades after the developed nations had eradicated it, was a direct result of the negligence of our public health network. There is no evidence that this network has in any way been transformed. Hence if smallpox reappears, given the present complacence, the effects could be disastrous.

There has been a general euphoria, much mutual backscratching and self-congratulation over India's 'success' in eradicating smallpox. Nothing could give this complacence a ruder jolt than the sobering facts recorded in two WHO publications on the eradication programme. Health Ministry policy-makers would do well to devote deep study to these two eyeopeners. One is *The Global Eradication of Smallpox: Final Report of the Global Commission for the Certification of Smallpox Eradication, WHO, 1980 (History of International Public Health, No. 4)*. The other is *The Eradication of Smallpox from India by R.N. Basu, Z. Jezek and N.A. Ward (WHO South-East Asia Regional Office, New Delhi, 1979)*. The instances specifically concerning India quoted in this article are from the second book. All the facts from both books tell their own tales and have important lessons to offer.

(1) The smallpox epidemic in Gulbarga (Karnataka) in 1972 shows how deliberate concealment and poor reporting of smallpox cases can lead to a massive epidemic situation: "A large unreported smallpox epidemic, which started in Gulbarga district in December 1970, continued through 1971, reaching a peak in April 1972, after which it declined. There was a total of 1,359 smallpox cases and 123 deaths, affecting 128 villages and five municipalities. In 1970 there was only one case but in 1971 there were 198 cases with 18 deaths and in 1972 as many as 1,160 cases with 105 deaths. In a few instances it was found that even though the field staff had detected smallpox in their areas, the information was concealed. The medical officers of the PHCs and even higher authorities did not report outbreaks." For example, the Medical Officer of Health, PHC, Kalgi, and the District Health and Family Planning Officer, Gulbarga, were duly informed by official correspondence about the smallpox outbreak which had been present in Chittapur town since September 1971 (this town became the epicentre of the Gulbarga epidemic). These authorities, however, did not report the outbreak to State headquarters. Neither did they initiate any containment measures. Local administrative authorities such as revenue department officials, police patels, village munsiffs, office-bearers of panchayats, etc, also did not report the outbreak.

If smallpox reappears, what is the guarantee against another Gulbarga-type episode?

(2) Mass misdiagnosis in Bhandara: In Bhandara district of Maharashtra, there were 448 smallpox cases with 45 deaths in 1973-74. The district first reported smallpox cases in the third week of January 1974 after a long period of being smallpox free. The first four detected cases had actually occurred in mid August 1973 in Gondia town and the source of infection could not be traced. Investigation of pock-marked persons indicated that smallpox had been present in the town for a long time. Eventually 64 cases resulting in six deaths occurred in the town in the subsequent six months, the majority being known to the health staff. The diagnosis had been chickenpox but verification of this by

more experienced experts was never sought and, in spite of the occurrence of deaths, no attempt had been made to verify the diagnosis by lab examination. Because of the delay of 140 days in arriving at correct diagnosis, infection had spread to more villages and eventually to Madhya Pradesh. "The important lesson was that all outbreaks involving fever with skin eruption should have verification of diagnosis by a competent authority."

Have we learnt this lesson? Are we sure misdiagnosis will not recur? And what is the guarantee against deliberate 'misdiagnosis' just to prevent a 'scare'?

(3) Reward for detection: "Traditionally neither the health workers nor the general public were motivated to report smallpox cases." A report of smallpox by health staff was considered evidence that vaccination work was incomplete and in some instances field workers were even punished for reporting smallpox cases. In 1974 it was realised that workers and field searchers employed in ation programme were not publicising the reward, and often, though cases were reported by the public, the health worker would claim the reward. It became necessary to organise widespread publicity about the reward and a dual reward was introduced so that both the public informant and the health worker received Rs 1,000.

If smallpox reappears and spreads, big rewards may be needed for reporting and containment. Surely all the funds saved in discontinuing vaccination will be quickly used up?

It is relevant at this point to ask: Why did India fail to eradicate smallpox by the simple process of total compulsory vaccination and thus prevent thousands of deaths and thousands of cases of permanent blindness? In 1966, when the 19th World Health Assembly called for intensification of eradication, India accounted for 64 per cent of global smallpox incidence. Other countries had already eradicated smallpox without any crash eradication programme and long before freeze dried vaccine or the bifurcated needle arrived on the scene. A popular myth is that the 'illiterate and superstitious' Indian masses with their belief in 'Shitala Mata' strongly resist vaccination. The truth seems to lie elsewhere — in the indifference of the health personnel and their negligence of their vaccination duties. For, the WHO study says: "During the course of smallpox eradication activities, enthusiasm and acceptance of vaccination has been the norm and resistance to vaccination the exception. During the Intensified Campaign no strong cultural or religious resistance to vaccination sufficient to have any influence on the programme was encountered."

Another lesson emerges from the way the developing countries, which had been smallpox-free, tackled instances of re-introduction of smallpox from endemic countries by visitors. These importation cases occurred in countries which had discontinued vaccination. The problems of recognition of smallpox when it has not occurred for a long time, controlling its spread and stamping it out give us an idea of what we shall face if smallpox reappears. The question obviously is: Are we really equipped to tackle a situation which even countries with superior health facilities had problems in controlling?

Ten outbreaks in Europe arising from cases imported from India were recorded between 1962 and 1974. Most importations originated from Asia and Africa. Particularly interesting was the 1972 outbreak in Yugoslavia which had not had a single case of smallpox since 1945. The final count was 175 cases and 35 deaths. A pilgrim returning from Iraq developed mild smallpox and 11 cases developed among his many contacts. In the process of reaching a diagnosis this patient passed through four hospitals and 48 cases resulted of which 42 were *hospital personnel and hospital contacts*. Other contacts of the index case spread the disease to 17 villages.

In their book, *Smallpox: Cholera* (1977), Romanian virologists V. Tudor and I. Strati discuss the significance of the Yugoslav episode: "(1) The disease was not recognised and the initial cases and the secondary ones spread the disease; (2) in-hospital infection appears to play an important role in the foci of intact countries; (3) the deficient immunological background of the population (not vaccinated or vaccinated long ago)."

The Romanian scientists' book was written before total global eradication was achieved. However, the following observation from the book, made in the context of smallpox being imported into an 'intact' country is applicable to the reintroduction of smallpox into a smallpox-free world:

"The WHO considers that in the countries with *a well-organised health network* the fact that systematic vaccination has been given up only represents a restricted risk, since any epidemic episode is rapidly detected and eradicated; *where the sanitary organisation is not highly efficient, however, the consequences of renouncing vaccination may spell disaster*. (Emphasis added.)

"*The elimination of routine vaccination demands therefore a perfect organisation of the health service* which implies rapid action for the detection of any imported case, and the primary, secondary or indirect contacts. In addition, the elimination of routine vaccination demands a corresponding supply of vaccines, chemical substances and equipment so as to be able to intervene operatively at any moment." (Emphasis added.)

Do we have the kind of preparedness which alone would justify discontinuation of vaccination? Incidentally, Romania is one of the seven countries yet to announce a vaccination policy. India, which at one stage was known as the world's largest exporter of smallpox, seems to have gone in for a hasty decision.

Some more points arise. An expert committee advised the Global Commission for Eradication of Smallpox in February 1979 that it was necessary for 'scientific' reasons to preserve smallpox virus in a few labs but that the position should be reviewed in 1982. Has the review been done? Precisely what are the 'scientific' reasons? Why should not all stocks be destroyed so that the world is really smallpox-free? One enthusiastic stop-vaccination lobbyist gave a vague reason that the virus should be preserved as a kind of museum piece for future scientists. Why should the academic interest of a minuscule fraction override the health interests of the vast majority?

Again, who decides which countries shall retain the virus and why this arbitrarry choice? In India, the School of Tropical Medicine and the Infectious Diseases Hospital, Madras, *voluntarily* destroyed all stocks in June 1976. The Virus Research Institute, Pune, followed suit in November. And finally, the National Institute of Communicable Diseases, Delhi, destroyed its stock at the end of 1976. Nobody seems to know on whose advice NICD destroyed its stock. Some countries with clout — USA, South Africa, USSR, Netherlands and UK — have a stock of the virus (as of February 1981). Why did not India retain a stock as a deterrent and as a weapon for retaliation?

Here's something more to chew on: Out of seven labs that had smallpox virus as of December 1979, one was the US Army Medical Research Institute for Infectious Diseases which retained its stock till April 1980 and then transferred it to the Centre for Disease Control. What was smallpox virus doing in an army institute in a country where the disease had been eradicated long ago?

A former scientist at the School of Tropical Medicine, who is also member, WHO Expert Panel on Virus Diseases, is an ardent stop-vaccination advocate. (In a letter to the AIR station director he had protested strongly against a radio talk by a senior Calcutta paediatrician who told listeners that despite eradications.smallpox vaccination should be done at least once after birth.) In his B.C. Roy Memorial Lecture last July, he had enumerated the reasons why vaccination should be discontinued and, referring to the possibility of biological warfare, he had said that if an aerosol of smallpox virus is released, "the spread can be terminated in four to six weeks". Is there any basis for such an optimistic outlook? The Yugoslav incident started in February and the last of the 167 cases was recorded in April. To quote the Romanian virologists again: "Apart from the loss of human lives, the import of smallpox cases into other countries also involves upheaval of social life and serious financial losses; For instance in the USA in 1947, a single imported case generated 12 secondary cases necessitating an intense vaccination campaign in New York that included six million inhabitants. In Yugoslavia the mass vaccination initiated in 1972 included approximately 18 million campaign inhabitants and the survey measures taken affected the life of vast regions."

Regarding vaccination policy, a Reuter report from Geneva last November said that India and China had joined the list of nations that had decided to discontinue vaccination. One expects that such an announcement should more appropriately come from New Delhi. If this is really India's official decision, then one assumes that India has stopped vaccine production and relies on WHO's "insurance against an unlikely event", that is, 300 million doses to be stored in Geneva, New Delhi and Toronto for 'emergency use'. However, it appears that the Government has not really finalised its policy. According to sources, vaccine is still being produced at the centres in Belgaum and Guindy. As recently as the last week of May the Calcutta Vaccine Institute had sent a batch for potency testing to the School of Tropical Medicine. Has the Government made a final decision on vaccination or is still in two minds? Incidentally, five countries — Burma, Chad, Egypt, Kuwait and Tunisia — still have vaccination.

There is also the question of the stability of vaccines kept for emergency use. WHO questionnaires in 1967 regarding potency and stability of vaccines as tested in various producing labs all over the world showed that only 16 out of 45 labs recorded satisfactory results. Of the 16 labs which submitted samples for independent testing only seven met WHO requirements. What if the emergency doses prove to be ineffective when the time comes for their use?

Another tricky aspect is diagnosis: "Smallpox can be diagnosed readily on clinical examination in 80 to 90 per cent of the cases. In endemic areas lab confirmation is rarely necessary. As the incidence of smallpox decreases, lab verification, however, becomes increasingly important." But even in lab testing there can be disagreements. In January 1975 the Government concentrated lab investigation in one place — the National Smallpox Reference Lab at NICD. One of the duplicate specimens used to be sent to NICD and the other to a WHO Regional Reference Lab. "Four specimens reported as negative in the WHO lab were found positive in the NICD." The problems that will result from a possible future reappearance of smallpox are mind-boggling.

Under the heading "Possible sources for a return of smallpox "the WHO report has this to say: "In 1972 many nations in the world signed the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their destruction. Nevertheless, abhorrent as such an act would be, the possibility of smallpox virus being deliberately released by an individual or group as an act of sabotage or terrorism cannot be excluded. *The*

SOME FACTS

* In India, five years after a national eradication campaign began in 1962, the number of reported cases was larger than in any year since 1958.

* In September 1963, evaluation by NICD found that the recorded figures for vaccination were higher than the real figures.

* Before the cash award was announced, surveys showed that only 2 to 10 per cent of smallpox cases were ever notified and in some areas even less.

* During the Intensified Campaign between 1974 and 1977, the Centre contributed about $ 19 million, the States and Union Territories $ 21 million and WHO $ 11 million.

* The vaccination policy of Albania, Algeria, Gabon, Romania, San Marino and the two Koreas is "not known".

* On April 30 this year Defence Minister R. Venkataraman told the Lok Sabha that the Government was "aware" of Pakistan's efforts to develop biological warfare agents. —*V.B.*

potential harm of such an act would increase as the immunity of the population waned; in addition to illness or death there would be psychological and possibly socio-economic damage. However, the risk should not be exaggerated. *Unless the public health services had completely broken down,* the outbreak that followed could be readily contained and the virus eliminated." (Emphasis added). The operative words here are the ones italicised. Our public health services may not have 'completely broken down' but nobody can deny that they are far from satisfactory and don't inspire confidence.

As one doctor put it, our Government needs little persuasion to dismantle an existing facility. But if the need to mobilise it again occurs — that's a different story altogether. ☐

Agriculture in U.P.: Some Issues

G.P. MISHRA

Existence of agrarianism is said to be the basic characteristic of an agriculture-dominated backward economy. This characteristic unfolds two things: firstly, preponderance of peasants, and secondly, adoption of traditional techniques and practices in agriculture from one generation to another. These two in fact manifest an agrarian situation of natural dependency on agriculture. The situation of natural dependency on agriculture shows that the peasants are not exposed to available technological alternatives nor they are in position to respond to their uses in agriculture. In either case, agriculture suffers from low yields and production uncertainty. The peasants also remain fatalistic. As a result, agricultural backwardness persists.

Modernisation of agriculture is held to be the best way to remove agricultural backwardness, and agrarianism stands as a stumbling block in the way of the process of growth in agriculture. As a concept, modernisation of agriculture implies two things: (a) technological transformation of agriculture, and (b) evolution of a new class of peasants, called progressive peasants of farmers. In other words, modernisation of agriculture should aim at changing the tradition-bound form of production into the modern technical form and also at making peasants responsive and adaptive to changes in the technical form of production.

Since the inception of planning in rural India, some planned efforts have been made to modernise agriculture. Three sets or packages of policy programmes launched so far are worth mentioning: firstly, intensive agricultural development programmes; secondly, the introduction of new technology; and thirdly, intensive rural development programme. The first two constitute a package of measures and schemes to introduce land-augmenting technological change in agriculture. The objective is to raise yield and employment potentials of agriculture for accelerating the rate of growth in production and income. The third includes a number of measures to develop rural areas based on cluster approach or growth centre theory or multi-level planning system. Among them, the programmes to diversify agriculture and allied activities are worth noting. This is the third stage of modernisation through which Indian agriculture is assumed to be passing. The success of this stage primarily depends on the extent to which the first two programmes have brought about changes in the technical form of production and in the structure of production relations.

Indian experience of modernising agriculture brings the following situations to notice. Firstly, there are areas or regions where the technical form of production has by and large changed into a new one and a class of progressive peasants has correspondingly emerged. Secondly, changes in the technical form of production and production relations have been partial. Thirdly, there has been negligible change in the technical form of production, and production relations more or less continue to be the same as they were previously. That is why agricultural development varies from one region to another and from one area to another within a given region. The inter-regional and intra-regional variations in agricultural development, as a consequence of corresponding variations in the process and form of modernisation, may be due to various reasons such as lack of productive investment in agriculture (whether public or private), continued dominance of landlordism, lack of minimum techno-economic infrastructure and lack of technical dynamism, and entrepreneurship. Whatever the list of factors restricting the process of growth in agriculture may be, the elements of agrarianism and agrarian social structure are supposed to impose limitations, in some form or other, on the process of modernisation and growth in agriculture.

In the above setting of modernisation and growth, let us take a look at UP agriculture. Uttar Pradesh, the fourth biggest State in terms of geographical area and the largest in terms of population, is a land of sharp regional variations — whether they are geographical or social or linguistic or geopolitical or economic. Its five regions — western, eastern, central, Bundelkhand and hills — have a lot of variations among themselves, and their agriculture and level of development also vary from one region to another. However, the spatial variations or characteristics may be mediated in terms of progress which has taken place in agriculture.

An overall picture of the progress in agriculture during 1975-76 is presented in Table 1. The table

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Table 1

PROGRESS IN UP AGRICULTURE

	Per cent growth over the period 1950-51 to 1975-76
Net cultivated area	5.19
Growth in total cropped area	15.06
Intensity of cropping	25.00
Area sown more than once	59.67
Growth in total irrigated area	69.73
Percentage of cropped area under HYV (1975-76)	27.00
Consumption of fertiliser per hectare (kg in 1975-76)	21.13
Growth in foodgrain production	65.00
Increase in yield per hectare:	
(a) Rice	72.34
(b) Wheat	55.39
(c) Sugarcane	51.16
Rate of growth in agricultural output (1950-51 to 1975-76)	1.75

Source: "Agrarian Change, Agrarian Tensions, Peasant Movements & Organisations in UP", by P.D. Shrimali, Lucknow University, 1981.

shows that the rates of growth in area sown more than once and the extent of irrigated area, the percentage increase in cropped area under HYV and consumption of fertiliser per hectare have not been unsatisfactory. But the average annual rate of growth in agricultural output stands at about 2 per cent, although foodgrain production has increased by 65 per cent (nearly 4 per cent increase per year) during the period 1950-51 to 1975-76. Moreover, yields per hectare of some major crops like rice, wheat and sugarcane have increased significantly during the same period. The changes in area sown more than once, area under HYV, consumption of fertiliser per hectare, extent of irrigated area and intensity of cropping indicate that agriculture has undergone the process of modernisation. As a result, yield potentials specially of foodgrains have also increased, leading to an increase of 65 per cent in the foodgrain production of the State. An aggregative picture of growth and modernisation, however, does not present a full but only a partial view, and the elements of agrarianism and the characteristics of the earlier agrarian production relations still seem to dominate agriculture at State level. The figures relating to items 3 to 5 in Table 1 are indicative of some changes that have taken place in the technical form of production but they are not sure signs of corresponding changes in the structure of production relations.

A more realistic picture of growth and modernisation may be presented if we have a close look at the disaggregative level of agriculture in the State. A close look at Table 2 shows the following: Firstly, the western region is a high-growth region wherein the rate of growth in agricultural output and the level of yield per hectare for foodgrains are the highest. Secondly, the central and eastern regions present a situation of medium growth wherein the annual rate of growth is about 2 per cent. Thirdly, the Bundelkhand region is a low-growth region having only 1 per cent annual rate of growth in agricultural production, and the level of yield is as low as 7 quintals and the foodgrains yield per hectare is 10 quintals.

The hill region presents a somewhat confusing picture because its growth rate is a little more than two per cent but the level of yield is near to that of the western region. This is due to the existence of two sub-regions — upland hills and Tarai. Hence progress in the hill region need separate analysis. However, it may be mentioned that the Tarai region is agriculturally as developed as the western region.

If the extent of irrigated area, intensity of cropping, area under HYV, consumption of fertiliser per hectare and mechanisation are taken together to show the magnitude of modernisation in agriculture, the western region has made significant progress. The region being in the high-growth group indicates that not only has the technical form of production changed but a class of progressive peasants has emerged.

The central and eastern regions more or less present the same level of modernisation as the western region does in respect of area under HYV and consumption of fertiliser per hectare (with slight difference). But these two regions having about 2 per cent growth rate and a lower level of yield per hectare indicates that the introduction of new technology is not accompanied by corresponding changes in the structure of production relations. As a result, the process of modernisation is partial

Table 2

PROGRESS IN AGRICULTURE REGION-WISE IN UP

	Western	*Central*	*Eastern*	*Bundelkhand*	*Hill*
Per cent growth in net cultivated area (1950-51 to 1975-76)	3.2	6.7	6.1	23.0	—9.9
Per cent growth in total cropped area (1950-51 to 1975-76)	19.62	13.04	9.64	26.41	24.54
Intensity of cropping	141.47	129.77	133.88	109.34	161.88
Net irrigated area as per cent of net cultivated area (1975-76)	63.18	37.65	43.06	22.41	22.95
Total irrigated area as per cent of total cropped area (1975-76)	53.74	34.27	35.11	21.40	21.73
Fertiliser consumption per hectare (kg in 1975-76)	27.02	15.45	22.59	4.52	14.73
Percentage of total cropped area under HYV	38.70	15.80	38.50	3.70	3.30
Average yield of foodgrains (quintals per hectare in 1975-76)	12.08	10.34	9.22	7.34	11.52
Average annual growth rate of agricultural output (1950-51 to 1975-76)	3.25	1.68	1.75	1.00	2.04

Source: Same as mentioned in Table 1.

Table 3: PROGRESS IN AGRICULTURE IN SOME SELECTED DISTRICTS IN UP

	Hamirpur	*Gorakhpur*	*Rae Bareli*	*Muzaffarnagar*	*Nainital*
Average size of holding	3.05	1.03	0.90	1.48	1.67
Percentage of net irrigated area	18.18	46.35	46.54	76.00	55.99
Percentage of area under commercial crops to total cropped area	6.58	6.14	4.24	38.15	16.59
Cultivated land as a percentage of total area	71.58	75.62	76.03	78.99	29.17
Intensity of cropping	103.88	142.47	105.03	145.00	165.00
Intensity of irrigation	101.20	101.82	114.23	131.42	137.36
Percentage of area under HYV crops	8.47	39.26	31.85	37.76	22.15
Fertiliser use per hectare in (kg)	2	77	14	84	14
Production of agricultural crops (in Rs):					
(a) Per hectare	489	1517	1383	3684	2845
(b) Per capita	363	329	306	765	110

Source: Same as in Table 4.

Table 4: REGION-WISE AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY PER HECTARE OF OPERATED AREA

District	*Tubewell*	*Pumpset*	*Driller*	*Seed Driller*	*Iron Plough*	*Tractor*
Gorakhpur	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.001	0.001	0.003
Muzaffarnagar	0.10	0.01	—	0.07	0.21	0.02
Rae Bareli	0.043	0.005	0	0.001	0.140	0.002
Nainital	0.002	0.035	0	0	0.001	0
Hamirpur	0.00	0.0001	0	0	0	0

Source: District Statistical Bulletins, Office of District Statistical Officer, Government of UP.

and its effect in agriculture is not the same as in the western region. The Bundelkhand region is the most backward in terms of both, changes in technical form of production and production relations. The elements of agrarianism and the earlier characteristics of agrarian relations in production seem to loom large still. The above regional characteristics of growth and modernisation thus show: (a) In the western region, the technical form of production and production relations, to a large extent, appear to have changed. (b) In the central and eastern regions, the technical form of production seems to be changing significantly but not the old characteristics of production relations. (c) In Bundelkhand changes in both seem to be minimal and so it is the most backward region.

The above features are further corroborated by some more figures for five districts representing the five regions, as shown in Table 3. This table shows that the process of modernisation is not only successful but is accompanied by a high rate of commercialisation in the western region as 38 per cent of the total cropped area of Muzaffarnagar district is under commercial crops. As a result, the value of agricultural output per hectare and per capita are in the order of Rs 3,685 and Rs 765. That is to say, both the form of production and production relations have progressively changed. The key to the success of these changes also lies in an increase in private investment if the extent of irrigated area under private tubewells, wells, pumpsets, etc, is taken into account. But the situation in other districts/regions is more or less the same as presented in the above analysis based on Table 2. The low percentage of total cropped area under commercial crops and the value of agricultural output per hectare and per capita being as low as Rs 1383 and Rs 306 and Rs 1517 and Rs 329 in Rae Bareli and Gorakhpur respectively show that the process of modernisations is partial despite changes in technical form of production being satisfactory. This implies that a class of progressive farmer has not significantly emerged in the central and eastern regions. The Hamirpur case presented in Table 3 is a typical case of agricultural backwardness, as the low level of yield per hectare and per capita is accompanied by a negligible level of modernisation.

The process of growth and modernisation in agriculture is supposed to accompany occupational diversification — that is, development of non-agricultural activities and shift of work-force load from agricultural to non-agricultural occupations. So the relative proportion of agricultural and non-agricultural workers to total workers is utilised to show occupational diversification in the rural areas of the State.

Table 5 shows a positive trend of changes in occupational distribution of the work-force in the State. The proportion of non-agricultural workers was 13 per cent in 1971 but according to the 1981 Census, it is 21 per cent in the State. The proportion of agricultural labourers to total workers shows some decline in 1981 over 1971; but the number of cultivators has gone up to about 68 per cent of the total workers in 1981.

The regional picture of occupational diversification is also more or less similar. But the Muzaffarnagar case is noteworthy because in this district of the western region, the proportion of non-agricultural workers to total workers is as high as 30 per cent (a small increase in the proportion of agricultural workers apart), and the proportion of cultivators to total workers (being as low as 41 per cent in 1981 and 48 per cent 1971) presents a trend of decline. Nainital also presents a similar trend of change in occupational distribution. Although the relative picture of change in the occupational distribution of workers in Gorakhpur and Rae Bareli shows some marginal increase in the proportion of non-agricultural workers, yet the proportions of cultivators and

Table 5 : OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF WORKFORCE (IN PERCENTAGE)

Districts	*Cultivators*		*Agr. Labourers*		*Non-agricultural workers*	
	1971	*1981*	*1971*	*1981*	*1971*	*1981*
Gorakhpur	46.65	52.97	37.85	26.09	15.50	20.92
Rae Bareli	65.49	67.08	22.40	17.86	12.11	15.05
Nainital	45.56	45.05	18.45	18.73	35.99	36.21
Muzaffarnagar	43.22	41.38	27.97	28.632	28.81	29.98
Hamirpur	51.74	53.64	33.07	28.15	15.19	18.21
UP	64.88	67.73	22.22	10.89	12.91	21.18

Source: 1971 & 1981 Census.

agricultural labourers are quite high. In Hamirpur, the proportion of cultivators shows a declining tendency; but the proportion of agricultural labourers is still high. In this district there has been some marginal increase in the proportion of non-agricultural labourers from 15 per cent in 1971 to 18 per cent in 1981. Thus the regional picture of occupational diversification shows significant change in a region where modernisation has been successful.

The above analysis shows that agricultural growth and modernisation have close association. But the impact of modernisation on growth in agriculture does not depend only on the introduction of changes in the technical form of production but also on characteristics of production relations. That is why we broadly observe three situations; (a) areas with high growth and modernisation; (b) areas with slow growth and partial modernisation; and (c) areas with very slow and low growth with negligible level of modernisation. The case of occupational diversification indicates that it is closely associated with the above situations in the economy.

A comparative analysis of the prevailing situations suggests that the introduction of technological changes is not sufficient for modernising agriculture for growth and development. The character of social relations in production (production relations) should also change. Changes in technical form of production and production relations, a combination of which in fact completes the conceptual meaning of modernisation, have significant bearing on the process of occupational diversification. Thus the agrarian characteristics of social relations in production cannot be overlooked while planning the process of growth through modernisation and diversification of occupational structure of work-force in an agriculture-dominated economy. It may also be borne in mind that public investment is not a sufficient condition for growth and modernisation; private investment is also necessary. How this can be encouraged should be worked out. This will be possible if technical dynamism and entrepreneurship grow and develop at the farm level. Comprehension of the agrarian situations in the totality of growth and development as perceived and conceived over a period of time is necessary; and the forces built into the agrarian social structure of produuction relations which restrict or arrest the process of modernisation and growth should be located and overcome.☐

Entrepreneurship and Planning

T.K. MOULIK

I would like to put forward some hypotheses on entrepreneurial development in developing countries. In fact, these hypotheses are not new. Long back, Karl Marx has done the analysis. I am only looking at entrepreneurial development in developing countries in the light of Marxist class analysis. The history of entrepreneurial development programmes in a developing country like India is merely the history of class evolution in the political economy of the country.

One should consider whether entrepreneurship development and creation of class differentiation are concomitant or not: I do not mean creation of a new class, but sharpening or widening of already existing class differentiation. One is surprised how in this country people remain totally blind to the existence of class and class struggle. Dogmatism is not the monopoly of Marxists. One of the most striking pieces of evidence of this is the extraordinary resistance that still exists to the idea that there are classes and class struggles in India, let alone the idea that they may be of central importance.

A careful analysis will reveal that a Schumpeterian entrepreneur is a thorogh bourgeois; so reimmiscent of the free enterprising rugged individual of our own heritage. He combines with an ostensible interest in the general welfare a more profound measure of self-interested cunning and economic calculation. His gaze is fixed on the *main chance*. His every public action is designed to make a competitive and invidious comparison with others to show a standing above the masses, that is, product of his own personal manufacture. In effect, like any capitalist entrepreneur, the entrepreneur in a developing country has two distinguishing characteristics: 'strength', that is, innovation coupled with self-assertion, and 'control, over resources as district from ownership of them.

With the spread of modern technology and market economy the traditional nexus between production/accumulation and distribution was broken. The two characteristics, 'strength' and 'control', facilitated the emergence of the rural big peasant and the

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so-called industrial entrepreneur class. Unless one could muster the initial strength within one's community to be able to tie up one's own traditionally ascribed higher status with modern technology, then to be part of the mass was inevitable. Some traditional status was useful in securing the initial advantages. The use of money provided the means whereby surplus production could be converted, stored and accumulated rather than dissipated. And what has emerged is an amalgam of 'big man' and entrepreneur: entrepreneurs in that they are keen innovators, eagerly seizing upon new ideas (including university education and motivation training). Also, they are beginning to show a proper entrepreneurial distaste for the distributive norms their societies traditionally attach to the acquisition of wealth. They manipulate caste group obligations to acquire labour cheaper than wage awards permit.

'Group' enterprises are in reality controlled by the leaders, not by the group *per se*. They are the new elite — that is becoming increasingly self-confident, assertive, politically active and powerful — able to transfer power and wealth to their heirs.

The hypothesis is that this political evolution of a developing country like India marked by the emergence of a new elite entrepreneur class has been nurtured and developed by a congenial supporting system. What is this supporting system? In the political history of India, there are three distinct phases; First, the colonial administration phase. The establishment of 'control' over India by the British must have been a traumatic experience. This was closely followed by the emergence of a class of collaborators who assiduously cultivated the new masters and penetrated the colonial institutions. The landlords and administration officers were the beneficiaries of this new world and they were men of some status in their own community. Second, the independent Government phase. By the late 1950s the elite entrepreneur collaborators matured and changed into the big peasant and industrial entrepreneur class. This was associated with the increasing development of agriculture and industry. This phase was also marked by the increasing independence of big peasants and industrial entrepreneurs on the government, while earlier collaborators had been virtually parasites on government. This semi-autonomy began to allow them to make organised demands upon the Government. These entrepreneurs greeted the supporting governmental institutions with enthusiasm. On the other hand, the cooperatives proved unable to handle the aspirations of these eentrepreneurs because of (1) recruitment based on community and (2) rigid organisational and fiscal structure. This phase ended with the entrepreneur elites (now a big peasant and vigorous industrial entrepreneur class) by the early sixties directing their ambitions towards the phase three institutions and support system.

Phase Three can be described as that of Interest Association/Dynamic Communal Association. This phase is in response to a situation when the utility of money equals or is less than the return per unit of labour, resulting in stagnation. This does not mean entrepreneurial development is finished, but that without massive capital inputs it cannot lead to any substantial increase in economic output by hitherto-utilised methods. Something new in terms of techniques is needed. Hence the World Bank projects, sophisticated techniques and massive capital investment in industrial projects.

The social reaction to the situation has been increased tendency towards individualism at the expense of community consciousness. Thus, there has been a process of individualisation of the right of ownership of the important means of production, and it is supported by the Government.

With this started interest association or dynamic communal association by entrepreneurs in the mid-sixties. There has been a spurt of licences for various industrial projects and agricultural technologies, with Government initiative through entrepreneurial development programme has led to the formation of interest association by the elite entrepreneurs.

Through interest association the elite entrepreneurs seek to control the provision of Government services at the local level with the limited objective of benefiting the exclusively recruited members of these associations. Their elitism is seen in attempts at making association membership exclusive, their desire for symbols of their status and for receiving deference from politicians and civil servants. Their interests are pursued through attempts to control political interests and development officials at the local level and use their pressure for assistance and subsidy. On the national level they are 'nationalist' in a quasi 'national-bourgeois' style.

These elite entrepreneurs are the chief beneficiaries of the whole support system. Thus, even HYV or agricultural development programmes have not given much attention to the rural majority, but concentrated on high input level agricultural and livestock technology which is beyond the means of the masses. The Banks cater to the loan needs of these people. They send their children to university and for technical education. Trainees get selected from this class for entrepreneurial development and motivation training.

Planners in a country like India, where a socialistic pattern of society has been preached as the politically accepted principle, inevitably become hyprocritical in face of the inherent dilemma in implementing entrepreneurship development programmes. On the one hand, there is the rugged individualistic/capitalistic concept that entrepreneurship basically connotes, and there is the politically proclaimed socialism on the other. These two diametrically opposite ideological concepts are to be matched by the planners in a programme of mixed (or hotch-potch) economy.

Yet the country needs economic growth and that too at a faster rate. One wonders whether there is any mechanism to use capitalistic (or elitist) entrepreneurs as a Vehicle of social change in terms of distributive (or socialistic) norms. Unless such a mechanism is found, we will have entrepreneurial development through various support systems without achieveing anything resembling an egalitarian society. In the process there would be economic growth but no social justice and no peace. □

The late Daniel Thorner was a household name in Indian intellectual circles in the last three decades. His contribution to the understanding of Indian economic development was as significant as the close and friendly relations he unfailingly maintained with forward-looking elements in this country. While it was generally known that Thorner was an eyesore for the conservative establishment in the United States, the extent of US intelligence watch on Daniel could be gauged only from the recent disclosures in the FBI files. His widow, Alice Thorner, herself devoted to the ideals and pursuits of Daniel, sent the following material to one of our contemporaries, The Economic and Political Weekly (May 22, 1982) with the following note: "Under the Freedom of Information Act passed during Carter's Presidency, US citizens acquired the right to request copies of their own FBI files. The following excerpts from the file of the late Daniel Thorner may be of interest not only to his friends and colleagues, but also to students of recent US history". Alice Thorner's contribution is reproduced here because a very large number of Mainstream readers have been personally acquainted with the Thorners. —Editor

FBI Watch on Daniel Thorner

ALICE THORNER

UNDER the Freedom of Information Act passed during Carter's presidency, US citizens acquired the right to request copies of their own FBI files. The procedure was — I believe still is — to fill up a form, wait several months, agree to pay so much per page, and finally receive in the mail a stack of documents. Each photo-copied item is neatly labelled as to date and origin (FBI head office in Washington, referred to as 'Bureau', or regional office, or other agency such as the Passport Office of the Department of State, etc). Also indicated: how many copies were sent to Bureau, New York, London, etc. Names of FBI agents filing the reports occasionally appear; certain letters are shown as written to or by J Edgar Hoover, or other specified officials. But names of informants, even when altogether favourable to the subject under investigation, are uniformly blacked out. So are many lines, paragraphs, and even entire pages, of which nothing remains but a date or serial number. Certain pages are labelled 'Secret'. Several pages display a rubber-stamped legend: 'All Information Contained Herein Unclassified Date ...... by ......', duly indicating, the code number of the officer taking responsibility for the declassification. Many paragraphs are marked "K5", presumably a reference to the particular provision of the law under which they have been released.

The following excerpts from the file of the late Daniel Thorner may be of interest not only to his friends and colleagues but also to students of recent US history.

I have indicated where words or lines have been blacked out, and have added in parentheses a few brief notes.

The file opens in 1942 with a routine investigation consequent upon Daniel's war-time appointment as Analyst, at a junior level (he was 26 years old), in the office of the Co-ordinator of Information, later to become the Office of Strategic Services, and eventually, after Daniel had left for a different government job in Henry Wallace's Board of Economic Warfare, the famous CIA. It closes with a report from the Paris office in June 1974, that the *International Herald Tribune* had announced his death.

Federal Bureau of Investigation

This case originated at Bureau. Report made at New York City. Date when made 6-23-42. Character of case Office of Co-ordinator of Information: Employee Investigation. Synopsis of Facts: Thorner attended City College of City of NY from September 1982 to June 1936, obtained BS and SS degree and graduated with special honours in history. Took graduate work at Columbia University, NYC 1936 to 1940 and was preparing a dissertation in history for a Ph D degree. Obtained two fellowships at Columbia University. Also obtained a fellowship from the Social Science Research Council, NYC and did research work on the affairs of India in London, England. [Subject of research: early investment in the Indian Railways. AT] ... No credit or criminal record.

Education

Details: [Several words blacked out] ... the William Cullen Bryant High School, Queens, Long Island, New York, advised that her records reflected that Thorner had attended that school from February 1928 to January 1932. The records also reflected that he was born on May 14, 1915 and that he had graduated with grades above average. There was no record of any disciplinary action having been taken ... [Several words blacked out] ... of the City of New York advised that his records reflected that Thorner had worked in the Registrar's office from 1936 to 1938 as an assistant clerk. He had received fifty cents an hour for this work and it was not under the National Youth Administration. His records also reflected that Thorner had been a tutor during the summer session of 1938 at the rate of two dollars and fifty cents per hour. He had worked ninety-six hours during that summer and [word blacked out] explained that a tutor was the lowest form of instructor and that Thorner had not been employed as a teacher.

[Word blacked out] in charge of clerks in the Registrar's office advised that he could slightly recall Thorner. He said that Thorner had co-operated with all the other clerks and that his work had been satisfactory. He could recall nothing outstanding about him and stated that had no reason to doubt his patriotism to this country.

[Several words blacked out] at the City College of the City of New York, advised that he could remember Thorner only as a student. He said that he got along very well with the other student and was brilliant in history [Word blacked ont] could not recall Thorner as an instructor at the school. He said that he might have done some reading [of examination papers AT] there but was never a teacher to his knowledge. [Several words blacked out] stated that he had no reason whatsoever to doubt Thorner's loyalty although he never made a display of his feelings in either direction.

[Several words blacked out] the Registrar's office at Columbia University, New York City advised that her records reflected that Thorner had none graduate work from September 1936 until January 1940. He had worked on a fellowship awarded by Columbia University from 1938 to 1939. From 1939 to 1940 he had worked on the Lidig fellowship, awarded to outstanding students ... his wife's name was Alice Thorner.

[Several lines blacked out] said that Thorner was one of the nicest boys she had ever come in contact with. She said that he was married and had one small child. She also stated that there was no doubt in her mind whatsoever about Thorner being a loyal American citizen.

[Several words blacked out] advised that ... the university scholarship was won in a contest which consisted of more than one hundred and fifty contestants. In addition to this (word blacked out) said that it was absolutely necessary that a contestant have good character and background ... she said definitely that Thorner was a loyal American citizen.

[Several words blacked out] advised that she had known Thorner since 1939 and that she considered him to be a brilliant person ... She also stated that at the time Thorner had won their fellowship, he had also won the Lidig fellowship at the Columbia University. The Social Science Research Council had thought so much of Thorner that they had awarded him the fellowship in spite of the fact that he had obtained another one. She said that Thorner had left this country in July 1939 and had returned in June 1940. His work had. been entirely satisfactory while in London, England. [Word blacked out] stated that Thorner was well qualified for his position in Washington because of his research into the affairs of India ...She also advised that Thorner was definitely a loyal American citizen.

Neighbourhood

[Several words blacked out] advised that Thorner and his wife had lived there for a short while during the summer of 1941. He also stated that they had sublet the apartment [several words blacked out]. He understood [word blacked out] had let the Thorners have the apartment because they needed assistance. He also stated that Mrs Thorner was very congenial and that he knew nothing detrimental concerning them.

[Several words blacked out] advised that he had sublet the apartment to Thorner during the summer of 1941. He said that Thorner had been recommended to him by his son who was at the University of Michigan. [Some confusion here; we were in fact recommended by his son-in-law, who was teaching at Columbia University. Daniel had just finished teaching force semester at Michigan. AT]. He also stated that they had been desirable tenants and that they had taken good care of their furnishings. [Word blacked out] also stated that he had no reason whatsover to doubt Thorner's loyalty to this country.

[Several words blacked out] [presumably the janitor of the building where Daniel's parents had lived, AT] at the above address advised that there were no residents in the building at the present time who would know the Thorners. He said that he remembered them personally and that they had always treated him very nicely .... He added that Daniel Thorner was a very fine boy and that he was positive that he would be loyal to this country.

Credit and Criminal

Special Agent DS Horth advised that there was no record for Thorner in the files of the Credit Bureau of Greater New York.

Special Agent JE Amos advised that there was no record for Thorner in the files of the New York City Police Department.

There was no information concerning Thorner in the files of the New York Field Division [of the PBI, AT].

Miscellaneous:

[Single line blacked out]

Report made at Washington, DC

Date when made 7.8.42

Synopsis of Facts: Neighbours know slightly. Some unspecific derogatory information concerning associates of applicant by informants. Reputation in neighbourhood indicates good moral character. No criminal record. No credit rating. Wife employed at Social Security Board at $ 2,000 per annum. Dies negative [That is, no mention of Daniel in the records of the Committee on Unamerican Activities, chaired by Representative Dies. AT]. Details: At Washington, DC.

Neighbourhood

[Several words blacked out] were interviewed and gave to the writer the following information: [word blacked out] have known applicant and wife since they moved to present address in the Fall of 1941. [Word blacked out] had occasion to go into applicant's home and at that time noticed that there was almost no furniture but many shelves of books. [Name blacked out] thought it was strange that applicant would pay $ 90 per month for house and not have any furniture. [Name blacked out] stated that he thought applicant acted suspiciously but had no specific grounds for the statement other than the fact that applicant refused to act as an air-raid warden and would not discuss any aspect of the war. Another item [name blacked out] was that large numbers of foreign appearing persons visited applicant, some of them carrying brief cases, and staying until late at night.

[Name blacked out] states that the number of visitors has decreased greatly and now does not believe there is anything usual in the visitors. [Name blacked out] stated that about one month ago applicant had a very unusal visitor. The visitor was apparently a Hindu or some other Indian sect and was thought [name blacked out] to be a woman of about 40 years of age. [Name blacked out] was advised that the Indian was a physician taking a post graduate course at Johns Hopkins University and was endeavouring to secure a passage home. Neither [name blacked out] could furnish any specific derogatory information, and when pressed, stated that their suspicions of the applicant had been abated by the conduct of applicant in the last few months.

Credit and Criminal

The records of the Metropolitan Police Department, Washington, DC, both criminal and traffic, were checked for record of the applicant and no information concerning him was found.

The records of the Credit Bureau, 1221 G Street, Northwest were checked with negative results. The records at Stone's Mercantile Agency, 1419 H Street, NW, dated November 14, 1941, indicated rental of house through [name blacked out] Agnew company with prompt payment of $ 90 per month rental.

Report Made at New Haven, Conn.

Date when made 7.14.42.

Synopsis of Facts: [Several words blacked out] has known Thorner as a student for several years; recommends as to ability but states he has been associated with radical elements while in school and is rather Leftist although has never heard Thorner express any subversive or dangerous sentiments.

Reference: Report of Special Agent (A) CP Aderhold, New York City, dated June 23, 1942.

Details: [Several lines blacked out] stated he has known Daniel Thorner for several years but only as a student. His field of special interest was the history of India in the Nineteenth Century, particularly British Imperialism in India, and he was anxious to examine unpublished records in the India Office in London; he was in England from the summer of 1939 to the spring of 1940. [Name blacked out] stated he has never had any occasion to change or qualify the high opinion he formed of Thorner's intellectual ability when he was a student but that it was only fair to say that members of the City College Department of History had told him that Thorner as a student had been associated with radical elements there; that he once spoke to Thorner about this and he denied there was any truth in it. [Name blacked out] stated that Thorner's attitude like that of many other young 'intellectuals', especially Jewish intellectuals, is rather Leftist but that he has never heard Thorner express any sentiments that could be called dangerous or subversive.

Albany, New York 8.7.42.

Synopsis of Facts: [Several words blacked out] states applicant was brilliant student, good character, good reputation, dependable and loyal American citizen, knows nothing derogatory.

Reference: Report of Agent CP Aderhold (A) dated 6.23.42 at New York City.

Details: [Several lines blacked out] advised that he first became acquainted with Thorner sometimes in 1936...... [Name blacked out] informed that he was very pleased with Thorner and that a fellowship from Columbia was awarded to Thorner ... [Name blacked out] remembered that Thorner took at least two and possibly three years graduate work at Columbia, majoring in History. [Name blacked out] advised that he knew applicant all the time he attended Columbia and followed his activities fairly closely, and he found him to be a brilliant student.

The Professor also knew applicant socially and described him as being a good mixer and a popular man around the school. He further stated that Thorner was a man of good reputation, good character, was reliable, trustworthy and from all indications he was a loyal American. [Name blacked out) advised that applicant is of Jewish extraction, though born in the United States.

[Name blacked out] stated he could recommend applicant highly and knows nothing at all derogatory about him.

Detroit, Michigan. Date when made: 8.24.42.

Synopsis of Facts: Thorner employed by the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, as an instructor for the second semester of 1940-41 in the Department of History, receiving $ 1,550. Reference and neighbourhood investigation satisfactory. No evidence of un-American tendencies or connection with subversive organisations noted during investigation. Credit, criminal and traffic negative.

Details: At Ann Arbor, Michigan. The University of Michigan advised this office that Professor Thorner was a visiting member of the History Department from February to

June 1941. [Name blacked out] stated that Mr Thorner did not teach under his direction but shared an office with him and through this relationship. [Name blacked out] came to know Professor Thorner rather well. [Name blacked out] stated that Thorner impressed him as a very reliable and straightforward person, cultivated in his manner, and giving every indication of having a good background. [Name black ed out] regards Professor Thorner's character as excellent and considers him thoroughly loyal. It was also stated [name blacked out] that Professor Thorner has marked initiative and an impressive amount of ability and that he is not afraid of work. Professor Thorner is said to have a cheerful temperament and friendly manner which makes him a pleasant person to be with.

Neighbourhood: [Name blacked out] told the writer that Professor Daniel Thorner and his wife lived at [word blacked out] for the second semester of 1940-41 and that while they were there they paid their bills promptly. Professor Thorner was a man of the highest character and reputation, and she considered him very loyal towards the University and towards the country... She further stated that the Thorners were expecting a baby when they were at her house and because of this very seldom went out, and [name blacked out] thought the Thorners knew very few people in Ann Arbor. She stated that Professor Thorner received his mail at her house but that she never saw any foreign mail addressed to him and that most of the time he also mailed letters at the box on her porch. On certain occasions when the wind would blow the letters down on the porch she would replace them in the mail box and on those occasions never saw any addressed to any foreign country. She could give no derogatory information on Professor Thorner, and as far as she knew would trust him in any Governmental job... Criminal and Traffic: At the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office, the writer thoroughly checked the Washtenaw County criminal and traffic violations back to 1930 against Daniel Thorner with negative results.

Because of the summer session at the University of Michigan and the vacation period which most of the Professors are now taking, no further information could be obtained from the Department of History on Professor Thorner as to his character, reputation, and loyalty towards this country and it could not be further established if he were connected with any subversive organisations or exhibited any un-American tendencies while teaching there.

Report made at: Washington DC 1.9.51. Character of Case: Security Matter-C.

Title: Dr. Daniel Thorner (The FBI has correctly taken note of Daniel's Ph D obtained in 1948, AT).

Synopsis of Facts: Passport Division, State Department, Washington DC reflects passport issued to subject June 1939, to visit Great Britain... Passport issued to subject 11.8.44 for travel to New Delhi, India, and 1946 to visit Great Britain. [Name blacked out] advised Daniel and Alice Thorner active in Freedom for India Movement in Great Britain... [Lines blacked out] T-2 advised subject's name appeared on a list being in some degree in sympathy with the Communist party.

Details: At Washington, DC.

A passport was issued to him on November 8, 1941, for travel to New Delhi, India, where he was to work for the Foreign Economic Administration as an assistant to the Special Representative. At the time the passport was filled out, he was living at 4522 49th Street, NW, Washington DC.

Confidential Informant T-1 of known reliability, advised that information was received from [word blacked out] in August of 1942 that Daniel and Alice Thorner spent 1939 and 1940 in Great Britain and that while there, they were known to be in sympathy with the Indian extremists and were active in the Freedom for India Movement. [The 'extremists' with whom we sympathised included V.K. Krishna Menon, K.S. Shelvankar, P.N. Haksar, K.T. Chandy, Feroze Gandhi and the like. AT].

A check of the files of the Civil Service Commission in Washington, DC reflects that Daniel Thorner received a war service appointment in July 1942 as Assistant Economic Analyst, Board of Economic Warfare in Washington, DC. He was on military furlough [in the US merchant marine, where he actually served for more than six months, AT] from April 1, 1944 to June 1, 1944, and was re-employed June 22, 1944, at the Foreign Economic Administration.

Administrative Page

Confidential Informant T-1 advised that information was received in February 1944 from a Government agency which conducts security investigations, reflecting that Daniel Thorner was employed as an assistant to the Day Registrar's office at the City College of New York in 1943 and that a person connected with the Registrar's office stated that she could not speak well of the subject since he employed one John Ackley whom she described as having a bad Communist record. [In 1943, as is clear from the preceding paragraph, Daniel was working full time in Washington, DC. AT].

Office Memorandum: United States Government.

Date: November 30, 1951.

Background: On November 23, 1951, SAC Cornelius of Philadelphia office requested a review of the Bureau files for any information suitable for dissemination to [words blacked out] the University of Pennsylvania, concerning Dr Daniel Thorner, a member of the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, Asiatic Studies Division. [Several lines blacked out] that Thorner's status at the University is now temporary and he is coming up for permanent status. It has been previously recommended that only public source information be furnished [name blacked out] who requested any information which the Bureau could give him within a week. Scope of Search: In the preparation of this memorandum, the names of Daniel Thorner [words blacked out] were given a complete search for all subversive references.

Bureau Investigation [paragraphs blacked out].

Daniel Thorner is the subject of two Bureau main files. When interviewed by the New York office on April 2, 1950 [line blacked out] pointed out that the most recent book of Lattimore, "Pivot of Asia", published by Little, Brown and Company, Boston, in March 1950, listed six collaborators in the publication of this book, among whom was Daniel Thorner. [Name blacked out] stated that all of these people were known to him to be extremely pro-communist in their attitudes and that while at Columbia, Thorner was well liked and trusted by the communist study group there.

The review of other Bureau files at that time reflects that [lines blacked out] stated that Daniel Thorner was a graduate student of the Columbia University and belonged to the Columbia Unit of the Communist Party. The files also revealed that Daniel and Alice Thorner were social contacts of [names blacked out] suspected Soviet Espionage Agents and reported Communist Party members, during 1946 and 1947 [words black out].

The records of the Security and Investigation Division, State Department revealed that a representative of that agency interviewed Thorner (date not given) in connection with a security investigation...During the course of this interview Thorner made reference to the Rapp-Coudert hearings which were held in New York city in 1941. Concerning these hearings Thorner made specific reference to William Canning who was a star witness at those hearings, which pertained to Communist activities in the Colleges of New York City. Thorner stated that when he was at CCNY, he used to hear and read about the Young Communist movement, but as he was working his way through college he had no time "for that stuff". He advised that while he was at Columbia, he used to read of more radical activities taking place at CCNY than at Columbia. In his third and fourth years at Columbia (1937-1939) he was President of the History Club and no one had ever approached him or suggested to him to have any "radicals" speak before that club. He stated that all young persons in the History Department [at City College, AT] were under suspicion but his name was never mentioned by Canning, if Canning and had ever stated that he, Thorner, was a member of the Communist Party, "then Canning is liar". According to the State Department records, the name of Daniel Thorner did appear in the records of the Rapp-Coudert Committee hearing. However, no information from these hearings is being included in the material for dissemination to Stassen [unsuccessful Republican candidate for US president, then serving as President of the University of Pennsylvania, AT] as investigation conducted by the New York office failed to substantiate the fact that Thorner's name appeared in the records of Rapp-Coudert Committee hearings.

As a result of the file review it was not believed advisable to interview Thorner at that time, as there was no indication that he would be co-operative. It was recommended that a

Security Matter C Case be opened regarding him with Philadelphia designated as Office of Origin.This case is presently in a pending status and Philadelphia is in possession of all pertinent information in the case. [Several paragraphs blacked out].

Daniel Thorner was a member of the Institute of Pacific Relations as of October, 1946.

The American Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations has been cited as a Communist front "which received funds from the American Peoples Fund, another front organised and directed by Frederick V Field, as a repository for funds to be distributed to Communist enterprises". This information was found in the report of the California Committee on Un-American Activities, published in 1948 on page 168 (100-373415-10)

Report made by: Washington, DC, October 6, 1952 Security Matter C.

1. *Passport Information on Daniel and Alice Thorner.*

On May 22, 1952, he was issued Passport Number 652831 for proposed fifteen months travel to India, travelling via Great Britain, France and Italy. The purpose of this travel was "Economic research in India under a Social Science Research Council Travel grant" and a leave from the University of Pennsylvania.

The passport records contain a June 9, 1952, memorandum from Edward D Hunt of the Division of Protective Services, Department of State, in which he stated that he had conversed with [name blacked out] an old friend who was associated with the Social Science Research Council, regarding a "delicate problem concerned with a financial grant to Daniel Thorner". Hunt stated that at the same time as a committee of the Social Science Research Council met to consider Thorner's grant, the subject was called before the McCarran Committee where he refused to say, on lawyer's advice, whether or not he was a Communist in 1948. The memorandum continued that "in private conversation he (Thorner) evidently said that he was not a Communist and had never been, but that he did not want to be quizzed about other persons who might be embarrassed by the testimony".

Hunt stated that [words blacked out] Social Science Research Council, "hedged" the promised grant by making it contingent upon the subject's securing a Passport, which [name blacked out] evidently believed would not be granted.

Date: May 12, 1954.

To: Legal Attache (100-552) Secret Air Courier London, England.

From: Director, FBI (100-373415).

Subject: Daniel Thorner, Security Matter.

Reurlet dated April 20, 1954.

By dispatch dated March 22, 1954, the American Consul General at Bombay, India, advised the. State Department that Thorner was still a resident of India.

This dispatch noted also that Prime Minister Nehru of India had apparently taken a personal interest in Thormer's case to the degree that he was willing to furnish Indian travel documents to Thorner.

Report made by: Washington, DC 9.23.58.

Details: At Washington DC.

Files of the Passport Office, which were reviewed on September 20 and 21, 1955, reflected that on October 15, 1952 the United States Embassay at New Delhi, India, was requested by the Department of State to locate Daniel Thorner to take up and hold his passport 652831 which was issued on May 22, 1952. This request was made in light of the recently promulgated amendments to the Passport Regulations since it was alleged that the subject was a Communist.

Dispatch 876 dated December 19, 1952 from the American Consul, Bombay, India, noted that the subject had appeared at the Consular Section on December 15, 1952 but had declined to surrender his passport or to take any further action until he had obtained legal advice.

This communication noted that Thorner was then in India on a research project for UNESCO and was accompanied by his wife and three children.

A State Department communication to the American Consul in Bombay dated January 9, 1953 stated that unless Thorner surrendered his passport or submitted an affidavit stating he was not then and had never been a Communist by February 1, 1953, the Indian authorities were to be notified that his passport was cancelled and was no longer valid.

Passport files contained a four page notarised copy of a statement dated January 30, 1953 signed by Daniel Thorner stating that he was not then and had not been for the past thirteen years a member of the Communist Party or other political parties and had never been a member of an organisation which, to his knowledge, advocated the overthrow of the US government by force or violence. This statement reflected that the purpose of Thorner's trip to India was to carry forward the research and teaching in which he was engaged at the University of Pennsylvania. He noted that during the summer months (no date shown) he worked in the Archives of the Comonwealth Relations Office in London on land settlement reports of the period 1840 to 1914. The subject further stated that while in India that autumn (apparently 1952) he had been conferring with economists in the universities and in government, with representatives of large and small business and with agricultural experts, both Indian and American. He stated he proposed to continue these consultations and to make observations of his own of rural conditions at the village level.

The above statement continued that the University of Pennsylvania had granted him research leave to conduct these studies and had undertaken to pay half of his stipend for the period he was not on campus. In addition, the Faculty Committee for the Advancement of Research had awarded him a grant for the purpose of purchasing rare land documents or having copies made of them. Further he was also under contract with the Social Science Department of UNESCO for two months starting December 15 to serve as an Expert Advisor for a programme of research on the "Human and Social Effects of Technological Change" which was to be inaugurated in Asia. Dispatch 1107 dated February 5, 1953 from the American Consul, Bombay, India, reflected that the subject surrendered his passport 652231 on January 30, 1953 but declined to amend above affidavit to state that he had never been a member of the Communist Party.

The passport files also contain a February 18, 1953 Robert Rossow, Public Affairs Officer, Department of State, concerning [As I recall, Rossow had been Daniel's student in the South Asia programme at the University of Pennsylvània. AT] the authorship of a book entitled "American Shadow over India". Rossow's memorandum stated that a perusal of this book would prove without any doubt that it was written with intent to do harm to American interests in India and stated that it has been extremely successful in this regard.

This memorandum noted that the author of this book, L.V. Natarajan, acknowledged in the preface his debt to an American friend who furnished material, time and energy for this book but who wished to remain anonymous. Rossow, in his memorandum, stated that from strictly circumstantial yet nevertheless strong evidence he believed he could identify this anonymous American author or co-author as Dr Daniel Thorner.

Rossow based his belief on the fact that Thorner had probably the most complete private file in existence on India the nature of which was utilised in this book. He also pointed out that the meticulous indexing, use of footnotes and heavy economic approach to the subject of the book was also highly characteristic of Thorner. Rossow further noted that the author of the book had knowledge of the Office of Strategic Services in India during the war and pointed out that Thorner had spent several years in India with OSS during that period. [Incorrect, AT]

The Department of State, by letter dated May 29, 1953, requested the American Consul in Bombay to have Thorner submit an affidavit as to whether or not he was a current or past member of the Communist Party and to also state whether or not he had any part in the preparation or publication of "American Shadow Over India".

A July 6, 1953 communication of the American Consul at Bombay reflected that Thorner's passport was returned to him on July 3, 1953 valid for return to the US via Pakistan, Aden, Egypt, Italy and the United Kingdom. The subject's travel plans indicated a return to the US on August 27, 1953.

A July 7, 1953 dispatch from the American Consul, Bombay, stated that inasmuch as Thorner was leaving for the US within the week no additional affidavit was secured from him. This communication reflected that during an interview with an officer of the Consulate General, subject had denied an allegation of having been a Communist Party member as recently as 1952, having been wholly or partly responsible for publication or preparation of "American Shadow over India", and denied being acquainted with its authors, Natarajan or J.C. Kumarappa.

Dispatch dated July 14, 1953 from the American Consulate General, Bombay, advised the Department of State that Thorner did not leave India as planned on July 11, 1953 claiming illness of one of his children as the reason. This communication expressed the belief that Thorner might be endeavouring to build up a case of inconvenience and embarrassment with which to embarrass the Department of State. It was explained that he displayed irritation at the renewed effort to persuade Thorner to adopt a more direct return to the US. The subject said he was "irritated" by an alleged "leak of the Department to the University of Pennsylvania Campus" concerning the Department's suspicions of himself. Thorner further remarked that his good friends on the University of Pennsylvania faculty had "good connections" with the Department (of State) and had advised him that the Visa Division had indicated their suspicions, which Thorner stated he considered "scandalous".

Files reflect that the subject voluntarily surrendered his passport to the Consulate General in Bombay on July 24, 1953.

Dispatch 316 dated September 22, 1953 from the American Consul in Bombay reflected that the subject had informed the Consulate General that he believed he would remain in Bombay until some time in 1954. It was noted that his passport was valid only until September 23, 1953 and that his residence permit to remain in India expired on September 29, 1953.

Dispatch 354 dated October 8, 1953 from the American Consul, Bombay, stated that the Government of India appeared to have information to the effect that Daniel Thorner, was, may be, a Communist contact in India.

The passport files indicate that Thorner was informed by the Government of India on December 2, 1953 that his residence permit would not be extended beyond January 2, 1954.

The dispatch from the American Consul, Bombay, dated February 16, 1954 stated that the recommendations of the New Delhi and Bombay police had been overruled and that the subject was to be granted a stay in India until September 29, 1954. The source of information concerning this also expressed the opinion that the subject had obviously received support from a person with sufficient political authority to disregard police recommendations without having to give reasons.

In this connection files also reflect that information had been received that Thorner had attended a reception at which Prime Minister Nehru was present about the time Thorner was attempting to obtain an extension of his residence permit. Thorner allegedly advised Prime Minister Nehru of his troubles and also that the US government sends out all sorts of other political experts but when a land reform man wanted to go to India it was "not in the interest of the US government". This allegedly angered Prime Minister Nehru and subject was told to see him the following day at which time Thorner was advised he could remain in India as long as he wished. [An apocryphal story, AT].

Dispatch 656 from the American Consulate General, Bombay, India, reflected that the subject had applied for an extension of his residence permit which expired in September 1954. According to this communication Thorner indicated he was engaged in extensive research in the field of agricultural economics which he ultimately hopes to incorporate into a lengthy volume on the history of land reform in India. According to the subject this work might require his presence in India for another year or possibly even three years.

Thorner further advised that he had interested four universities in the United States among which is the University of California at Los Angeles, in the subject of his economic research in India and said that he receives approximately $ 3,000 per year from them. The subject added that he is no longer receiving a stipend from the University of Pennsylvania.

Office of Origin: Philadelphia, date: 1.20.56.
Details: [Paragraph blacked out].

In August 1952, the subject was stated to have described himself to his classes in 1949 and 1950 as a Marxist economist.

In 1953 [words blacked out] stated subject was bitter toward imperialism; that subject's general remarks since 1947 caused him to believe subject to be a CP sympathiser or CP member.

When reinterviewed in February 1958 [name blacked out] stated that in his opinion subject was more than a mere Marxist-Socialist; that Dr Thorner was a bitter one-against-the-world type who tried to break down the beliefs of others [name blacked out] stated that he had no proof that subject was ever a CP member. He recalled that an employee of the State Department, whose name he would not divulge, had told him that subject was a CP member in the late 1940s. Named blacked out] said he believed Thorner to be a CP member because he knew Thorner and believed him to be a "joiner." [Name blacked out] has had no association with the subject since 1952.

A "reliable" source of confidential information stated that Thorner contacted several "leftists" in Kashmir, India, prior to June 1953.

A "usually reliable" source of confidential information reported that subject and his wife stayed with a "well known Communist in Kashmir, India, in June 1953" [We were guests in the same house as the late K M Ashraf, AT] and that Thorner had contacted Indian CP members during 1952 and 1953. This source believed subject to be a member of the CP USA.

Date: March 5, 1958.
To: Miss Frances G Knight, Director, Passport Office, Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs, Department of State, Washington 26 DC.
From: John Edgar Hoover, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation.

[Name blacked out] referred to in the report of Special Agent [name blacked out] dated March 30, 1953, at Philadelphia, was reinterviewed February 11, 1958. [Name blacked out] stated that he was closely associated with Dr Thorner in 1917 while both roomed at the Library of Congress in order to complete their respective theses [Name blacked out] recalled that he was "wanted" that Thorner was a communist (he declined to divulge the source of his information). He recalled that Thorner impressed him as at least a Communist Party sympathiser since he made remarks in line with the communistic line of thinking, that Thorner was a materialist, and that, on one occasion during a discussion in which Thorner was remarking about the communistic way of thinking, Thorner quickly and in a teasing manner exhibited a pink card so rapidly [name blacked out] could not see what was on it. [Name blacked out] believes that Thorner meant to convey the idea that he, Thorner, had a Communist Party membership card..

A review of subject's file at Philadelphia reflects the following pertinent information concerning subject's CP activities and Communist sympathies.

In 1953 subject furnished an affidavit to the State Department that he had not been a Communist since his student days, 14 years before.

In 1952 several associates of subject stated they believed him to be a CP sympathiser or a CP member; they based their comments on general knowledge of Thorner and his remarks over previous years.

In June 1952 subject admitted to [lines blacked out] that he was a CP member under an assumed name in 1939.

Subject was reported a member of the CP at Columbia University in 1938.

In March 1952 subject denied current CP membership before a Senate Subcommittee and declined to testify concerning his past affiliations.

To: Director, FBI.
Date: 7.16.58.

On 6.5.58, the Passport office. Department of State, furnished information to this office that the subject had been authorised the issuance of a passport in India.

His passport file was reviewed by [name blacked out] and the following history of his case at the Passport Office was obtained.

Thorner executed an application for a passport on 11.8.57, and gave the following answers to three questions:

Are you a member of the Communist Party? No. Have you over been a member of the Communist Party? See attached affidavit. If ever member, state period of membership. See attached affidavit.

In his attached affidavit Thorner started as follows:

"I, Daniel Thorner, being duly sworn, do depose and state that: I am not a member of the Communist Party of the US or of any other country. I am not a member of any organisation which believes in or advocates the overthrow of the Government of the US by force or violence.

"I have not been a member of the Communist Party or any other political party whatsoever during the past seventeen years; that is, since the close of my days as a university student.

"I have never believed in or advocated the overthrow of the Government of the US by force or violence.

"I have never been a member of any organisation anywhere which to my knowledge advocates the overthrow of the US Government by force or violence.

"s Daniel Thorner

"Sworn and subscribed to before the Vice Consul of the US.

"s/A A Lakeland, Ir
11.8.57

The subject indicated he wanted a passport "to explore in person university teaching and research opportunities, to visit family in US and depending on where academic post is obtained or opportunities appear most promising, to return abroad".

The Department of Justice on 3.31.58 advised the Passport Office that "after carefully considering this matter, it has been determined that there is presently insufficient evidence upon which to prosecute the subject for violation of Title 18, US Code, Section 1001 or 1542".

The Passport Office has, by letter 6.9 58 authorised the American Consul General at Bombay, India, to issue a passport to Thorner for the full period of validity subject only to geographical restrictions of general applicability. The following instructions were imposed on the American Consul General before delivery of passport:

It is requested that a statement in as much detail as possible be obtained from Mr Thorner with respect to his present travelling plans.

8.12.58.

This office has since received a communication from the State Department reflecting that Daniel Thorner was issued Passport No. 120819 valid until June 17, 1960. at Bombay. India.

The American Consul at Bombay India, asked subject for a statement with respect to his present travel plans ... Thorner objected strongly to the Department asking such questions pointing out that such information would indicate that his is considered a "special case". He added that, as far as he was concerned, nothing "special" should be attached to his case and cited the decision to issue him passport "on merits" as the example.

The Consuler Officer attempted to draw the subject out in an extended conversation but, while he displayed considerable courtesy and talked animatedly about the economic history of India, he steadfastly maintained his position that his travel plans are as indefinite as his statement suggests.

The Consuler Office has not developed any new information of a security nature with regard to Thorner's activities in India.

To: Director, FBI, 6.19.61

From: SAC. Philadelphia

For the information of the Chicago office ... Thorner was on the Security Index of the Philadelphia Office, and was dropped from the Security Index after going to India. He was carried on the Communist Index, and the case was opened to determine whether or not he should be retained on the Reserve index.

Re: Paris letter 8.17.65

A petition was received by the American Embassy, Paris, on 12.9.65 protesting the American military action in South Vietnam. Among the signatures appearing on the petition was that of Daniel Thorner, 9 rue Guy de a Brosse, Paris.

BOOK REVIEW

Transnational Imperialism

The Transnationals: by Profulla Roychoudhury: Firma KLM(P) Limited, Calcutta; 1981; pp 278; Rs 45.

TRANSNATIONAL corporations, popularly (though not very correctly) known as multinational corporations, are forms of imperialism which have been menacing the world since the end of the Second World War. They are a big factor in the present-day international economic crisis manifesting itself in various ways. They have been posing the greatest danger not only to the independent economic development of the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, but also to their survival as politically independent entities. Chile is there to testify to this These corporations have been dominating the political policies of Western countries and Japan and their collaboration with the state has led to the emergence of military-industrial complexes which are behind war preparations and whipping up of tensions in various parts of the world.

In our country, except among a few thousand newspaper reading and politically conscious people, there is not much awareness of the operations of these giants and the dangers posed by them. Political parties, no matter whether they are Left or democratic, have not given adequate attention to their increasing penetration in the Indian sub-continent. It is surprising that one Left democratic government has been aiding the expansion of the Indian subsidiary of a transnational corporation!

The present book by a well-known journalist of Calcutta is timely. It is written in an interesting and simple way and its intention is to make people aware of the nature and functioning of transnational corporations. What are their aims and objects? Do they promote research and development? Can they be relied on for aiding India's industrialisation? Do they bring latest technologies from abroad? Roychoudhury has tried to answer such questions convincingly with the help of facts and figures.

In 1976 the American magazine *Fortune* listed 50 largest transnational corporations of the world. Of these, 23 giants have been operating in this country directly or indirectly. The author has given their names which are not unknown to the people. He has reached the conclusion that "it would not be a wrong generalisation that these giants have not done so much as to lead to a real addition to investible resources. Nor have they brought new technology, better management and marketing skill, better export earnings, etc. Actual direct foreign investment through the TNCs in the form of paid-up capital, loans, etc., is about Rs 1800 crores. This works out roughly to 8 per cent of the total investment in the entire corporate sector in India, both public and private. TNCs have not generated much employment either. They have not helped accelerate industrial activities; rather their existence in the country has put a brake on the process of growth in a number of spheres".

He goes on: "The TNCs have created a myth in India that they devote much time, energy and resources to Research and Development. Official records point out that in one year (1973-74) a total of Rs 246 crores were spent in India on R and D...private sector's share in this was only...8 per cent. The share of the TNCs in this is but nominal."

The TNCs have created a new elite of employees and executives and most of them have their loyalty only to their corporations and not to the country. He quotes the chief of a big TNC to show that this has been knowingly done. In the words of that gentleman: "The manager of a company controlled by the United States should set aside nationalist attitudes and understand that in the final analysis has loyalty should be to the shareholders of the mother-company and that he must protect their interests, even if in doing so he seems apparently to come into conflict with the national interests of the country in which he is operating."

The author has devoted a full chapter to a somewhat detailed analysis of the operation of TNCs in India and it contains a lot of useful information and data.

The book needs to be read by Left-oriented political activists, patriotic citizens and students.

Girish Mishra

Mandal Report and Ruling Class

V.T. RAJSHEKAR

TWELVE per cent of Hindu upper castes are enjoying more than four-fifths of the benefits of India's progress and 88 per cent of the low castes are grudgingly given less than one-fifth, says the Mandal Commission Report neatly summing up the country's fast-deteriorating socio-economic situation.

The report of the second Backward Classes Commission, headed by B.P. Mandal, who died recently, was placed before Parliament on April 30, 1982, after 16 months of delaying tactics by the Government which had received the report on December 31, 1980. The Janata Government appointed the Commission, but the report was submitted to the Congress Government of Indira Gandhi who had given ample indication that she was not in favour of the report.

Already L.R. Naik, a member of the Mandal Commission, had admitted that he saw no hope of the report being implemented. "The political will is lacking in the present set-up," he said in an interview to *The Daily* (May 5, 1982). B.P. Mandal himself had in a talk with us predicted that his report would have the same fate as the Kaka Kalelkar Commission Report on Backward Classes (1953) unless the Other Backward Castes were ready for a bloody street battle. It is now about two months since the Mandal report became public, but there has been total absence of any follow-up action by the OBC leaders. Barring the Dravida Kazhagham of Tamilnadu, which has been making all the noise, nobody is interested in the report. V. Anaimuthu of the Periyar Equal Rights Movement of Tiruchi was to a great extent responsible for getting the report placed before Parliament.

The author, a well-known journalist represents Karnataka in the All-India Federation of Backward Classes, and is Editor, *Dalit Voice*, organ of the Dalit Sahitya Akademy, Bangalore.

But Charan Singh, Karunanidhi, Karpoori Thakur and the late Devaraj Urs, considered to be backward class leaders, made no statement to our knowledge. No political party has passed any resolution on the report. Both the CPI and the CPM have been from the beginning opposed to reservations for OBCs or any reservations for that matter. On the other hand, we have any number of reactions criticising the Mandal Report. This means that the high castes of India and their organs, the "national press", are alert, while the potential beneficiaries are sleeping.

Experts on the OBC problem have appreciated the Mandal report. How can 52 per cent OBCs be satisfied with a mere 27 per cent of reservations? But then the point is that the Mandal Commission has made the best of a bad bargain.

The main recommendations have appeared in the press. However, the following points need repetition: (1) 27 per cent of reservations in jobs in all Central and State Government services, public and private sectors (both in recruitment and promotion), and admission to educational institutions. (2) The criterion fixed for measuring backwardness is "caste" and not income or poverty; 78 per cent of the respondents have recommended the caste criterion. (3) The total number of OBCs is 3,743. (4) Reservations are recommended even in the private sector and factories and offices receiving Government aid. (5) The OBCs constitute 52 per cent of the Indian population (including Muslims and Christians), but reservation for them is fixed at almost half of this, at 27 per cent, in view of the Supreme Court ruling that reservations cannot exceed 50 per cent. As Scheduled Castes and Tribes are given 22.5 per cent of reservations, the OBCs must be content with 27 per cent. (6) OBC candidates appearing in merit quota (the unreserved 50 per cent called the "merit pool") should not be adjusted against the 27 per cent reserved quota. (7) The poor people belong to low castes and the rich to high castes and hence "caste" is "class" in India.

The recommendations are pragmatic — evidently in the hope that they will not be set aside by our conservative, high-caste-controlled courts. But can the country be ruled by the courts? If the court has fixed a limit of 50 per cent, it can be asked by the people, who are above the courts, to revise its opinion. And there are several States in India that have already given more than 50 per cent reservations to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs and others.

When the Commission restricted the reservations to 27 per cent for people who form 52 per cent of the population, it is asking the people to live for the sake of courts. If as the Supreme Court says reservations exceeding 50 per cent will violate the provisions of Articles 15(4) and 16(4), the Constitution can surely be amended.

What makes us suspicious is the dubious stand taken by the Prime Minister and the Union Government. Not only did the Government delay placing the report before Parliament but referred the report to the States for their opinion. The Mandal Commission was appointed by Government of India. Where do the States come in? Does it not mean the Centre is trying to delay and thus kill the report?

We quite understand the Government's predicament. Karpoori Thakur had to face violent opposition from Government servants themselves against his job reservation scheme for OBCs in Bihar. Only about 5 per cent of Indian population is employed in public services. Since Government services command influence and respect, it is natural that the traditionally advanced higher castes, who are also the people to get early education, monopolised it. The SC, ST, OBCs and minorities, being poor and illiterate, were left behind in the competition for scarce posts.

As India has not developed economically and the higher castes who own its wealth have not cared to help its development, the proportion of jobs in public services has also remained more or less static. But the aspirations of the weaker sections have started rising because of the little education they get and the awareness of the injustice they are suffering at the hands of the ruling class When the contradictions get sharpened, conflict is inevitable. The upper castes do not want to give up what they have been enjoying for centuries. And they have appropriately manufactured the "merit theory" to retain their privileges. Those who have read Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer's final judgement on reservations will get an idea of the high caste game of divide and rule. *The Statesman* (May 7, 1982) editorial asking Indira Gandhi to throw the Mandal report into the waste paper basket just as her father did with the Kalelkar Report is an echo of Iyer's judgement.

When there is so much opposition to SC/ST reservations, will the high castes extend it to OBC? The move led to violent conflict in Bihar, Gujarat and UP. Since "caste" is "class" in India, a "caste war" is the inevitable outcome of such a situation. The Marxian concept of "class struggle" will take the shape of caste war. When that is the situation, any move to implement the Mandal report will surely lead to bloody conflict.

The upper castes who monopolise the public services can simply paralyse the working of the Government; and the RSS has treatened that even officers of the Defence Services may join in. Ministers, both Central and State, may like to implement the report but in the face of the fury of the pampered Government servants they will be helpless.

The Government may throw the report into the dustbin, but can the ruling class stop the rising aspirations of the OBCs? That is why conflict is inevitable. If the conflict does not come tomorrow, it will come the day after tomorrow. The ruling class can only delay the crisis.

The Indian road to socialism will be tougher than that of the USSR or China because in India we have not only "classes" but the more deadly "castes". The ruling class will do everything to rule. The leadership of the 3,743 OBCs listed by Mandal will have to educate their people on the Mandal report, bring out small pamphlets, hold conferences, pass resolutions, take out processions — and never trust politicians. Let us declare: No vote till the Mandal report is implemented.

What is even more important is that the OBC leaders must take the Dalits into confidence and ask for their support in the struggle. We are happy that Dalit leaders like B.P. Maurya and Ram Vilas Paswan have strongly supported the Mandal report. If the OBCs want to win their battle, their best friends are the Dalits. But then, unity between OBCs and SCs is a pipe-dream.

So the only way out is to go in for population-wise reservations for all castes and communities, including Brahmins and other high castes. The demand for population-wise reservation will get wide support. It is for the OBC leaders now to decide what course they will take. We cannot expect political leaders of OBCs to help us. Politicians must be kept out. Not even the mother will breastfeed the child unless it cries. The course of the Mandal report will not be smooth. Are the OBCs ready for the struggle?□

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Company Meeting: Hindustan Lever Limited

A PERSPECTIVE ON EDIBLE OILS

Speech delivered by Dr. A.S. Ganguly, Chairman, Hindustan Lever Limited, at the Annual General Meeting held at Bombay on Friday, 25th June, 1982

INTRODUCTION

India, like other petroleum-importing economies, has been concentrating its efforts for the last ten years on augmenting foreign exchange earnings to pay for mounting petroleum imports and exploring new energy sources. The large national issue prior to this was self-sufficiency in food, which the country has spectacularly achieved in the case of cereals. However, in two other areas, much remains to be done — the production of pulses, and edible oils and fats. These are so important that the Government has included them in its list of national priorities.

The reason why I have referred to petroleum hydrocarbons and food is because these two, along with the population problem, tend to dominate the economic and popular thinking in this country. I have chosen to highlight the issues involving edible oils, not only because it is a significant part of Hindustan Lever's business, but also an important national issue; and unless we continue to highlight the problems involved and seek solutions, the nutritional and economic consequences will become progressively intractable.

This is not the first time that a Chairman of this company has chosen the AGM to review this rather important subject. It was discussed at length by Mr. S.H. Turner in 1959 and Mr. T. Thomas in 1974. More recently, an integrated strategy for increasing the production and consumption of oilseeds and oils in our country was made by Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, an eminent agricultural scientist.

Besides, a number of other recommendations have been made at various conferences and quite a few of them have found their way into agricultural and commercial practice. For example, a project for the development of a cooperative structure for increasing oilseed supplies through an integrated programme of production, processing and marketing is being implemented by the National Dairy Development Board.

However, in spite of all these efforts the gap between demand and supply is widening at the fairly low per capita consumption in the country. This has led to a rise in imports.

During 1979-80 and 1980-81, the country had to import close to a million tonnes of edible oils per annum valued at Rs. 600 crores. If one projects this into the rest of the decade, the import bill for edible oils alone would be staggering. Production would need to rise by about one-third to eliminate imports.

While one can debate our ability to be self-sufficient in oils and fats, there can be no alternative to increasing the country's edible oil production significantly. There has also been near unanimity on the ways to augment availability. Yet, the results have not come up to expectation. All the recommendations made by my predecessors and experts in the field are as valid today as when they were made. Is it possible to bring about a quantum improvement in oilseed production and availability in the country? From the point of view of foreign exchange outflow as well as malnutrition resulting from low fat intake by the population, the problem is becoming so critical that it is not amenable to marginal solutions.

Any solution to the problem must take into account a combination of enhanced production with reduced dependence on imports. To assess the opportunities which obtain in the edible oil economy, and develop a possible strategy to bring down the burden of imports and improve availability, I shall discuss the topic in four parts:

i) A brief review of the current status of oilseed production
ii) Some economic and nutritional aspects of the problem
iii) Improvement in traditional areas, and-
iv) The potential for Rice Bran and Oil Palm

I. CURRENT STATUS

The total area under oilseeds cultivation is currently estimated to be about 16 million hectares. The average rate of growth of oilseeds production which was 3.46 per cent during the period from 1952-53 to 1964-65 declined to 1.62 per cent between 1967-68 and 1978-79. One of the main reasons for this decline was the poor increase in the area under oilseeds cultivation during the latter period. This was in sharp contrast to the significant improvement in the productivity of cereal crops during the same period. In fact, except during the First Five Year Plan period, oilseeds production has fallen short of target.

Production data relating to edible oilseeds comprising groundnut, rape/mustard, sesamum, safflower, niger, soyabean and sunflower, highlights large variations from year to year. Groundnut, which constitutes 70 per cent of the oilseeds, has hardly shown any improvement over the last five years. A major reason for this poor performance is unfavourable weather. Another factor is that out of the total area under oilseeds cultivation, less than ten per cent is irrigated.

Given this brief background, the likelihood of any major breakthrough in the forseeable future would seem to be quite low. If, however, some determined and systematic steps are taken to introduce fairly well accepted corrective measures, improvement is certainly possible. In spite of this, the dependence on imports of edible oils is likely to continue for quite some time. The other point of grave concern is the danger that the already low per capita edible oils and fats consumption is likely to fall further.

II. SOME ECONOMIC & NUTRITIONAL CONSEQUENCES OF OIL SHORTAGES

A. Economic

Next to petroleum, the two major items of import for India are edible oils and fertilisers. The problem, however, is not restricted to edible oils only. The inedible oils used in soap-making and for paints and varnishes also need to be considered to get a complete picture. As per capita income grows, the demand for soaps, whose income elasticity is 1.7, is bound to grow. In a similar manner, with the increase in construction and other development activities, the demand for paints and varnishes is growing as well. The pressure on non-edible oils, however, has been greatly relieved due to the increasing use of non-traditional and minor oils. This has been made possible due to, among others, the pioneering work undertaken at the Hindustan Lever Research Centre on oils such as castor, rice bran, karanja, sal and neem, during the last 20 years.

It is the continuous shortage of edible oils that has contributed to escalating inflation and draining of foreign exchange. An interesting picture emerges if we consider how imported oils are utilised: a major portion of the oil requirement of the vanaspati industry is met through imports. This keeps the pressure off the indigenous edible oils market. The logic of providing the vanaspati industry with oil much below the local market price and maintaining some kind of informal price control on the final product, however, needs to be assessed. Vanaspati is largely consumed by the relatively more affluent and bulk consumers.

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It would, therefore, be rational to lift the informal price control and charge an economic price for the imported oil. The consequent surpluses generated by the Government through the sale of imported oil to the vanaspati industry can then be used as an additional resource for the development of indigenous oilseed production. Perpetuating the system of keeping the price of edible oils artificially low through imports runs counter to the long-term aim of increasing indigenous production.

In making a plea for several steps that need to be taken in order to reduce the burden of imports, it is useful to examine the supply and demand figures between 1970-71 and 1980-81. From a deficit of six lakh tonnes in 1970-71, we were faced with a deficit of more than a million tonnes in 1980-81. This gap is likely to persist for the next few years; by very conservative estimates, it could rise to two million tonnes by the end of the decade, even at the very low level of per capita consumption.

Suggestions have been made from time to time that a partial cushion against import costs can be provided by not only rationalising the pricing policy of imported oils but also by exporting oilseeds like HPS groundnut and cakes and meals, as well as other agricultural commodities. The cost of imports of edible oils formed about 0.3 per cent of the country's import bill in 1960. This went upto about two per cent in 1970 and is currently between five and six per cent. During the same period the value of agricultural exports has steadily gone up. Though this argument has obvious limitations, a sharper focus on some of the agricultural exports could help enhance foreign exchange earnings. The opportunities to export sugar are uncertain from year to year, but there has been a decline in the value of staple items such as tea and oil cakes. To some extent this has been made up by coffee, tobacco and spices. In other words, a more organised and centralised effort to boost agricultural exports in the country's areas of strength could help reduce the impact of the cost of importing edible oils.

The export of HPS groundnut has been a very productive foreign exchange earner over the years. Before this was canalised, there was a very encouraging and progressively increasing trend. Having reached a peak in 1976-77, it dropped drastically in 1979-80. If we decanalised the export of HPS groundnut, it would be possible to recover lost ground over a period of time and achieve a potential export of two lakh tonnes per annum. While this would mean an outflow of 90,000 tonnes of oil, the net realisation in foreign exchange under currently prevailing prices would be about $160 million, equivalent to about three lakh tonnes of imported oil.

Another important source for generating foreign exchange is the export of extractions. Unfortunately, India's policy on this has been inconsistent and the country is looked upon as an unreliable supplier. In the international market there is increasing availability of soyabean meal and soyabean producing countries have undertaken vigorous and aggressive marketing efforts to promote the use of soyabean meal. This, coupled with uncertainties in the availability of extractions from this country, has actually deprived us of a very large share of this profitable market. To build a sizeable and steady market share in competition with soya meal, India will need a long-term strategy. This involves sophisticated marketing in a growing but increasingly competitive world market. It is also essential to have a long-term understanding between exporters, the animal and poultry-feed industry and the Government so that a reliable supply for exports can be maintained.

Simultaneously we need to direct efforts to build up value-added exports in certain areas where opportunities exist. Initially these activities will require support to be competitive. Thus castor based derivatives, compound animal feeds, processed sal products, etc. could develop into significant exports. With the progressive establishment of markets for some of these value-added products, the export of raw oils, such as castor and sal, can be tapered off.

There are certain inherent strengths in our agricultural sector which could provide some buffer against foreseeable costs of imports if tackled methodically.

B. Nutrition

The minimum nutritional requirement of fat specified by the Indian Council of Medical Research is about 20 kg per capita per annum. In recent years, however, the per capita availability of oils and vanaspati has been far below this figure — around 5 kg. If the national average is that low, the predicament of the poorer sections of society is bound to be even worse.

Nutritionists have traditionally been focussing greater attention on the need for calories, proteins, carbohydrates, minerals and vitamins in diet than on edible oils and fats. The vital role of oils and fats in human health is too well-documented to be ignored, especially given the very poor consumption levels in this country.

Oilseeds are rich in proteins and fats, and fat is equally important in the diet of weaker sections of the population as its caloric density is more than twice that of proteins or carbohydrates. Essential fatty acids from oils and fats constitute membranes of living cells. They are also used by the body to make prostaglandins, important metabolites involved in regulating the muscles and the brain. Fatty acids also play a role in immunity. Fats convey and metabolise fat-soluble vitamins and play a part in the biosynthesis of several long chain alcohols necessary for transmembrane transport of sugars.

Without adequate fat in the diet, it would be impossible to solve the problems of calorie deficiencies of the vulnerable sections of our population such as infants, children and pregnant mothers. Continuous deprivation of fat leads to inadequate water retention, greater water loss through the skin, scaling of the skin, impaired metabolic efficiency as evidenced by the increase in endogenous oxygen intake and decreased tone of all cell functions and muscles. Since essential fatty acids constitute the major framework of all cells, decreased availability can also lead to impaired growth and diminished mental and physical capacity.

The consequences of low per capita consumption of oil are serious and pose a threat to the health of our nation. Therefore, while tackling the problem of shortage of fats, we need to urgently examine its availability, especially to the vulnerable sections of society through existing or new distribution channels.

III. WHAT CAN BE DONE IN TRADITIONAL AREAS

Over the years productivity has improved in certain traditional oilseeds within the country even though the sum total has been below expectations. It is now necessary to constantly examine ways to increase the spread effect as well as to tap new methods to improve the rate of growth.

Next to foodgrains, oilseeds production, of about 10 million tonnes valued at Rs.2,500 crores, constitutes the main agricultural sector in the country. As stated earlier, the growth rate in oilseeds has declined from 3.46 per cent in the period 1952-65 to 1.6 per cent in the period subsequent to this. In order to achieve the Sixth Five Year Plan target of 13 million tonnes, it would be necessary to grow at over six per cent per annum.

However, even to achieve a modest improvement over the current growth rate of 1.6 per cent it is necessary to step up the outlays on research, development and the extension of oilseeds. In the Sixth Five Year Plan, out of an outlay of Rs.6,000 crores on agriculture, only Rs.65 crores have been earmarked for oilseeds development. Although it is an improvement over the Rs.14 crores in the Fifth Plan, the total amount is still quite small. One of the methods of augmenting resources for the development of oilseeds could be the suggestion made earlier of recovering commercial prices from the vanaspati industry. At current prices this could generate upto Rs.150 crores per annum. Allocating some of these additional funds for Research and Development would certainly help raise the growth rate significantly.

Further, increasing the area under irrigation for growing oil crops is the single most effective measure that can be adopted in a rapid and sustained manner. This will reduce the dependence on weather. Varietal and seed multiplication management, which has been successfully done in the case of cereals, will greatly help in restoring, if not improving the very poor rate of productivity. Finally, it is imperative that a consistent price support policy is evolved to persuade the farmer to sustain his activity.

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At this point, let us briefly review the status of traditional oilseeds where marginal improvements have been made in certain areas.

Of the total **groundnut** production in the country, about 16 per cent is the summer crop, which is cultivated in irrigated areas — the rest, 84 per cent, is the kharif crop and is primarily dependent on the monsoon. The competing crops are jowar, bajra, maize, and to a lesser extent, cotton. Currently, in terms of return per hectare, the net return on groundnut is highest in these regions, but with the introduction of hybrid bajra, the situation may change. Ideally, therefore, it is necessary to improve the kharif productivity and increase the area under rabi groundnut.

There is need for breeding new high yielding, short duration varieties of this crop. Large genetic stocks of improved varieties are now being maintained in groundnut breeding centres in India, some for selection work and to a limited extent for planned hybridisation and mutation breeding programmes. Although coverage under improved varieties is being extended in large areas in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Gujarat, Maharashtra and other states, this has not yet produced the expected impact on groundnut production in the country. With our present knowledge and experience, and with the use of improved seeds, the application of fertilisers and trace nutrients, proper plant protection measures along with attention to the timing of sowing, optimum seed rate and adequate weed control, there is scope to increase the level of production by at least 50 per cent.

Rape/mustard is one of those crops for which both area under cultivation and production and yield show large fluctuations from year to year. One of the major problems is the non-availability of suitable seeds. Furthermore, various schemes have been adopted for foliar application of fertilisers and mass plant protection against Aphids, but the productivity gains have not been encouraging. In Uttar Pradesh, as well as in Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Assam, major gains are possible through uniform seed multiplication programmes and sustained extension work among farmers.

Though it is a traditional oilseed, **sesamum** has not received any sustained attention. The average yield of sesamum is gradually decreasing from year to year, partly due to the prevalence of serious diseases like stem and root rot and wilt, and partly due to mycoplasmal infections such as phyllody. Fungal and vector control is particularly important for this crop.

In the case of **sunflower** large-scale cultivation in our country started in the early seventies with the introduction of varieties from the USSR and Canada. However, even after ten years, progress of the sunflower development scheme has not been very encouraging. The main problems are heterogeneity in varieties, susceptibility to diseases like rust, alternaria, leaf spot and various root and stem rots, bird damage, poor seed set and genetic deterioration of varieties.

In the Sixth Five Year Plan, it is intended to increase the total acreage under sunflower to 7.5 lakh hectares by 1984-85 from its present level of slightly over two lakh hectares. The potential oil output from such activity would be large enough for this scheme to be pursued with a great deal of vigour.

The potential oil output from **cottonseed** is of the order of four lakh tonnes. However, only 1.5-2.0 lakh tonnes of oil is normally recovered. In order to improve oil recovery, as has been recommended for several years, it is essential to discourage the use of cottonseed directly in animal feeds and divert it from the ginning mills straight to crushing plants. It is also possible to improve the yield and the quality of the oil by using the decorticated cottonseed extraction process. In addition to its increasing use by the vanaspati industry, it has been gaining acceptance as an edible oil in recent years.

During the last three years, **soyabean** cultivation has made rapid progress. According to current estimates, the area under this crop has gone up from three lakh hectares in 1978-79 to 4.3 lakh hectares in 1979-80. It is estimated that this area can be raised to 10.5 lakh hectares by 1984-85, which could yield about two lakh tonnes of oil, and about four lakh tonnes of high quality protein. Even though the target appears ambitious, the experience of countries like Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Mexico and Thailand shows that in the initial years (1964-72), an almost 200 per cent increase in area took place. Soyabeans produce two to four times as much protein per unit area as pulses and grains and thus offer promise as the cheapest available source of high-quality protein.

The production of **coconut** is estimated at around 6000 million nuts. However, there has been a declining trend in productivity as a result of the failure to replant superior seedlings, over aged plantations, the menace of coconut 'root wilt' disease, sparse use of fertilisers and also, perhaps, indifferent agricultural practices. If planned targets with respect to coconut have to be met, then a part of this crop will have to be grown on a commercial plantation basis. Such an endeavour will require resources which are beyond small homestead gardens.

IV. POTENTIAL FOR RICE BRAN AND OIL PALM

I have selected Rice Bran and Oil Palm for a more detailed examination compared to the oilseeds discussed above in view of their very large potential. With the increase in rice production, oil from bran for both edible as well as non-edible purposes would increase significantly. And there is sufficient evidence from several countries to suggest that palm oil has high long-term potential for increasing the availability of edible oils substantially.

1. Rice Bran

In 1980-81, the country produced about 150,000 tonnes of rice bran oil, most of it of technical non-edible grade. Starting with about 500 tonnes in 1960, this represents impressive growth even though it is a fraction of the potential availability in the country. Nevertheless, as a result of the pioneering development of sophisticated indigenous technology at the Hindustan Lever Research Centre, it is today a major raw material in soap manufacturing. This in turn has eliminated the dependence on imported tallow by large units and at the same time has helped conserve edible oils which otherwise would have been diverted to soap-making.

The main reasons why rice bran oil (RBO) has not grown to its true potential are (a) the method of de-husking the paddy, and (b) the presence of the enzyme lipase which increases the free fatty acid content of the bran and renders the resultant oil unsuitable for edible purposes.

It is therefore of interest to examine ways of enhancing the availability of extractable bran and at the same time to review the status of edible RBO. Rice bran is obtained by de-husking paddy and polishing the resultant brown rice. The average quantity of bran removed during polishing is five per cent of the weight of paddy. Under the Rice Milling Industry (Regulation) Act, the Government has fixed the degree of polish. The percentage of bran that may be removed should not be more than five per cent or less than three per cent. The logic for this is that excessive removal of bran beyond five per cent divests the rice of its nutritive value. It is therefore appropriate to use a figure of five per cent of the paddy tonnage as the theoretical bran availability. This is equivalent to seven to 7.5 per cent on the weight of rice.

In order to obtain bran of extractable quality it is necessary to de-husk paddy first, separate the brown rice and then polish it. The two principal means of milling paddy are through the "huller" and "sheller" (including modern rice mills). In a "huller", de-husking and polishing are done simultaneously. Hence, bran produced is a mixture of husk (23 per cent) and bran (four to eight per cent). In a "sheller", the de-husking and polishing are done separately and it is only these mills that give a quality of bran suitable for oil extraction.

On the basis of 55 million tonnes of rice production and at 7.5 per cent polish, the theoretical availability of bran is approximately 40 lakh tonnes.

The estimated quantity processed, however, is only nine lakh tonnes. This is due to the fact that about 30 per cent of paddy is hand-pounded and 35 per cent is milled by "hullers".

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Of the 14 lakh tonnes produced by "shellers", if only nine lakh tonnes have been processed, the rest has obviously gone into feeding poultry and cattle. If all the "sheller" bran was processed during 1980-81, instead of producing 130,000 tonnes of RBO, the country could have produced 200,000 tonnes of oil.

The potential of RBO for the year 1984-85 has been estimated in the Sixth Five Year Plan at 440,000 tonnes. Based on current experience, this figure appears to be on the high side. However, if by 1985 the percentage of paddy milled in "shellers" can be raised to 65 per cent and all the available bran can be extracted, the oil production can rise to 285,000 tonnes.

Some of the obvious steps which need to be taken urgently are:

(a) Hasten the modernisation of the rice mills through existing schemes and increase the pace of replacement of "hullers" by "shellers".

(b) Re-examine procurement/levy policies in order to remove the competitive disadvantage and increase the availability of extractable quality bran ex "sheller" units.

(c) Improve the effectiveness of the Food Corporation of India and the co-operative sector for marketing the bran to solvent extraction plants.

The problem of increasing the proportion of edible grade RBO of the total oil extracted needs to be tackled urgently. In 1980-81, of the 130,000 tonnes of RBO produced, only about 5000 tonnes was of the edible variety. No method has been found upto now other than heat deactivation of lipase to stabilise the bran ex-milling. Parboiled paddy gives a higher yield of rice as compared to raw paddy, better quality in terms of oil content (22 per cent against 16 per cent in raw bran), and because of the stabilising effect of parboiling, more stable extracted oil. Of the total rice produced in the country, more than 50 per cent is parboiled. Unfortunately, very little parboiled bran is available for oil extraction because of the structure of the rice milling industry, and parboiling cannot become universal practice because it influences the taste of the rice.

Though a lot of work has been done in the country to develop a suitable and economical stabiliser, we are yet to develop designs which could be widely used in the rice mills. Recently, USDA reported a promising new method of deactivating lipase and stabilising rice bran using a simple, low-cost, extrusion cooker. However, this new technology needs to be tested under field conditions.

A heat-deactivation method for bran by, say, the use of agricultural waste, can be developed as a simple, low-cost unit process for use in the rural rice-growing areas. Although this may be a practical short term solution, preliminary chemical research indicates that eventually a simpler and more elegant chemical deactivation of lipase may be possible for widespread use. If we were to aim for a production of a modest 100,000 tonnes of edible rice bran oil by 1984-85, we could save Rs.70 crores worth of foreign exchange per annum.

There is also need for a clear long-term policy on the export of de-oiled rice meal, crucial for the solvent-extraction economy. There is a limit to which the domestic market can absorb the extracted meal. Time and again it has been observed that once the local market needs have been met, the extraction stops since there is no ready outlet for additional meal. It is therefore necessary to encourage unrestricted exports in order to maximise oil recovery from rice bran since the economics of rice bran extraction are largely dependent upon realisation from de-oiled meal.

Encouraging exports of rice bran extractions has paid rich dividends in the past. Earnings from exports have gone up from Rs.3.4 crores in 1974-75 to Rs.32 crores in 1981-82. This could have gone up even further but for the ceiling on exports and the withdrawal of cash assistance. Moreover, capacity utilisation has gone down drastically. It is estimated that if restrictions on the exports of extraction are lifted, the country can save Rs.100 crores by producing oil and earn a significant amount through the export of de-oiled rice bran.

The impression that the local poultry industry would be deprived of a valuable raw material has not been borne out by the recent experience of Andhra Pradesh, which is a leading state in poultry farming.

2. Oil Palm

Malaysia and palm oil have virtually become synonymous in the international oil trade. No discussion on edible oils can be complete without a description of what can only be termed as a stupendous achievement by this neighbouring country. As subsequent discussions will reveal, palm oil could make a major long-term contribution in bridging the gap between edible oils supply and demand.

a) Palm Oil & Malaysian Economy

Malaysia has been described as one of the miracle economies of South East Asia, with a growth rate of six per cent per annum in the 1960s, seven per cent in the first half of the 1970s and between 11 to 13 per cent from 1976 onwards. It has managed to keep inflation under five per cent with the agricultural sector providing the major springboard for its overall growth and with the emphasis given to palm. Malaysia, in the space of ten years, has become one of the three most important countries in the export of edible oils. This success is remarkable and impressive, not only in terms of palm oil production, but also the development of the whole sector. Malaysia has now established its own industrial structure in this sector to produce and market processed oil, a considerably more complex undertaking requiring not only production skills but also skill in marketing the more sophisticated products of the right quality.

The palm crop, which was first introduced to reduce the economic dependence on rubber, had a planted area of 130,000 acres in 1960. It now covers an area roughly spanning two million acres. It is the third largest planted crop after rubber and rice. Malaysian palm oil production increased from 1.6 million tonnes in 1977 to 2.5 million tonnes in 1980 and is expected to reach four million tonnes by 1985. Today, it accounts for 63 per cent of world palm oil production.

Yields per acre have also been increased by carefully selecting strains which give high yields of oil and planting the trees in commercial plantations. As the growth of acreage is likely to slow down in future years, the emphasis is to maximise yields from the existing lands. Research is concentrating on optimising fertiliser usage, pollination, field planting densities, and control of diseases, weeds and pests. Propagation by tissue culture, which could increase yields by 30 per cent is also progressing, and field trials with plants from tissues have reached fruit-bearing stage. Commercial planting is expected to commence in 1985.

Palm oil accounts for between nine and 12 per cent of Malaysia's export earnings. It exports close to 95 per cent of the palm oil it produces in various forms. This significant achievement has been possible largely as a result of the Malaysian Government's agricultural investment policies. While the private sector continues to play a vital role and accounts for a considerable share of the growth of the industry, a major force continues to be the Government. Malaysians who are landless or operate uneconomic farm units, are resettled as small holders by the Federal Land Development Authority. This was created in 1956 by the Government and has been funded by financial institutions and the World Bank. The policy, which has led to the development of a successful oil palm cultivation and processing industry, is giving employment and income to no less than one million people. It is a classic example of an agricultural activity thriving under proper organisation and planning. The Malaysian experience has relevance to the subject under discussion and its application to our country.

b) Planning for Palm Oil in India

Oil palm needs red loam soil and does not flourish in the sandy areas of the coastal zones. It grows well, climatically, in areas 10° North and South of the equator — with good humidity, mean annual temperature over 25°C and average minimum temperature not less than 18°C. It needs plenty of sunshine, and evenly distributed rainfall of 2000 mm — a drought lasting over a month has a limiting effect on yields.

Kerala considered medium-sized plantations in 1965, but due to pressure on land and other factors, the efforts did not yield the expected results. However, other areas which can be

(Continued)

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A PERSPECTIVE ON EDIBLE OILS

considered are the west coast of Karnataka, North and South Kanara Districts, and certain areas bordering Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The Andaman & Nicobar Islands offer excellent and practically unlimited possibilities. Two pilot projects of small acreage in Kerala and in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands have been taken up by the Government, but their impact, even as demonstration units, has not received enough publicity.

To begin with, for a pilot project to have any discernible impact, it should cover at least between 20,000 and 30,000 acres. Though by itself this will not make a dent on the oil shortage situation, it will set the pace and provide the impetus for greater development. For larger acreage, it is suggested that the Government consider a joint venture with the private sector which has the requisite expertise and can provide management skills. The necessary finance can be obtained from local and international financial institutions.

In 1965, oil palm estate development cost per acre upto maturity (five years) was estimated at Rs.3800 in Kerala and Rs.5600 in the Andamans. Today it would be fair to estimate the cost for the Andamans at Rs.12,000 per acre spread over a five year period. While it is true that oil palm is a highly capital-intensive crop with a relatively longer gestation period, this by itself should not deter the country from promoting a plantation industry. The major advantages of palm plantations are:

- **i)** It is not a seasonal crop but is produced regularly all the year round
- **ii)** Oil palm is singularly free from pests and disease
- **iii)** Climatic conditions in certain parts of this country are similar to Malaysia and similar crop performance and productivity can be expected
- **iv)** Oil palm produces fruit regularly from five years to 30 years of age and continuity of supply is therefore reasonably ensured
- **v)** Because of modern growing and milling techniques, the quality of oil produced is uniform throughout

Considering that an investment of Rs. 100 crores spread over a five-year period would start yielding annually oil valued at Rs. 80 crores and save foreign exchange, the case for pursuing this seriously cannot be overemphasised. If Malaysia has achieved the highest efficiency in output, cost and high yields, it is entirely due to scientific and research-oriented management of plantations by a very enterprising private sector with Government support.

CONCLUSIONS

In reviewing the problem of availability of edible oils and fats in the country, I have briefly surveyed some economic and nutritional aspects. The data on oilseeds production and the experience of the last few years indicate that while we should continue our efforts to achieve self-sufficiency, we should also consider the need for imports and what it will cost the country. Since the import of edible oils appears to be unavoidable in the forseeable future, ways of reducing its impact on the economy as well as on the long-term effort within the country should be considered with due care.

During the last ten years imports of edible oils have grown steadily. In financial terms it is currently equivalent to about ten per cent of the import bill for petroleum products. While exploration, conservation and substitution generate an air of hope and optimism on the mineral oil front, the same cannot be said for vegetable oils.

Apart from the adverse economic impact of edible oil shortages, the not-so-apparent nutritional consequences of poor consumption levels have much deeper and long-term consequences.

I believe that in the short-term some improvement in availability can and must come from frequently recommended practices such as better seeds, more extensive irrigation, and fuller utilisation of the increasing quantities of rice bran. Further, evolving a price support policy as well as one on the utilisation of imported edible oils which is in consonance with the strategy on pricing, would act as an incentive to sustain and improve indigenous production.

Oilseed production is now a national priority. Hence it is reasonable to expect that the plans to increase indigenous edible oil availability will receive the much needed encouragement. Even with moderate success in increasing the output of groundnut, sunflower, soyabean and cottonseed oil, alongwith some improvement in the availability of edible grade rice bran oil, imports can be reduced by 30 to 40 per cent by 1984-85 at the current levels of consumption. In addition, if the recommendations made for export of HPS groundnuts and extractions find acceptance, this can meet the cost of the remaining imports, substantially if not fully, by the end of the Sixth Five Year Plan.

For a longer-term strategy some other factors need to be considered. The goal of self-sufficiency in edible oils needs to be viewed along with the larger national issue of optimising productivity in agricultural land use. In addition, there is the fact that foreign exchange earnings from the export of certain agricultural commodities have been showing encouraging growth, the methods of increasing these further as a possible source for financing edible oil imports, need to be examined. The role of an organised palm oil industry has also to be taken into account as part of such a strategy.

Finally, I believe that there is a need for a coordinating body to oversee the policies on agricultural exports and oil imports, in the national interest and keeping aside sectoral pressures. An apex body constituted by the Government as a single point recommendatory unit, along with the active participation of the agricultural interests and the trade could perform this function. If the short-term as well as the long-term strategy is clearly defined and made the responsibility of such a body, we are likely to bring forth the quality of effort, imagination and achievement which have been missing from the edible oil strategy of the country.

(NOTE: This does not purport to be a report of the proceedings of the Annual General Meeting. Anyone wishing to have a copy of this speech in booklet form, including charts, may please write to: Communications Department, Hindustan Lever Ltd., P.O. Box 409, Bombay 400 001.)

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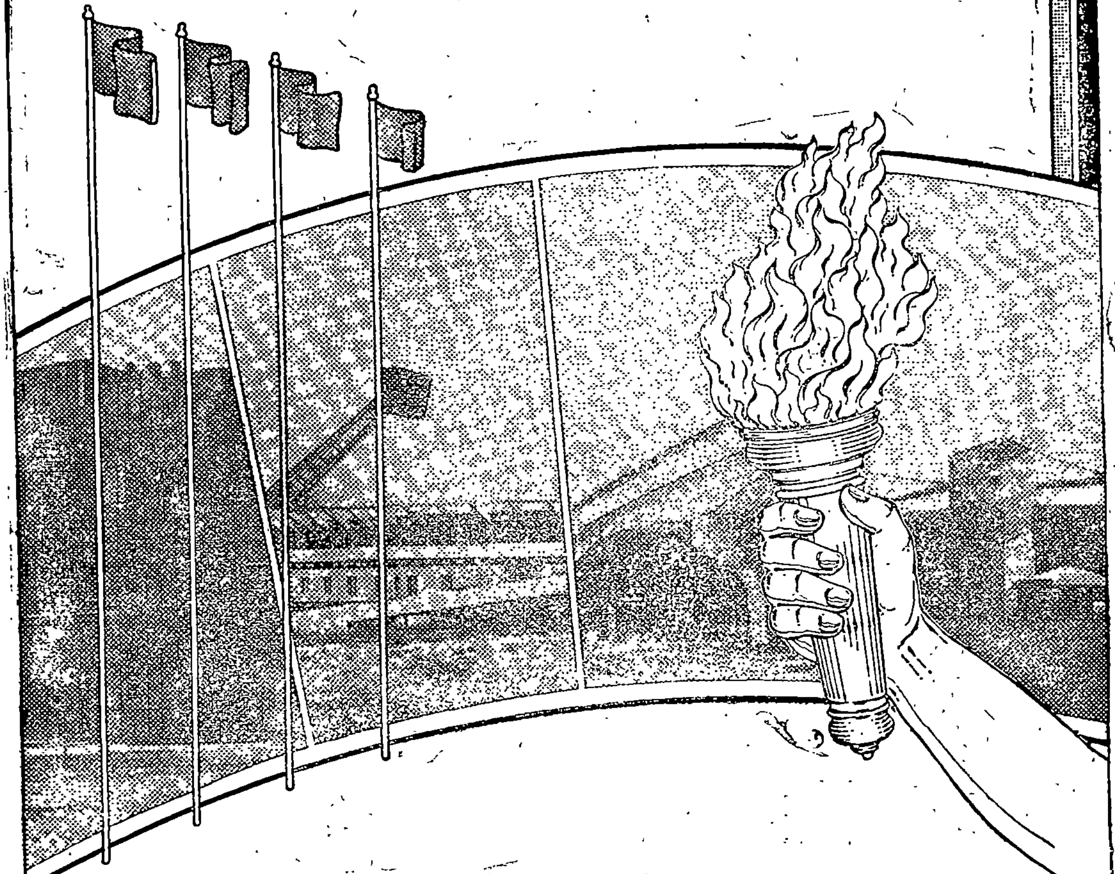

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Mainstream

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

How Deep is the Rot?

BIHAR and Uttar Pradesh together have long been regarded as the traditional homeland of the Congress. These two States together constitute an almost overwhelming bloc in Parliament, and all the Prime Ministers of India but one have come from Uttar Pradesh. The Central Ministers from this region easily out-number those from any other region; inevitably this has been most conspicuous under the Congress than under the Janata Raj.

It is therefore natural to regard these two States as providing the barometer of the health of the Congress. In fact, this stretch of Indian soil forming the basin of India's two mighty rivers, Ganga and Jamuna, has long set the tone of Congress culture.

Viewed in this background, the striking deterioration in the standard of Congress functioning in these two States should serve as a warning not only to the leadership of the ruling party but to the nation as a whole. It is not enough to say that the Congress in these two States is riddled with factions: perhaps it was always so in the past. But when faction fights reach a point of physical violence, when a Congress MP was so brutally assaulted in the presence of the Pradesh Congress chief that he had to be hospitalised — as happened only a few days ago at Kanpur — then one has to concede that the rot has reached a new dimension.

The Kanpur clash is not an isolated incident. It fits into the pattern of degeneration that could be regarded as inescapable given the sorry state of things around. It does not require much research to say that Viswanath Pratap Singh's resignation from the post of Chief Minister of UP although submitted in the wake of the massacre of Harijans and Yadavas in Mainpuri and Kanpur districts, was actually motivated by the fore-knowledge that his faction — more precisely, his caste faction — has ceased to enjoy the patronage of the high-ups in his party, and his ouster was only a matter of weeks, if not days. By taking the initiative himself of stepping down from office, he might have missed the chance of getting a berth in the Union Council of Ministers as the Prime Minister was reportedly thinking to provide for him since

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personally he had not earned her displeasure. The new dispensation which is sought to be installed in the UP Congress started with the appointment of Mohsina Kidwai as the President of the Pradesh Congress. The ugly scuffle among Congressmen that took place in her presence at Kanpur on July 4 will no doubt serve as an ominous portent for her. The change of guards does not necessarily lift the standard of political conduct.

If in UP Viswanath Pratap Singh resigned after the Harijan massacres, no such compulsion or compunction moved the Bihar Chief Minister to follow suit after the gruesome murder of six Harijans by upper caste landlords in a village in Aurangabad district followed by the murderous clash between two groups in Monghyr. This is because Dr Jagannath Misra is confident that his faction can safely hold out against all others inside the Pradesh Congress.

Whether the Bihar Chief Minister's self-confidence is justified or not, there is no gainsaying that this has generated an attitude of disdain towards what may be regarded as public opinion. The demand in the Bihar Assembly for a debate on the Monghyr incident was flouted by the Mishra Ministry with the Speaker oblivious to the need for taking up the matter urgently in the Assembly. The pandemonium that broke loose in the House leading to the ejection of as many as ninety-seven MLAs in two consecutive days brings out the utter degeneracy of political life in Bihar. If the Opposition behaved like a bunch of rowdies, the Ministry fared no better having demonstrated its provocatively dehumanised attitude to the sufferings of the common people with whose vote it had come to office.

The enormity of the Bihar Ministry's criminal apathy to what has been happening in the State can hardly be comprehended by focussing attention on these two incidents, however shocking these might have been. In every walk of life, not only does one come across a spate of violence but rampant corruption. From the running of railways through the State to the management of hospitals, schools, colleges and universities, the stink of corruption reaches high heavens and the Ministers in office with records that would have put their forefathers to shame. This is the picture of Bihar: if there is any State where the charge of breakdown of administration can be applied with the least fear of contradiction, it is Bihar indeed.

But Indira Gandhi would not easily wield her broomstick to clean up the Augean's stables, because of the lurking fear that any drastic treatment might cost the Congress-I Ministry itself. After all, defection though perfected in Haryana is not the monopoly of that State alone. Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra and Orissa — it is difficult to find a State where the Congress-I Ministries are not haunted by the spectre of defections. Haryana has of course helped to embolden the prospective defector: he is armed with the knowledge that defection is not even formally punished but on the contrary, amply rewarded. The authority of the so-called Congress High Command has passed into the realm of mythology.

Those who try to diagnose the malady of the Congress Ministries as being due to the disharmony between the Pradesh Congress leadership and the Ministerial team, between what is called the party and the Government, are really living in a world of makebelieve. The slide down in Congress functioning has gone too far to permit any such tussle based on the concept of the movement-versus-administration. That was the issue that used to harrass the Congress in the thirties and possibly uptil the fifties, and that is the issue which today might be proving a headache for the Left Front Ministries whether in West Bengal, Kerala or Tripura. But so far as the Congress today is concerned, the problem is how to keep under leash the warring factions, and they are widely interspersed over the Ministries and the legislature parties. As for the party organisation — outside the clan of the legislature party — it is virtually a signboard organisation, revived from time to time at the time of elections with a convoy of jeeps and a battery of loudspeakers.

If one talks to a Congressman of the old vintage, invariably he comments about the lack of a party organisation. In moments of honest introspection, he or she concedes that after the great split of 1969, there has been no party-building worth the name. Different executive bodies were adhoc appointed or sanctioned by the top. Since

1978, that is, after the final split which gave birth to the Congress-I, every Committee is formed as ordained by the Party President, that is, Indira Gandhi herself. If Chavan is left in the cold and Bhajan Lal is admitted, it is by virtue of the decision of the Party President.

For sometime, the Congress circles were excited at the prospect of their organisation being rejuvenated by the up-and-coming Youth Congress and Sanjay Gandhi was held aloft as an avatar. But the elements that were found to flock around him were by and large of the type which would have fitted better into a mafia, hardly the mettle needed to run a democratic organisation or to rule over a functioning democracy. Most of these elements are being unobtrusively weeded out; obviously Indira Gandhi has found most of them to be a liability than an asset. The Maneka controversy brings out in a manner the liability left behind by the Sanjay tradition: essentially, the Maneka clique represents what Sanjay stood for.

In UP Congress policies, the process of gentle purge which Indira Gandhi seems to have undertaken has brought out another element of the problem: in working out the election strategy of 1979, Indira Gandhi, along with Sanjay, had patronised rather conspicuously the Rajput elements, and this was taken by the Brahmins as a threat to their preserve. In the overhauling of the UP Congress, the elimination of Rajputs from key positions is only to be expected. And with it the possibility of heightened tension within the party organisation can hardly be ruled out.

Would Indira Gandhi try to rebuild a proper party organisation.? As far one can make out, she is averse to the building of a well-knit party. For her, the emergence of the party structure would lead to the reappearance of the party bosses of the Syndicate type. She prefers, it seems, only a vast, amorphous collection bound by loyalty to her person. It is not just an accident that most of the Congress Chief Ministers of today openly proclaim that they owe their office to the grace and kindness of Indira Gandhi: they hardly claim to be the leader by virtue of their own hold on the party or the masses. And this is also the candid claim of the Congress candidate for the current Presidential poll.

There are senior leaders in Congress-I who are worried about the alarming disintegration of the party. They feel that once the Presidential poll is over, there will be urgent need to build the party and as the first step towards it, they are keen on having organisational elections on the basis of membership drive. Some of them, to gain the Prime Minister's ear, are pressing for Rajiv Gandhi to devote himself to the running of the AICC office. But even these elements do not have the faintest idea how to go about holding organisational elections. The Pradesh Congress organisations are either defunct or hopelessly divided while there has been no membership enrollment for years.

But the more mature among the senior Congressmen are not so optimistic about the future. They are sceptic about the efficacy of holding organisational elections. As one of them very wisely explained, vested interests have come to dominate the party organisations over the years at various levels, by the strength of their money power which the party had used during the elections. So, once the organisational elections are set in motion, these vested interests would push through their own cronies and edge out whatever old and honest Congress elements still left in the party.

Indira Gandhi has been repeatedly emphasising the urgency of implementing the Twenty-Point Programme: special bodies have been set up in the Government for this purpose. Exhortations galore have gone out. But without an organised mass movement can any such programmme be implemented? And no organised mass movement will be possible without the transmission belt of a mass political organisation. This is precisely what her Congress could have taken up, had it cared to build an organisation.

In the hot-house atmosphere of Emergency, the Congress planned to set up implementation committees for the Twenty Point Programme. Nothing emerged — not because there was any lack of funds. Rather the surfeit of funds — not all of which was honestly collected, to say the least — created the illusion that everything could be built with money. The more hard-headed in the set-up thought that the elections at least could be managed with huge accumulation of funds. The election of 1977 disproved this thesis, but the thesis itself has not been rejected. In the dark days of hibernation, 1977-1979, funds were not only carefully stored but more were collected. However, the 1980 elections were won by Indira Gandhi's party not by the strength of funds, but by the strength of the fact that the Janata having broken to pieces through its own follies and shortcomings, the electorate rejected it and brought Indira Gandhi back to power. It was thus not a case of funds that settled the question of electoral victory, but the strength of politics.

Today, the only politics that dominate Congress is the politics of how to hold on to power. What is missed is that power can slip out of the grasp of any party if it fails to respond to the needs and urges of the masses. Callousness to the problems facing the underprivileged millions and concentration on the acquisition of ill-gotten wealth can kill a ruling party however powerful or an opposition, however vociferous. The future of the Congress-I, as also of every party in this country today, depends on its qualifying by that test in the eyes of the masters of Indian democracy, the millions who toil and periodically come to exercise their vote.

July 7

N.C.

COMMENTARY

Chicken-hearted Burrah Sahibs

THE Israeli biltz into Lebanon, the lightning aggression by tanks and air force, has stunned the entire world. More shocking has been the genocide committed on the civilian population, the indiscriminate Israeli bombing on civilian targets and the tortures inflicted on Palestinian Liberation Organisation forces, refusing to extend to them the status of prisoners of war as enjoined by the Geneva Convention. The international community has been horrified, the International Red Cross has drawn attention to the Israeli barbarities: even medical supplies were often withheld. Then came the siege of West Beirut and defying all conventions and the appeals from the UN, Israel has been trying to starve the Palestinians to their knees having cut off supplies, water and electricity to West Beirut.

All this has shocked beyond measure our public. And yet there has so far been no concerted mass protest. Hall meetings have been held in many places, with different parties participating, from the Congress to the Communists. But the old fire is missing. The Congress gave a reception to Yasser Arafat when he was in India in May. But today not even a massive rally has taken place condemning Israel. The AICC has got a Foreign Relations unit but there is no evidence that it has moved to hold countrywide rallies. The Left parties have got powerful bases and they run their own government in West Bengal, a state reputed for its long tradition of political militancy. There have been meetings and statements, but no mass mobilisation to condemn Israeli barbarities.

In the Government circles, the plea is often made that India is ready to help PLO, but it is for PLO to state what it wants. As a leading nation of Asia and an acknowledged leader of the nonaligned community, India has a responsibility. It has to prod and persuade other powers to move: just casting a vote of censure on Israel in the UN, however important that may be, does not complete our commitment.

It is true that the Arab countries have miserably failed this time. Perhaps most of them are constrained, for very obvious reasons, to look up to Soudi Arabia, and the present ruler of Saudi Arabia prefers to look up to the US President.

But this does not mean that India has no role to play, that it is paralysed by the infection from the Arab world. Rather if India moves energetically, others, including Arab countries are likely to respond.

Indira Gandhi on her part has taken the first step by writing to the leaders of Governments — to the Presidents of USA and USSR as also of France and that of Cuba who is the present Chairman of the nonaligned movement. There is reason to believe that in her communications she has not only condemned Israeli aggression but has called on these Governments to assert their authority to force Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon.

But these communications from the Prime Minister are not widely publicised, not even in our country. While AIR broadcasts, and rightly, the appeal by President Nyerere of Tanzania, there is hardly any reference in our media, official and non-official, to the Prime Minister of India's appeals to other world leaders. This is because there are chicken hearted Burrah Sahibs in South Block who are so engrossed in dressing up for the Prime Minister's coming trip to Washington, that they would not like to publicise anything that might be embarrassing to the US Administration. After all, the Israeli panzers have invaded and occupied Lebanon with American arms which Washington has so generously gifted the tribe of Begins over the years.

Such a servile mentality on the part of our bureaucrats, handling major affairs of state, can bring disgrace to the fair name of this country. These can thrive only because political elements in the nation have not bestirred themselves in defence of the cherished values that we have inherited from our freedom struggle.

It is time our patriotic conscience was stirred.

July 7 *Analyst*

Technology, Development and Self-Reliance

G.S. SIDHU

At the thirty-second conference of the Directors of Laboratories under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) held in New Delhi (July 3, 1982), the Director General, Dr G.S. Sidhu made a statement underlining the urgent need to set out a policy on technology, to ensure its indigenous development and to demarcate the areas of its import. This statement has far-reaching significance in the context of the national commitment to the goal of self-reliance It is being reproduced here with minor editing. —Editor

WHEN CSIR was founded in 1942, research and development were in their infancy in the country and very few industries existed. The picture today is different. We are now a leading industrial nation and have proven capabilities in research, development and design.

Within our limited means we in CSIR are trying to upgrade our capabilities both by induction of new talent and procurement of much needed equipment so that we are still better equipped to build up a strong base for innovative basic research and meet research, development and design needs of many sectors of industry.

Unfortunately the nexus between research and development still does not exist or at best is tenuous. Let me assure that it is not for want of effort on our part. Industry, be it in the public sector or the private sector, has always looked to countries outside India for purchase of know-how. This has always been justified and continues to be justified on the basis of trying to gain lead time. Industry has always claimed to import the most modern know-how and has paid liberally for it. Import of know-how takes place even when indigenous capability could have been used; but many a time we have received not only second-hand know-how but also reconditioned equipment. Yet this policy continues.

We started as an independent nation with a comfortable surplus in foreign exchange. Today we are a very heavily indebted nation. Why is it that after 35 years of practically free import of know-how we are still at a stage which is nowhere near self-reliance even in fields most crucial to our survival? Import policies have once again been liberalised so that our obsolescent technologies can be modernised. One may, like to find out the root causes of continued obsolescence even after continued import of technology.

One could take as an example, the status of electronics, especially integrated circuits, about two decades earlier. At that point of time, the United States was perhaps the most advanced country and the gap between India and Japan was perhaps not too much. Both purchased know-how from the United States at about the same time. Today the Japanese are world leaders. We also realised the need and importance of electronics in the country but apparently could not devise policies and instruments for development which would have brought us to the forefront. The know-how which we have purchased in the last few years will already be at least one generation and possibly two generations behind by the time we have translated it into industrial practice, and this is a field vital not only to our growth but to our very survival.

No simple answers can be provided to these complex questions. But one of the reasons is that no firm policy has been laid for absorption, adaptation and further development of imported technology. I hope that a mechanism is urgently established to ensure that responsibilities for absorption and improvement of such technologies are fixed at the time of import of technology.

I may take the liberty of mentioning here that one of the main reasons for Japan's phenomenal success in science, technology and industrial growth lies in the choice of a specific area for national thrust and developing a national consensus and providing the necessary resources to outshine other countries. They did so in electronics, automobile industry and now they are going in for low energy systems. We could learn from them and could make an effort now to develop a few areas where a national consensus be developed and a major thrust made to outshine other developed countries.

CSIR is prepared to take up major responsibilities in this field and one of the objectives in its Memorandum of Association is "*research and development directed towards continuous improvement of indigenous technology and adaptation and development of imported technology.*"

If some major areas are now selected in which already imported technology and technology to be imported is to be up-dated, I would urge that a proper directive be issued that this major task should be entrusted to CSIR in as many spheres as possible. Where such technologies are owned by the public-sector companies, it should be possible to establish joint research, development and design teams with public-sector companies concerned and with the association of public-sector Design & Engineering Companies.

Many devices are used by technologically advanced countries to hinder and thwart our progress towards technological self-reliance. One such device is the policy of selective "technology dumping". Thus, whenever the domestic S&T sector comes close to developing a needed technology, those who control the international price of this technology keep dropping the price until a gullible and short-sighted domestic decision-making considers it not worthwhile to further develop the domestic technology to full utilisation. Import is then resorted to and the chain effect of dependence continues unabated.

One of the impediments in the way of mounting the required major R&D programmes in any field in the country is the jurisdictional approach. Everything is in the jurisdiction of some Ministry/Department or a Public Sector company; when CSIR wants to start a major research programme where substantial investments will be involved, it is not easy for us to find money from our meagre budget because the jurisdictional authorities consider that research and development can be better carried out by their own organisations even when these R&D organisations have yet to be established or developed to full strength. Research and development facilities have been set up in some companies and are being set up under different auspices, although according to the Memorandum of Association of the CSIR Society research and development is very much our jurisdiction. But this jurisdiction has been constantly eroded and is now being eroded much more rapidly.

When the Sixth Five Year Plan was prepared, a sum of Rs. 170 crore only was provided for CSIR and over Rs 1,000 crores were allocated for R&D effort of the Ministries with the understanding that an apreciable portion of the latter allocation will be made available to CSIR for specific projects. This has yet to materialise.

It is not that we are against the establishment of R&D Units in the Ministries or Public Sector Companies. We believe that each public sector unit should have strong R&D, but this should look after the unit's day-to-day and short term problems; major investments for innovative R&D and building further on imported technologies should be made in existing CSIR laboratories. CSIR, which has a known research culture could be more effectively used to tackle their problems. One alternative could be to consider establishing joint research institutes of CSIR and other ministries/departments and public sector enterprises. The agencies, ministries and public sector industries should be obligated to contract major problems to CSIR.

The new Department of Ocean Development has set an excellent example. When we were asked by the Department of Ocean Development, whether we can take the responsibility of organising an expedition to Antartica, this responsibility was readily accepted. The research programme was drawn up. The research scientists not only in CSIR but other organisations were identified. The hardware and equipment were procured in record time and backed up by the Department of Ocean Development in facilitating the help required from other Departments and Missions abroad, the expedition was successfully manned in record time. Yet, CSIR continues to be deliberately denigrated as a slow moving organisation.

The Department of Ocean Development has now entrusted us with the responsibility of exploration for polymetallic nodules with a view to demarcating mining sites. Extensive discussions have been held with the Department of Ocean Development to chalk out our strategy and the Department has agreed to provide us the necessary budgetary support which will be approximately of the order of Rs. 8 crore and I am reasonably confident that this task will also be completed to their satisfaction.

In the changing world of today, we cannot go on meeting problems as and when they arise. There is, therefore, need to study the trends of scientific and technological development, social impact of these developments and national requirements. Advanced countries, mostly on the basis of these analytical studies, are making forecasts, constructing models and assessing the likely consequence of different alternatives and, based on these, are taking decisions. We could work and provide to the Government such analytical studies for it to weigh various options. However, for the system to be useful and to provide effective support, a strong modernised and sophisticated information base is necessary. CSIR has developed considerable capabilities in this area and would seek support for its further development and utilisation of its capacities.

In the present context there is an urgent need to look into the efficiencies of the industries and efforts needed to improve these. The need for improving efficiency is required in terms of investment decisions, utilisation of raw materials, energy consumption, quality of products and use of advanced and sophisticated techniques. One of our laboratories has done computer-based studies on the basis of which the Gujarat State Fertiliser Corporation has benefited to a large extent in the matter of plant operation. Similarly our work in the area of sugar industry can yield rich dividends to the industry. Optimisation and simulation studies are required to be increasingly used to increase the efficiency of the production system and today we are in a position to offer our expertise in this area. We are making efforts in our own way, but we could do much more with support and encouragement and the issuance of clear-cut directive so that the expertise available in CSIR could be much more effectively utilised in policy formulation and decision-making in the areas mentioned above.

While our budget grant provides for the statutory increase in dearness allowance, etc., it does not even attempt to nullify the increased costs of equipment, chemicals, apparatus, books and journals and construction. In real terms we are extremely short of funds. We are unable to attract good scientific talent due to low emoluments, lack of housing and amenities and inability to make investments for modernising our equipment. Investments in large public-sector projects escalate many times over the original estimates; yet the Government is able to accommodate these huge escalations. Therefore, we are not able to understand why there is hesitation in the matter of allocation of adequate resources for R&D.

We are contemplating major thrusts in the area of micro-electronics, particularly LSI and VLSI. In the area of biotechnology, an Institute of Microbial Technology is being planned. Work is already on for developing the technology for production of fibre optics for communication purposes. Cryogenics, superconductivity, coal, and catalysis are other areas of thrust. These require major investments and we will seek commitments and tie-ups from the Departments concerned.

In the end, I venture to urge the setting up of a mechanism which should:

(a) decide where technology has to be imported and where it can and should be developed indigenously;

(b) set time-bound targets, ensure adequate support and commitment to utilise technology identified to be developed indigenously;

(c) ensure the association of appropriate research and development institutions with the import of know-how so that it can be absorbed, adapted and improved; and

(d) recommend incentives for use of technology developed indigenously and disincentives for import of technology.□

George Shultz: The Bechtel Boss

CLAUDIA WRIGHT

> *Here is the assessment of the new US Secretary of State who succeeds General Haig, by* New Statesman's *Washington correspondent.*

In the three days before General Haig's resignation (on June 25) the White House disintegrated to a point of contradiction, chaos, and loss of personal control that has rarely been seen before during an international crisis.

In picking Shultz, the White House was motivated by the urgent need to have a man at the State Department whose loyalty and amiability will help settle White House nerves and allay outside criticism, while implementing to the letter the stances which Reagan has decided are necessary for his re-election campaign in 1983-84. Where Haig was splenetic, Shultz will be phlegmatic — a change of humour, but not of policy.

On first appearances, Shultz, the millionaire President of Bechtel Corporation, one of the 25 largest companies in the US, is the sort of Republican who might be expected to preserve the Administration from the votes of no-confidence it has recently been getting from Wall Street and international markets. He sits on the boards of Dillon, Read, the stock brokerage; J.P. Morgan and Morgan Guaranty Trust, the banks; General Motors and Sears Roebuck, the retailer. He and Bechtel have grown increasingly richer by foreign construction projects and the export of American technology abroad.

This side of his activity, however, will produce some of the toughest questions Shultz will face from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, when it meets to consider his nomination. As a pipeline builder for the oil and gas industry, Shultz is inclined not to interfere with the Soviet-European gas pipeline contract, but he will adhere faithfully to the President's policy. Mr Reagan's decision to reverse the commitments he gave to the Europeans on that issue (during the Versailles summit in June) not only contradicted General Haig's recommendations. but also those of Shultz himself, who had been the President's emissary in Europe and Japan before the summit conference met.

Shultz may face another test of conflicting interests on nuclear non-proliferation and American technology exports. His corporate interest in exporting reactors and nuclear technology will coincide solidly with the Reagan effort to ease non-proliferation controls over such exports to countries like South Africa, Taiwan, and Argentina. This will agitate several Senators. On the other hand, Shultz is the man who approved an agreement last year with Mitsubishi and in 1980 with Hitachi to provide nuclear technology to the Japanese. The same companies are currently embroiled in indictments by the FBI and Justice Department for allegedly trying to steal computer technology from IBM.

Shultz's fundamental problems, however, will be that his personal views on East-West relations and international economic policy — which do not differ markedly from those of the State Department or of Haig for that matter — are not those of the President. Though the latter's simplism in these areas can be worked on by the former economics professor and university dean, Shultz has not been appointed to that role.

The new Secretary of State will also lack the opportunity to appoint enough senior staff to make even a subtle difference to American diplomacy in the short run. The price of any move he makes will be a tacit deal with Senator Jesse Helms and other Right-wing Senators, who are determined to hold the Administration to a hard economic line with the Soviet Union and to intransigence on arms control. He must also accommodate the erstwhile liberal bloc of Democratic senators on the Foreign Relations Committee, who are intensely pro-Israel; and happy for their own political purposes this year, looking to the Presidential election ahead, to press the Administration – and Shultz — into a corner over the Middle East.

If Shultz appears 'soft' on the Arabs, both Senator Alan Cranston and Senator John Glenn, who are presidential contenders on the Committee, have an asset to exploit for pro-Israel support. If Shultz appears 'tough' on the Arabs, he will be putting himself in the same bind that Haig was in. He may try to satisfy all sides, or try to be both soft and tough, including the possibility of inviting Henry Kissinger back into government service as a Middle East negotiator. Kissinger has been anathema to the Republican Right-wing, but he carefully cultivated Shultz whom he describes in his memoirs as the "one American to whom I would entrust the nation's fate in a crisis". The Administration's relations with the Israelis would be eased if Kissinger, in whom they have confidence, were in charge of the settlement.

There is in reality no room for American policy to adopt either an anti-Israel or a pro-Arab position with Shultz's appointment. Instead, the contradictions will continue. The White House cannot run its empire without the Israelis, but neither can it retain the loyalty of its tributary Sheikhs, Emirs and Sultans by relying so obviously on Israeli force alone. (*New Statesman*: July 2, 1982)

Al Haig: Ambition Via Intrigues

GODFREY HODGSON

Here are excerpts **from** a **brilliant** *spotlight on Haig by a very informed commentator in* **New Statesman** (*July 1982*).

We have been treated to worthy, if confusing, attempts to give meaning to Secretary of State Haig's sudden resignation. They have tried to identify some issue of principle or policy that divided him from Judge William Clark and the rest of the California mafia in charge of the Reagan Administration's foreign policy....

.... two things might convince an Al Haig that it was time to go. One would be the belief that the Reagan Administration was in such disarray that to be associated with it was beginning to be damaging. And the other was that his own role within the Administration was so humiliating that it would damage his own political ambitions. Haig has not concealed his ambition to be President....

His rise was been pitilessly chronicled by a former colleague in the Kissinger White House, Roger Morris, who was one of those who resigned as a matter of conscience when he learned of the secret bombing of Cambodia. The same incident revealed Haig as an unconditional loyalist to Nixon, Kissinger and Carpet bombing.

It was Haig who ordered another disillusioned staff member, William Watts, to do public relations on behalf of the bombing. Watts said he would rather resign. He could not quit, Haig said to him: You've just had an order from your commander-in-chief.'

'Fuck you, Al,' said Watts, and walked out.

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Haig is himself a considerable master of public relations. He has succeeded in portraying himself a tough sonofabitch, perhaps, but a simple fighting soldier who lives by the antique code of patriotism and honour. It is true that he was in combat in Korea and that he received several medals for gallantry in Vietnam. But he is no simple fighting soldier. He is, for one thing, a careerist whose rise has owed everything to patronage at more than one critical moment. His first staff appointment was as ADC to his father-in-law, and he began his military career as a protege of those military courtiers who surrounded Douglas MacArthur as the American proconsul in Japan. When he was made a four-star general, he jumped over the heads of more than 200 senior officers. That was not done by simple military virtue. It was done by out-intriguing and out-conniving the champion connivers and intriguers in a White House that was a snakes' nest of backstabbing, weasel-talking and knifework. In that Byzantine environment, surrounded by such virtuosi of the countiers' arts as Kissinger, Haldeman, Colson, Ehrlichman and the rest, Haig was the champion bravo and the ultimate survivor.

Think of any of the clandestine brutalities of the Nixon foreign policy; and Al Haig was at the heart of it. Cambodia? It was his 'special responsibility' in the Kissinger team. Chile? The Senate Intelligence Committee investigation concluded that he was the 'de facto executive officer' of the murky plotting that led up to the Schneider assassination in 1970. Bangladesh? Haig and Kissinger alone sat with Nixon in the White House when he contemplated joining Pakistan and China in a war with India and Russia. 'He was always perfectly comfortable doing what must be done,' one of his colleagues told a reporter.

But Haig was also profoundly implicated in the secret inner history of the Nixon White House....

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So Haig has gone. Are these his final days? That depends whether he can raise the money for a *condottiere's* ride towards the republican nomination in 1984. Does that mean that we should heave a sigh of relief that authority over American power and American policy in a dangerous world has reverted to Ronald Reagan and his new adviser William Clark, who in his confirmation hearings before the Senate did not try to hide that he knew nothing and cared less about the world beyond America's shores. That is hardly reassuring.

Nor is it reassuring that the Haig affair has demonstrated once again that as this President, like each of his four predecessors, discovers the impotence of his office, foreign policy becomes the football of competing cliques of ambitious courtiers who are neither elected, nor representative, nor responsible. Once upon a time the United States stood for open diplomacy, for 'open compacts, openly arrived at', under the scrutiny of Congress and the press. The Haigs and Kissingers and their successors want the policy of the world's most powerful democracy to be decided by the methods of nineteenth-century absolutism: Potsdam on Potomac. □

Lebanese Tragedy and Palestinians

SULTAN SHAHIN

THE Israeli invasion of Lebanon has evoked widespreads condemnation. This includes even the Western press, but it, appears to be using its condemnation of Israel as a double-edged sword. For, while it condemns Israel for its uncalled-for aggression, it also holds the Palestinians responsible for the plight of Lebanon.

But the barrage of Western propaganda seeking to hold the Palestinians responsible for the tragedy that has befallen Lebanon, cannot blur certain historical facts that prove that the seeds of Lebanese distintegration lay in the local political and social divisions which were perpetually exploited by the neighbours and foreign powers. Also, it seems the stupendous experiment in laissez-faire that the Lebanese people conducted over the decades since independence in all spheres of life has contributed in a large measure to their present plight. If Lebanon lies in ruins today, it is partly because it never cared to build sound foundations for its economy. Industrial development was by and large ignored. The performance of the agriculture sector was even worse. Lebanese economy was almost totally dependent on tourism. But for these factors, in spite of the intermittnt PLO-Israeli clashes and the present Israeli invasion, it would not have faced the kind of devastation it has. The Palestinian presence in Lebanon did certainly prove an additional destabilising factor, but it just could not have caused the crisis in Lebanon as is being made out in the Western press.

Since 1920, when the French designated this tiny strip of land, 120 miles long and on an average 35 miles wide, as Lebanon, it has been convulsed by communal strife. There are followers of some 17 different sects in the country and even the promulgation of a National Covenant agreed upon by all parties concerned did not remove the perennial communal tension. Quite often this tension has sparked off bitter clashes between the Christians and the Muslims, resulting in indiscriminate killings and house-to house fights bordering on civil war.

The very creation of Lebanon was based on faulty assumption. Right at its inception 55 years ago, the new Lebanon suffered from a basic built-in tension between the Christians and Muslims. The two distinctive features of the country's structure and history are: the long mountain range protecting it from the east and the narrow strip of coastal plain facing Mediterranean Europe. The coastal ports Byblos, Tyre and Sidon were ancient Phoenician trading centres: the mountain forests were exploited by succeeding Egyptian, Assyrian, Persian and Selucid invaders. The country has been a cradle of several civilisations: Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Arab conquerors brought their faiths and built their cities. Until the ninth century the mountain, as the range is commonly known, remained predominantly Christian. Subsequently two Muslim sects Shia and Druse took roots among the Christian settlements. But this did not automatically lead to communal tension. It was during Ottoman rule that for the first time communal strife began to appear on the surface. The Turkish Pashas of Tripoli, Sidon and Damascus attempted to capture power by fomenting religious differences and instigating violence. The Ottomans secured direct control in 1840. But only twenty years later the situation changed. Bitter clashes between Druse Muslims and Maronite Christians erupted. French intervention followed. France had long sought the status of protector of the Christian minorities in the Ottoman Empire. This time it was able to force the Sultan to grant Lebanon the status of an autonomous province under a Christian Governor.

The end of the first World War saw the end of the Ottoman Empire as well. Under the new arrangement Greater Syria was split up, with the French being granted mandates for Syria and Lebanon and the British for Palestine and undivided Iraq. In a bid to reinforce the pro-French Christian Lebanon at the expense of the Arab nationalist Syria, the French immediately added the coastal areas of Beirut, Tripoli, Tyre, Sidon and the Bekaa plain to the east of Mount Lebanon. The new French-created Lebanon had a built-in deficiency: it had brought into Christian domination a large minority of Semi and Shia Muslims. The Christian naturally looked to France to maintain their dominance and the Muslims equally naturally looked to the south and east for outside support. Bitter clashes followed.

Subsequent political developments in the country reflect communal tension and bitter feelings at every stage During French rule — 1920 to 1943 — the Muslims, particularly the Sunnis influenced by the nationalist stirrings in Syria, supported the return of the Muslim-populated areas to Syria, while the Christians countered this by favouring the concept of an independent Lebanon. In the early forties independence from France became the common cause of the Christians and the Muslims. The urge for freedom from foreign rule proved stronger than the communal commitment and in 1943, after de facto nationhood had been achieved, the two communities patched up their differences through the promulgation of a National Covenant. This document established that the Arab and Christian communities should not undertake any action which might disadvantage the other. Article 95 of the Lebanese Constitution was amended to ensure that for the sake of justice and concord the communities shall be equally represented in public appointments and in the composition of the cabinet.

On the basis of the 1932 census the National Covenant allocated public offices to various religious denominations. No census has been taken afterwords because of the fear that it might reveal changes in the communal proportions and upset the old balance, although it is well known that Muslims now outnumber the Christians. The census showed that Christians and Muslims were in the ratio of six to five. National Assembly seats were fixed in the same proportions, with detailed allocations to each denomination like Maronites, Greek orthodox and Catholics among the Christians; and Sunnis, Shias and Druse among Muslims. The President was always to be a Maronite Christian; the Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim; the Speaker of the Assembly a Shia Muslim. Top civil service jobs were also allocated on a rigid communal basis. For instance, of the 70 posts in public administration, the Shia share was fixed at 14.77 per cent. The Greek orthodox got 2.66 per cent of the 26 top jobs in the autonomous departments and 12.1 per cent of the 44 foreign service jobs went to Maronites A similar practice adhered to for 30 years is that some plum jobs always went to Maronites or other Christians in what may well be called a confessional succession.

In all the major political crises Lebanon has faced since its independence, there has always been an interplay between outside influences acting on and threatening to upset the balance of interests within the country and the personal and family rivalries of the leaders of various sects. In 1958, for instance, when the country drew back from the brink of a disastrous civil war, both the factors were present. The formation of the UAR and the propaganda campaign launched in Cairo and Damascus for the return of the Muslim area of Lebanon to Syria awakened a response in the Lebanese Sunni Muslims who saw in Nasser the man for whom they had been waiting. What aggravated the situation was the Lebanese Government's acceptance of American aid under the Eisenhower Doctrine. This seemed to confirm the worst fears among the Muslims that the country was going into the Western camp. On the other hand, the majority of Christians rallied to President Chamoun's policies for fear that otherwise Lebanon would be absorbed into the Egyptian-Syrian State. In the month of May, these tensions led to serious disorders in Tripoli in the north, in the capital city of Beirut and in Tyre and Sidon in the south. The Muslim insurrection assumed serious proportions in a month's time. The situation was saved through the election of a new President, the Christian army commander, General Chehab, who had not openly taken sides.

The creation of Isreal in 1948 and the subsequent overnight transformation of nine lakh prosperous Palestinians into hapless refugees added another dimension to the discord. During the Arab-Israeli war in 1967 Lebanon was firmly on the side of Arabs. This provoked Israeli military retaliation against Lebanon for allowing guerilla activities over its borders. The tiny 14,000 strong army of Lebanon was hardly capable of warding off the Israeli danger.

The Palestine resistance movement, however, got full support from the Muslim population as well as younger and more radical Christians. But for the majority of Christians the presence of large numbers of well-armed Palestinians within Lebanon constituted a direct threat to their own security. These factors coupled with the government's determination not to allow the Palestinians to set up a state within a state brought the country to the verge of civil war once again in 1969 with a crackdown on the commandos. The country remained without a government for seven months and the crisis was finally settled under the Cairo agreement. It curbed some of the commandos' privileges but allowed a Palestinian military presence in Arqu (called Fatah land by the Israelis) and absolute control of the 14 refugee camps where guerilla arsenals and training facilities are located.

But the situation continued to be potentially explosive. After King Hussein drove the Palestinian resistance forces out of Jordan in 1970 and 1971, the Palestinian presence in Lebanon increased. South Lebanon suffered grievously from devastating Israeli reprisals or commando operations allegedly originating or master-minded from bases in Lebanon. Some Rightist Christians called for the abrogation of the Cairo accord and restriction on Palestinian activities. The leader of the rightist Phalangist Party Pierre Gemayel, was one of the most vociferous opponents of Palestinians on this occasion. In early 1975 Gemayel called on President Franjieh to end the "state of anarchy" and either assert the State's sovereignty over all parts of Lebanon or surrender it completely to the resistance. He severely lashed out at the existence of what he called statelets (the armed commandos).

Thus before the latest Israeli invasion, for all practical purposes, Lebanon stood divided into three parts — Christian Maronite chunk north of Beirut, the strip on the Israeli-Lebanese border which was Israeli-ruled by proxy of Major Haddad; most of the rest, Muslim — and then redivided by some 20-30 private armies, each largely sustained by smuggling and protection rackets. The so-called central government, which had to resign last year to prove its existence, had hardly any influence in the Maronite area, absolutely no authority in Haddad-land and not much in the split Muslim lands. Whenever some people felt like killing some others, which they frequently did, the national army was just brushed aside. Moreover the Syrian army had to mobilise all its resources to preserve peace between christian factions, though the Phalange, the strongest of the Christian groups, continued making bloody strikes against the Chamounists, the followers of ex-President Camille Chamoun. It seemed to be only a matter of time when the divisions in Lebanon would be finally formalised and given international recognition.

The state of anarchy in Lebanon is not a new phenomenon, at any rate it is not just a decade old. Right since 1920, when the French called this country as Lebanon, it has religiously avoided the rule of law. Independence in 1943 only increased the Lebanese indifference to the norms of civilised life. Their obsession with what they prefer to call Freedom has actually been at the root of all the trouble the country faces. Of course, rules and regulations do exist to cover almost all the aspects of life. But to circumvent the laws has been an article of faith, almost a national duty, for every Lebanese. Take, for instance, the case of tax evasion. It has been so widespread that according to a liberal estimate only about 20 per cent of direct taxes were actually collected by the authorities in normal times. Perhaps the only law a Lebanese wanted to be observed was the banking secrecy law which made the detection of tax evasion almost impossible. In fact indirect taxation brought more revenue to the state than the direct taxes. In 1972 custom duties and the fuel and tobacco taxes raised £ 54.5 million while direct taxes brought in only 41.3 million pound. Out of these, income and business taxes accounted for £ 15 million and the property tax £ 9 million. The situation was more chaotic in 1962: direct taxes brought only 16 million pound while indirect taxation brought 30 million pound.

The Lebanese' excessive devotion to *laissez-faire* made planning an anathema in Lebanon, particularly in its capital, Beirut. The golden city of Beirut which earned the largest proportion of the country's income, had been growing from all sides, numbered to the building-owners' greed, ugly high-wise concrete constructions were replacing the mellow houses with gracious facades and fine, wrought-iron balconies nestled in their small, shady gardens for which Beirut had always been known and admired. This is not to belittle the architectural beauty of some of the new concrete blocks. It only underlines the fact that, come what may, the Lebanese would never adhere to any rule or regulation. The new buildings do not have underground garages, an accepted norm in every other metropolis with similar congestion problems. It never bothered a Lebanese that cars parked on both sides of narrow streets caused unmanageable traffic jams. Indeed, during the peak hours the traffic hardly moved in the busy streets of the now-ravaged city. The only solution lay in the widening of the roads, but government interference in public affairs being an anathema, it was virtually impossible. And land prices being what they were, the Government could not afford to purchase them either.

The policy of laissez-faire had affected nothing worse than the health services. The Government in every civilised country is supposed to provide the citizens with some medical facilities. Not so in Lebanon. Nobody would listen of it. This was one of the reasons why there were few government hospitals and clinics. Even the ones that did exist were poorly equipped and badly administered. Beirut's emergency medical services were handled by a Sunni and a Greek orthodox hospital.

Equally badly affected was the public transport in the city. In fact one would be nearer the truth to say that there was no public transport system in Beirut. Many people owned cars, and those who did not had to travel by private taxis plying all over the country. Other essential civic services were in no better shape. Water and power supplies broke down frequently. Garbage collection and sewage disposal left much to be desired. The telephone service was least dependable from international standards. And all this because the workers considered it below their dignity to cooperate with the Government. For the rich it mattered little, for they could get everything done using money-power. But life became intolerably miserable for the poor. No public health service, no transport, no lending, library, no park for their children, garbage heaps piled on the streets, appallingly inadequate sewage system, no public low-cost housing, and sluggish administration all round.

One of the by-products of the prevailing system of complete paralysis of the Government in the name of individual liberty, was the corruption at all levels. The only way to get anything done was to grease the palm of the person concerned. No garbage collector would care to look at the piling heaps unless you offered him a sweetener. No telephone engineer would come to your rescue until you tried to keep him in good humour, and, of course, paid for it. Corruption was the accepted norm. It had become a way of life. Sometimes in the past there had been scandals involving ministers and senior civil servants in highly responsible positions. On such occasions the response used to be typically Lebanese. The man in the street got angry. There were spontaneous outbursts of annoyance. Everybody would denounce the corrupt. There would be demands of severe punishment being meted out to him. But the storm passed over equally swiftly. Soon enough the people would start feeling sorry for the person who had been exposed because of some minor fault in his technique. This phase, too, would be over quickly. Everybody would then forget the incident, thus ending the mortification of the poor criminal.

Nothing would illustrate the Lebanese' universal contempt for law better than their feverish attempt to stock arms and ammunition in complete disregard of the rules. The favourite weapons were: rockets, mortars, bazookas and recoilless rifles. All these weapons have been freely used on numerous occasions in the past. Much to the detriment of the country, replenishment of the armoury was no problem for any of the numerous factions which maintained their private armies. Most neighbouring countries and some big powers had enough interests involved in the country for any faction to be able to get as much arms and ammunition as it desired.

But for this kind of factional fighting and arms race helped by and on behalf of foreign powers, Israel would not have dared to invade the country. The dogs of war in Israel know that killing Palestinians would only please several other groups in the country. But the one country in Middle East which could least afford this savage devastation is Lebanon. Dominated by trade and services, the Lebanese economy lacks sound foundations.

A sector-by sector breakdown shows that agriculture and industry combined generate less than a third and the service sectors generate the remaining two-thirds. This is largely because of the pattern and quality of Lebanon's resources and the size of the economy. While on the one hand Lebanon has little or no mineral and agricultural resources required for the development and sustained growth of a sound industrial and agricultural base, on the other it has an abundance of attraction for the tourist and the investor on account of its central geographical location, the variety of its landscape and the political system that gives unfettered freedom to the individual.

The capital of Lebanon, Beirut, is, so to speak, a golden city. For all its failings it has much to offer to its residents and visitors. With its night-clubs, cabarets, discotheques, bars and English-style pubs, it is a fun city, particularly for Arabs most of whom find themselves being exposed to this kind of merrymaking for the first time and for whom such opportunities are not available at home. Excellent restaurants for European and Arab food abound. French-style cafes and all-night coffee shops do a good late-night business. And who can forget the Casino du Liban. Half an hour's drive from Beirut, overlooking Juniyah Bay, the casino is both the country's one and only gambling spot and the stage for what must be the most expensively mounted and lavishly spectacular show outside Las Vegas.

Not the least attractive is the atmosphere of cultural freedom one enjoys in Beirut. This is invitation enough for the Arab writers, artists and students seeking to broaden their horizon. The well-laid out bookshops, open until all hours of the night sell books from all over the world. The number of daily, weekly and monthly newspapers and periodicals published in Beirut is certainly larger than in any other comparable city. In fact, every Arab movement and ideology has its platform in some or the other paper published from this city. What is more, the cultural freedom has induced many Syrian, Iraqi and Egyptian artists and writers, whose work is too political and smacks of too much independence of mind to be acceptable in their own countries, to settle in Beirut permanently or at least make it their work place. The painters get particular encouragement from the fact that there are numerous modern private galleries. The Lebanese are an art-loving people. They are particular connoisseurs of paintings.

Beirut is the only city in the Middle East where one could get a chance to see the best and latest American and European films in comfortable cinema houses. The annual Baalbek International Festival draws a total of 70,000 Lebanese and foreign connoisseurs of art. The visitors to this Festival include well-known symphony orchestras, theatrical and dance companies, leading jazz singers and solo artists.

Other parts of the country are equally enchanting. The great temples of Baalbek, the well-excavated acres of the ancient city of Tyre, the ruins at Byblos, the remains of the temples and castles of past conquerors in remote villages and the remarkable and spectacular grottoes at Jeita are reason enough for holidaying in Lebanon. Besides, the tourist is well looked after. Hotels are well managed, and the services provided leave nothing to be desired.

In view of the excessive dependence of Lebanese economy on the services most of which are sold to foreigners, it is hardly surprising that all local and regional upheavals in the past have proved greatly detrimental to it. The Suez war in 1956, the near civil war in 1958, the collapse of the Intra bank in 1966 and the subsequent bank purge, the Arab-Israeli war in 1967, 1970 and 1973 — all these upheavals caused serious setbacks to the Lebanese economy. The 1975-76 civil war virtually stopped all economic activity in the country. Not only the services but the industrial sector, too, was very badly affected.

What will be the impact of the present Israeli invasion can better be left to imagination. Lebanon will probably never regain the prosperity it used to enjoy, unless, of course, the various Lebanese factions learn some lessons from the present catastrophe and unite as one Lebanese nation. Apart from unity, what Lebanon would desperately need is an effective government which puts and end to the traditional policy of laissez-faire and lays much more emphasis on the development of agriculture and industry while simultaneously promoting tourism as well. The Palestinians too will have to play a role in the reconstruction of the country. But all this speculation is contingent on the fact that Israelis would withdraw from Lebanese territory. Whether or not they will would entirely depend only on international pressure as also on how soon the Lebanese people including the Palestinians living there are able to close their ranks and force them to withdraw.☐ (*July 1*)

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Indo-US Relations

K.R. NARAYANAN

In less than three weeks Prime Minister Indira Gandhi would be visiting the United States at the invitation of President Reagan. For an understanding of Indo-US relations, *Mainstream*, will be carrying contributions on the subject in its coming issues. The discussion opens this week with the following contribution from the Indian Ambassador in Washington: it is the text of his address before Foreign Policy Association, New York (May 3, 1982).

— *Editor*

IT has become a truism to say that Indo-US relations have been marked by ups and downs or by alternating periods of warmth and coolness.

Perhaps it is more correct to say that some sort of duality has existed at the core of this relationship. I am tempted to describe the Indo-US relationship as "half full of cold, half full of fire" in the words that the Spanish poet Lorca applied to a woman in one of his lyrics. The task of diplomacy, or rather statesmanship, is to mix the hot and cold and to generate a health-giving even temperature in our relationship that is neither frigid nor feverish.

Whatever be the ups and downs, and zigs and zags in Indo-US relations, certain common things stand like stone — durable and fundamental. Individualism with the attendant urge for freedom and liberty is one of the inherent characteristics of both Americans and Indians, even though the expression of individualism is different in one society that is new and bursting with energy, and in the other that is ancient, complex and variegated. The intellectual and philosophical links between India and the United States have never been sufficiently examined or understood in the superficial passion for political interpretation and misinterpretation. Ideas had travelled from India to America and from America to India influencing thought and action in both our countries. Great American thinkers and writers like Emerson, Thoreau and Walt Whitman were influenced by Indian philosophy, and they in turn profoundly influenced both thinking and action in India through their writings and through great Indians like Swami Vivekananda, Tagore, Gandhi and Nehru. Besides, as Jawaharlal Nehru acknowledged during his first visit to the United States "an echo of the great voices of the founders of the American Republic" can be recognised in the Constitution and the political system of India.

This intellectual relationship has been facilitated by the English language and educational systems that are akin to each other. Students, scholars and professionals from India come to the United States in greater number than to any other foreign country weaving a network of personal relations between the US and almost every part of India. The Indian community in the United States, which is over 360,000 strong, comes from the educated cream of Indian society which is able not only to adapt to conditions in this far-away land of opportunity, but to contribute significantly to the professional, scientific and technological fields of development in this country. Though it constitutes a brain-drain from India, it can also be looked upon as a brain-bank abroad in which India is investing for the future.

While these intellectual and cultural ties are facts, it must also be pointed out that there is a cultural gap separating the new society of the United States and the old civilization of India. For most Americans, India is still an exotic and sordid land of poverty, disease and squalor inundated by a ceaseless torrent of babies, while for most Indians, imbibing images from Hollywood and the media, America is an admirably and amazingly rich land, almost indecently affluent and materialistic, afflicted by crime, violence and sex. Here is a major cultural bottleneck in understanding — a bottleneck that exists in respect of life, society and politics.

The economic and commercial ties that bind our two countries are strong and growing. India's agricultural and industrial development has reached a stage today when it is possible for us to attract and absorb increasing investments from the USA, particularly with the current liberalisation of investment and trade policies by the Government of India. Our reservoir of scientific and technological personnel which is the third largest in the world, together with the sophisticated and diversified industrial infrastructure that has been built up, offers opportunities for economic collaboration in India as well as in third countries between Indian and American enterprises. The Indian market is a steadily expanding market which can offer outlets to American capital, equipment and consumption goods even when some of the other lucrative markets of today might dry up or be closed.

For India, the United States is a source of high technology and capital, and a market for its traditional as well as new industrial and engineering products. In the relationship between the United States, which represents the peak of economic and technological advance, and India, which is the paragon of a developing country, is telescoped not only a bilateral equation of major proportions, but the crucial economic relationship of our time, namely, the North-South relationship. How we adjust our relations in the bilateral field to our mutual benefit might well point the way to the larger structural adjustment between the developed and the developing worlds.

It would be less than graceful on my part if I do not acknowledge here the great contribution that the United States has made to Indian economic development. From 1951 to 1971 it has been estimated that the USA gave India loans and grants to the tune of over $ 9 billion including 40 million tons of foodgrains. Today the level of assistance is smaller, but it is still the largest development assistance programme that the US operates, though it is only eight per cent of the total external assistance that India receives. The most glorious chapter in Indo-American economic-cum-technological co-operation has been written in the field of agriculture. India's Green Revolution and the basic self-sufficiency in foodgrains that we have achieved today owes a great deal to this cooperation.

IN the field of international relations, notwithstanding our over-publicised differences, no two countries have a greater stake in the maintenance of world peace and the world balance and in the preservation of peace and stability in the vast Asian region. Our perceptions of the world may differ, and there are differences in our methods and approaches to international problems, but there is a basic thrust of commonality in our objectives, be it in the field of economics, politics, or international relations.

I have referred earlier to the intellectual and philosophical affinity between our two countries and peoples. This is symbolised by the one word 'democracy'. The significance of this democratic affinity has not been fully appreciated, and certainly not been integrated into practical policy-making. For India the fact that the United States is the greatest democracy and the most powerful nation in the world is of fundamental significance. The United States is a major factor in the world environment in which Indian democracy could develop and flourish.

But I should submit that Indian democracy also holds significance for the USA and the world. To appreciate this it is necessary to ask the question why and how this system, which was handed over by the British in a rudimentary form to countries over which they held sway, survived and advanced in India, while it went down in many other countries before military coups and dictatorships.

It has also to be understood that what has happened in India was not a mere imitation of a Western system, but the adaption of it to our conditions and needs, and the application of it to a massive process of socio-economic development and transformation. We are conscious of the difficulties and perils that face our democratic system, but the fact of six general elections involving a colossal electorate, the fact of changes of government, parties and leaders through the process of free elections, and the audacious application of the democratic method to basic social and economic development, are noteworthy in spite of all the deficiencies and shortcomings involved in the working of the system.

The British, though they introduced elements of the parliamentary system into India, were highly sceptical of the applicability of democracy in Indian conditions. Even today there are many in the West who look upon Indian democracy as some sort of transient illusion like the Indian rope trick, while the ideological East perhaps misconceives it as just a stage in what they consider to be the inexorable march towards Communism. But the fact is that in grappling with the great issues of Indian life, society, economy and politics, democracy has already moved from an experiment to an established system in India. To put a question mark against it, and to believe that only the elite of Western Europe and America are able to operate a democratic system, is to introduce a basic uncertainty into our relationship.

I should like to make here a related point. If the Western connection has facilitated India to emerge as a democratic nation, would it be possible, in a world of intense ideological and power contest, and in a world where the majority of mankind lives and struggles in the vast region of the developing countries, for the Western countries to flourish in the long run as islands of democracy and affluence, without at least some countries, certainly a populous and strategic landmass like India, remaining a political democracy and an example of social and economic development through democratic means? I feel that in this particular field it is possible for populous and developing India, and rich and powerful America to help and reinforce each other. This does not mean that we should get together in some sort of crusade for democracy through a global ganging-up. We believe that our political and our value-systems can be protected without such lining-up; indeed, to do so would be, in our judgment, more disruptive than supportive of our democracy, as the real threats to it are internal rather than external, and have to be dealt with by political, social and economic methods rather than by weapons and military methods.

It is necessary to understand this democratic, peaceful strategy of development adopted by India if one is to appreciate the policy of non-alignment which is integrally related to it. Non-alignment has been the single issue over which Indo-US understanding got canfounded, and most of our differences in international relations can be traced to the confusion over this basic issue.

NOW, non-alignment is a relatively new concept and approach in international politics. It is not neutrality, which is essentially a war-time concept, but a strategy for peace, and its principal objective is not so much to enable neutrality in the event of war as to lessen tensions and to avert war itself. John Foster Dulles had mistaken non-alignment for neutrality and condemned it as "immoral". Dante had written in his classical work that a special part of hell was set apart for those who remain neutral on the great issues of life. Jawaharlal Nehru had echoed the same sentiment when he told the US Congress in 1949 that when freedom is threatened and justice menaced, India cannot and shall not be neutral.

That approach however did not imply that we would line up with others and plunge into Cold

War. In modern politics, the dividing line between heavenly hosts and Satanic forces has become somewhat thin, and the black-and-white view of the world is no longer valid. Today the predicament of humanity is such that if there is a world war, be it for the noblest of causes, both the righteous and the wicked would find themselves in the hell of fire and brimstone and atomic radiation. It was in this context that Jawaharlal Nehru put forward his policy of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence warning that the alternative to co-existence was only "co-destruction".

If John Foster Dulles could not appreciate non-alignment, so could not others in more recent times, which perhaps, is not an isolated individual difficulty but a reflection of the general attitude towards this rather new-fangled policy. In his *White House Years* Dr. Henry Kissinger refers to India "as a country which had distanced itself from most of our foreign policy objectives in the name of non-alignment." At another place in the same book he showed a better understanding of the policy, but in a manner that ignored Indian interests and sensitivites. "Just as our wooing for two decades" Dr. Kissinger writes, "had not managed to tempt India out of its non-alignment, so India was unlikely to move irrevocably to one side as a result of our defending our own interests (the reference here is to US 'tilt' towards Pakistan during the Bangladesh crisis). Non-alignment enabled India to navigate the international passage with a maximum number of options. For that reason we were convinced that India would sooner or later seek a rapprochement with us again if only to keep Moscow from taking it for granted."

THE implication of all this is that India, in order to maintain its non-aligned foreign policy, would get along with the United States, even if the United States hurt India. Strangely, we have heard the same line of argument during the recent discussion on the supply of arms to Pakistan namely, that India might fret and fume for some time, but would desist from doing anything that would jeopardise Indo-American relations. Perhaps, there are some in India also who think along the same lines in regard to the USA's relations with India (but not at the official level and certainly not in the recent past) and believe that one can criticise the United States without damaging our basic relations with it. But arms, F-16s and nuclear ships are more concrete and dangerous things than words and criticisms. I think the worst thing in Indo-American relations is to take each other for granted. Even when there are no immediate and vehement reactions, one must take into account the slow, incremental re-adjustments in foreign policy generated by such policies and actions.

The most conspicuous as well as pervasive misunderstandings between India and America centre around the Soviet Union, and hence it is important to examine this closely and realistically. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has often stated that she is neither pro-Soviet nor pro-America, but simply pro-Indian. We are certainly friendly to the Soviet Union. It is a commonsense to seek friendship with a neighbour, especially with a neighbour that is a super-power, that has not hurt the interests of India, but on the other hand has extended support to us in some very critical situations. It would be foolish if we adopted an unfriendly attitude towards such a neighbour on ideological or Cold-War considerations.

Our friendship with the Soviet Union has not affected our internal political and social system, nor has it constricted the pursuit of friendly relations with any other country including the United States, Western Europe, Pakistan, and China, and the non-aligned countries. It was one of the non-aligned maxims of Jawaharlal Nehru that India's friendly relations with one country should not come in the way of friendly relations with any other country. Indira Gandhi has often stated that India's policy is to try to lessen hostility where there is hostility, to create friendship where friendship does not exist and to increase friendship where there is friendship.

In this context I should like you to consider what the situation in our region would have been if India had joined a strategic combination or consensus against the Soviet Union. It would have resulted in India and the region being drawn into great-power rivalries and conflicts, turning it into an area of contention and insecurity. In that event would it have been possible for the United States to continue its stance of benevolent neglect of India giving it a low priority in its strategic pre-occupations?

The charge that India is pro-Soviet needs further probing in view of its pervasive influence on American thinking. There seems to be a psychological penumbra surrounding this thinking. As early as January 1947, ten months before India became independent, John Foster Dulles made a statement that "in India Soviet Communism exercises a strong influence through the Interim Government." (This statement was made when Lord Wavell was the Governor General of India and Nehru the Vice-President of the Interim Government). It is a little surprising that in a booklet entitled *Soviet Military Power* published in May 1981, India has been shown along with Cuba, Ethiopia. Yemen etc. as a country where exist "major concentrations of Soviet and East European Military Advisers."

Such perceptions do violence to facts. From the Indian side it would be equally erroneous if we thought that behind these perceptions there does not exist understanding and friendship for India in America, and if we believed that the United States is unmindful of the need for co-existence and has embarked upon a collision course with the Soviet Union.

WE do appreciate the fears, suspicions and the sense of insecurity of the United States, and we also know that there are such fears in Moscow as well. One of the objectives of non-alignment is to contribute, to whatever small degree possible, to the overcoming of this wall of fear and suspicion that divide the super-powers.

The international outlook of our two countries has heavily influenced our bilateral relations. As a matter of fact there are no clashes of interests between us in the bilateral field in an intrinsic sense. It is the focussing of the global approach on bilateral issues that has magnified into major differences some of the bilateral issues. That is so with regard to differences over the supply of nuclear fuel for the Tarapur plant and arms supplies to Pakistan. With regard to Tarapur, a valid international agreement, every clause of which India has strictly, observed, has been rendered unworkable owing to developments in American policy on nuclear non-proliferation and American domestic legislation well after the agreement was signed. Both sides have expressed willingness to have the problem settled in an amicable manner avoiding negative fall-out on our general, friendly relations.

On Pakistan it is not often understood that, notwithstanding our differences and conflicts with that country, we have greater stake in Pakistan's integrity and stability than any other nation and that ever since partition it has been our endeavour to heal the wounds and evolve a relationship of friendship and co-operation with this neighbour. For various reasons we have not achieved success in this so far. The drawing of Pakistan into a military alliance system and the consequent militarisation of Pakistani politics are not irrelevant to the failure of the two countries to come closer together. As in the past the present supply of arms to Pakistan is in the Cold-War context and linked to a global strategic consensus.

Whether the United States wanted it or not, this would not only raise tensions in the region, but also pose a threat to India's security and national interests. In addition it is likely to interfere with the improvement of relations between India and Pakistan, and its repercussions in Pakistan itself can well be negative. To my mind what is involved in this Pakistan policy is not only an unawareness or under-estimation of the consequences, but a mistaken strategic doctrine that Pakistan is the defensive bastion in the region. While we in India appreciate US concerns over developments in the region, and we stand for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, we believe that the objectives that all of us have in view cannot be achieved without talks and negotiations leading to a political settlement. The stand that India has taken in regard to the Afghanistan situation is calculated to help such a process sooner or later.

I SHOULD like to add here that notwithstanding our differences with the United States on the approach to the Afghan question and on arms to Pakistan, I have no doubt that we can together overcome these hindrances and improve our relations; and as regards Pakistan we are determined to go ahead with our efforts for improvement of relations.

From Korea to Afghanistan, American dissatisfaction with Indian foreign policy has been that we have not sided with it or used sufficiently strong condemnatory language against the Soviet Union. In regard to some of these crises, India had actually played a role that was helpful to the USA and to world peace, and though misunderstood at the time, it was recognised later as events unfolded themselves. For a global power, a different approach by another country on global issues might be somewhat irritating. But that ought not be interpreted as being contrary to the vital interests of the United States, unless it is believed that if a country does not line up with you it is against you.

There is room for honest differences as to how to approach critical international questions, and such differences in approach need not necessarily be blown up into major bilateral rifts. At any rate, it ought to be appreciated that some of the issues on which India has differences with USA like the policy towards Pakistan, supply of technologically advanced arms and equipment to Pakistan, are such that they adversely and seriously affect India's vital national and security interests.

The basic affinities and the common interests that link our two great nations are so fundamental and over-riding that it has been possible for us to overcome even these and maintain our friendship and co-operation. But if we could understand each other's mental processes, political and economic compulsions, and geo-strategic situations a little more intensely and in greater depth, it would be possible for us to avoid most of the misunderstandings and zigs and zags in our relationship. To my mind, Indo-US relations are less an exercise in the resolution of problems and disputes — even though there are problems that must be resolved— than an adventure in mutual understanding. □

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Rehman Sobhan, Research Director, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, and Visiting Fellow, Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford, is among the leading economists of the Third World. In this article he raises the question of the social forces underlying the nation-state which determine the role of public enterprise in developing countries. The issues posed offer the basis for a meaningful worldwide discussion. The article, originally presented at the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, has appeared in the latest issue of new quarterly, *State Enterprise* (Vol. 1, No. 2, April-June 1982). In view of the importance of the contribution, we reproduce it here with due acknowledgement. —*Editor*

Public Enterprise and Nature of State

REHMAN SOBHAN

IN reviewing the rule of public enterprise, we are first of all drawn into a discussion of the evolving nature of the state in developing societies. It is, therefore, useful to initiate the discussion by briefly analysing the concept of the state and its relevance to the development process. It is not intended to make any contribution to the literature on this subject beyond seeking to define the nature of the state in terms of social forces which dominate the polity and the contradictory forces which are dominated or contend for domination within the state.[1]

In seeking to define the state in terms of contending class forces for our purposes, we move away from the conventional classification of state systems in terms of capitalism, socialism or feudalism since these represent static social concepts which clearly reflect the dominance of a particular set of class forces. Here, developing societies are seen as much more fluid social entities where particular social forces are in varying degrees of ascendancy but are far from having consolidated their position within the polity.

The discussion in this article seeks to spell out the broad categories of post-colonial social formations and to see how these relate to the growth and role of public enterprise and the generation and distribution of its surplus. The presentation is highly tentative and it is hoped that the discussion provoked by it will enable me to sharpen the focus of my questions and to refine the analytical framework. It is intended to apply the framework to the role of public enterprise in a selected list of developing countries where research has been undertaken. This will enable us to see how far our approach serves to provide some insight into the role and performance of public enterprise where the nature of the regime is seen as the critical variable factor.

It may here be pointed out that our attempt to relate the role of public enterprise to the nature of the State does not exclude the possibility that specific policies, natural and technical factors or even individuals may influence the performance of some enterprises or on occasions all enterprises. Our approach attempts to take the analysis a step beyond the impact of specific policies of acts to see how far these attempts to influence the role and behaviour of public enterprise are conditioned by the nature of the State.

II

WITHIN most post-colonial societies the initial determinant of the role or public enterprise tends to be the nature of the colonial relationship and the circumstances within which national independence was realised. Where the colonial relationship tended to be pervasive, dominating the productive and distributive sectors and even the machinery of state, such economies tend to be socially under-developed without a dominant class force to fill the vacuum created by the departing colonial power. A comprador bourgeoisie may gradually emerge as an appendage to the colonial state, serving as subordinate functionaries in the administration and economic enterprise owned by foreign capital or in the service sector which grows up to meet the needs of the colonial power.

The critical element within this relationship depends on whether, during the period of colonial rule, an indigenous bourgeoisie had managed to grow out of the petty bourgeoisie officials, clerks and traders who served the colonial system, to the point where they could co-operate or even contend with the dominant colonial rulers. Thus, in India by the time of independence an Indian bourgeoisie had emerged as a dominant social force. It had manifested itself in industry, trade and administration where it had reached a level of development under which it could assume control of the post-colonial State and take over economic and governmental institutions left behind by the British rulers.[2] Whilst on the eve of independence British capital may have been a powerful economic force in India, it did not take long for the Indian bourgeoisie to acquire dominant control over the economy through private or state-owned institutions so that foreign capital was reduced to a subsidiary, though far from unimportant, factor in the Indian economy. In contrast, in a number of African countries, no corresponding development of an indigenous bourgeoisie had manifested itself so that even in the post-independence phase foreign enterprise retained a dominant role within the economy.[3]

In both cases the transfer of power came as a result of peaceful political struggle and negotiations between the bourgeoisie leadership of the independence movement and the colonial power. There was no dramatic break with the colonial power which sought to uproot immediately the capital or even personnel of the colonial power so that at no stage did a vacuum within the social formation emerge. In the post-colonial phase either the colonial presence continued or was gradually displaced by the indigenous bourgeoisie.

These two categories must in turn be distinguished from these states which emerged out of a process of armed struggle or violent upheaval leading to discontinuities in the social order. Examples of this phenomenon may be found in the case of Vietnam, Bangladesh and Algeria where the bitterness engendered by a violent and bloody liberation struggle led to a dramatic withdrawal of the metropolitan bourgeoisie which had until their departure completely dominated the domestic economy.[4] In the absence of an established, mature bourgeoisie within the newly independent country, a major entrepreneurial vacuum was created within the economy.

It would be useful to construct a taxonomy of post-colonial societies in terms of the relative position and role of the colonial and national bourgeoisie and the circumstances, or lack of them, for determining the withdrawal or diminution in the role of the foreign bourgeoisie. Such an exercise would then provide an important insight into the emergence and role of public enterprise.

It is argued here that public enterprise has its origins in the circumstances of the colonial relationship and its termination. In societies where the colonial bourgeoisie has completely overshadowed and even frustrated the growth of a national bourgeoisie, its withdrawal leads to a dramatic escalation in the role of the State sector.[5] In these circumstancees the state sector, of necessity, has to extend its role by taking over industrial, commercial and financial enterprises abandoned by the departed foreign owners. Where the liberation struggle has been based on the masses and there is no contending presence of a local bourgeoisie to lay claim to leadership of the post-colonial state, or this class is itself tainted by its comprador role, the extension of public enterprise may be premised on the rhetoric of class struggle.

The extension of the state sector as a result of a vacuum created by the departure of the colonial power may, however, be distinguished from a situation where a change in the domestic balance of class forces as a consequence of social upheaval or external events, leads to a weakening in the power of an indigenous bourgeoisie and a corresponding strengthening of petty bourgeois and/or mass forces. The American attempt to subvert the Castro regime or the Anglo-French attempt to topple Nasser at the time of Suez are typical examples of such an externally-induced transformation in the domestic balance of power.[6] A slightly different variation of this theme is found in the overthrow of the monarchy in Iraq, Libya and Ethiopia, which created a new alignment of class forces with a wider popular base. In all such cases, there has been a concomitant extension of public enterprise to take over the properties and functions either of a foreign bourgeoisie or of its local agents who had been closely identified either with the foreign power and/or the *ancien regime.*

III

WE have attempted below to summarise broad categories of post-colonial societies and to relate these to the emergence of the role of public enterprise in them.

The first category covers three sets of circumstances in which the state was created, namely: (i) peaceful transition of power from colonial power to national bourgeoisie: (ii) power abruptly transferred as a consequence of armed struggle when the colonial power for various reasons decides to withdraw; and (iii) power is transferred from a comprador bourgeoisie controlling a neo-colony to a petty bourgeois, mass-based regime as a consequence of armed uprising or coup d'etat.

In the second category, there is balance of social forces in the state, which includes: (i) a strong national bourgeoisie with substantial interests in industry, commerce, finance and with a well-developed professional administrative class: foreign capital plays an important but not a dominant role in the economy; (ii) foreign capital is dominant: comprador national bourgeoisie exists but in a subordinate position in business and in the professions and administration; (iii) foreign capital is dominant: no national bourgeoisie exists: and indigenous petty bourgeois class provides services to foreign capital in administration and trade; (iv) petty bourgeois class with base in professional classes, armed forces, small business-rich farmers is the dominant social group: comprador bourgeois as in (ii) may exist but in subordinate role or does not exist at all: and (v) a mass-based regime with power base in working class, poor peasants and petty bourgeois.

As a consequence of the interaction between the first and second categories, the growth of public enterprises varies, for instance, as follows:

(*a*) Public enterprise — a dominant factor in the economy: (i) Armed struggle against colonial regime leads to abrupt withdrawal of foreign capital. Upper bourgeoisie weak, petty bourgeoisie dominant. (ii) Overthrow of comprador regime leads to withdrawal or nationalisation of foreign capital. National bourgeoisie non-existent or reduced to a subordinate position. Petty bourgeois as dominant class force. (iii) Circumstances as in (i) or (ii) but masses emerge as dominant class force.

(*b*) Public enterprise — important but not dominant: (i) Peaceful transition of power to national bourgeoisie. National bourgeoisie dominant class force. Uses control of the state through resources, policies and institutions to expand its control over productive forces. And, (ii) as in (i) but petty bourgeois influence in the regime due to retention of elective institutions institutionalises position of public enterprise and delimits the role of the private sector.

(*c*) Public enterprise entirely subsidiary to private institutions: (i) Foreign enterprise dominant in the economy. Public enterprise provides some infrastructural services; and (ii) national bourgeoisie dominant, but foreign enterprise plays an important role. Public enterprise plays a purely subsidiary role in support of a national bourgeoisie.

(*d*) Categorisations of the role of public enterprise are subject to change in a dynamic framework which may diminish the role of public enterprise: (i) Foreign dominated economy may change over time to a regime where national bourgeoisie plays a dominant role. Public enterprise may either play an equal or subsidiary role in national bourgeoisie. (ii) In a regime where national bourgeoisie is dominant, foreign enterprise may re-enter to play an important role when national bourgeoisie feels strong enough to integrate itself into the world capitalist system. Role of public enterprise is in (d-i). (iii) A petty bourgeois-dominated regime may lead to emergence of a section of the bourgeoisie from ranks of state enterprise, army, trade and small industry which seek to transform themselves into an industrial/rich-peasant bourgeoisie. This is possible at the expense of public enterprise or through the support of public enterprise institutions. Where a private sector remains active and undemarcated, such a development has stronger possibilities. A change may occur due to evolution in the character of the regime itself or due to a military coup d'etat which forces the change from a public enterprise dominated to a market system. This process may be accompanied by expansion in the role of foreign enterprise.

IV

THE operational performance of public enterprise is directly connected with the nature of the regime within which these enterprises function. The performance of public enterprise remains dependent on the resolution of contradictions between the contending social forces within the regime over the nature of the state[7]. Where this is largely contentious, uncertainty and conflict govern the operation of public enterprise. This is reflected in its capacity to generate surpluses and in conflicts over the distribution of these surpluses. Where the role of public enterprise has been stabilised in a subordinate or supportive role, its operational performance may improve. This may happen in a regime where it plays a clearly subsidiary and supportive role to the national bourgeoisie. Alternatively, it may emerge in a regime based on the masses which seeks to delimit and eventually eliminate the national bourgeoisie. The "in-between" options are inherently unstable and erode the performance of public enterprise.

In the two polarised regimes where the role of public enterprise is stabilised, the dominant groups clearly have a vested interest in raising the operational performance of the enterprises. In the bourgeois-dominated regime improved performance serves to reduce costs of inputs and services to the private sector and to improve the quality and reliability of services. Here the performance and profitability of the private sector improves as a direct consequence of the performance of public enterprise.

In a regime of the masses, public enterprise becomes a primary engine for generating surpluses, which serve as a resource for expanding the productive forces within the regime and generating a surplus for distribution. Potential for tensions may emerge in the latter regime over distribution of the surplus between investment and consumption and even between the enterprise and the community.

In a bourgeois-dominated regime an overly successful public sector may encourage the workers of these enterprises and even its managerial cadres to seek a more dominant role of public enterprise at the expense of the private sector. This may also create fundamental contradictions within the regime itself. In unstable intermediate regimes the performance of public enterprise is constrained by fundamental conflicts over the very role of the sector. In all these regimes where a large bourgeoisie survives in areas of private industry, trade and allied areas of economic activity, they not only constitute a social force in their own right but encourage the petty bourgeois elements dominant in the political and state apparatus to join their ranks.

Both the established and aspirant bourgeois tend to develop a vested interest in the failure or poor performance of public enterprise. This failure is used as the occasion for curbing the growth of the public sector and encouraging the private sector. In regimes where the petty bourgeois tendency is more powerful, public enterprise is thus used as an instrument for channelling surpluses to this class, these surpluses being used by it to build itself up to the point where it can seek entry into the ranks of the big bourgeoisie. This very tendency creates contradictions within the regime, as between the objective of expanding the productive forces through surplus generated by public enterprise and the need for the petty bourgeoisie to elevate itself. This weakness may encourage the big bourgeoisie to join hands with the aspirant elements in the petty bourgeoisie to overthrow the regime and establish another based on the domination of the bourgeoisie. A variant of this may come from a counter-revolution based on an alliance of foreign enterprise and a comprador bourgeoisie who re-create a neo-colonial regime. The military tends to be a useful instrument for realising such a realignment of class forces.

These tendencies may be summarised as follows:

(*a*) Regimes with an interest in improving the performance of public enterprise: (i) Where the national bourgeoisie is dominant and the role of public enterprise is delimited to a purely supportive role. (ii) A regime with a petty bourgeois mass-base and a weak national bourgeoisie. Here, in the short run, a regime depends on public enterprise as an instrument for expanding productive forces. (iii) A regime with a base in the masses where public enterprise is the primary engine of growth and resource generation.

(*b*) Regimes where the role of public enterprise is fundamentally counterpoised against other classes: (i) Mixed economies where a strong national bourgeoisie is contending for power with the petty bourgeoisie. Here the more powerful class wants to expand its role at the expense of public enterprise. (ii) In regimes where the petty bourgeoisie is either in contention with other groups or is dominant, it uses its administrative control over public enterprise to increase its extraction of the surplus. This is used for party building, improving life styles of the bureaucracy and diverting resources to the trading bourgeoisie. In contrast to (a-ii) type petty bourgeois regimes, such a regime retains an active private sector either in trade or with an embryo industrial bourgeoisie.

(*c*) Conditions of instability in the performance of public enterprise: (i) In regimes as in (b-ii) above, public enterprise creates conflicts between the managerial cadres and the private sector over allocation of the surplus. The public sector cadres equate their own power and life styles with the growth and prosperity of the sector. They are in conflict with the private sector who are in alliance with the ruling party to appropriate the surplus. Tensions between these two components of the petty bourgeois regime may destabilise the regime. (ii) Where a public sector bureaucracy in petty bourgeois-based regime appropriates the surplus to improve its life styles relative to the masses, contradictions build up between the bureaucracy and the workers in public enterprise over allocation of the surplus and division of labour, which leads to labour unrest and deterioration of morale and affects performance in the sector. (iii) This tendency could even manifest itself in a regime of the masses where a party or bureaucratic elite may use its control of the surplus to socially differentiate themselves from the masses. This may create tensions which precipitate a "cultural revolution" of the masses. (iv) In a regime dominated by a strong national bourgeoisie, a dynamic public sector may in the long run generate contradictions between the private and public sector cadres. An expanded public sector may also create a sizeable proletarian base which may form the vanguard to challenge domination of the national bourgeoisie.

(*d*) Constraints on performance of public enterprise: (*a*) Autonomy of public enterprises: (i) Hierarchy of power and accountability relating to puplic enterprises as between Minister/Ministry/enterprise/other agencies of Government: (ii) corporate status of public enterprise; (iii) freedom of public enterprise to mobilise resources on capital and current account from within an external to the enterprise; (iv) freedom to hire, fire and reward personnel in public enterprise; and (v) freedom to buy, sell and price the products of public enterprise.

(*b*) Constraints on these freedoms in terms of regimes: (i) Under conditions of stability relating to the role of public enterprise in national and petty bourgeois dominated and in mass-based regimes, autonomy is maximised since these regimes have a stake in the improved performance of public enterprise. (ii) In mixed economies, particularly with a small business base, the dominant group may acquire a vested interest in production shortfalls so that they can maximise profits from limited supplies of products allocated to this group under a regime of controls. Such a regime is most restrictive to the freedom of public enterprise, both with a view to limiting its productive capacity and in controlling all instruments of patronage derived from public ownership. (iii) Potential for conflict over autonomy to public enterprise may emerge within the State bureaucracy as between public enterprise executives and permanent civil servants who wish to retain domination over the sector.

V

WE have argued that both distribution and generation of the surplus from public enterprise depends on the character of the state. Indeed, the capacity of public enterprise to generate a surplus itself depends on how contending social forces determine its distribution. It is our underlying premise that, in the final analysis, distribution of the surplus generated by the economy is dependent on the balance of power within the society as between contending social forces. The balance stems from ownership of assets and/or access to political power. It follows from this assumption that the surplus from public enterprise will be appropriated by those forces that are dominant in the polity.

The significant feature of surplus disposal from public enterprise is that it is explicitly determined by acts of public policy which emerge out of the interplay of contending social forces. Public policy determines the extent to which the surplus is distributed by administrative decision and/or by reliance on market forces. However, to the extent that the organisation of the market, along with its working, are the consequence of these policies, the relevance of social forces in determining the nature of the market regime is of some importance.

The list below summarises the principal policy instruments which determine how the surplus of public enterprise is distributed. Some policy instruments identified by us remain as relevant to private as to public enterprise. Some elements relate to the cost structure of public enterprise and may be seen as more relevant to the size rather than the distribution of the surplus. Though it is argued here that policy decisions determining the costs of public enterprise are also relevant to distributive questions, this redistributes potential surpluses within public enterprise to particular social groups supplying the inputs or alternatively it penalises them at the expense of public enterprise. For example, pricing policy for raw jute in Bangladesh may determine how the surplus is distributed between jute growers, jute traders and the nationalized jute industry.

1. Public policies relating to distribution of surplus generated by public enterprise:

(*a*) Budgetary Policy: (i) This determines the cost structure through indirect taxes, levies, rebates on material inputs and capital costs. (ii) Taxes on the final product, including corporation tax. (iii)

Policy towards budgetary subsidies to public enterprise.

(*b*) Incomes policy: (i) How the post-tax profits are distributed as between workers, enterprise and exchequer. (ii) Reward structure for public enterprise employees both at management and workers' levels.

(*c*) Marketing policy: (i) Policy towards permitting competition in public enterprise markets from internal and external sources; (ii) Policy determining who distributes output of public enterprises — the enterprise itself, specialised public enterprise, marketing institutions, co-operatives, private traders and political parties; and (iii) Policy towards modes of distribution — use of market mechanism, administrative controls and rationing.

(*d*) Pricing policy: (i) Policy determining which products will be sold at market price and which products at an administratively-determined price. (ii) Policy determining institutional levels at which prices are determined — Cabinet, Ministry, enterprise. (iii) Subsidy policy relating to products of public enterprise — whether subsidy will be borne by public enterprise, distributing agency or directly by exchequer. (iv) Exchange rate policy. This relates to market regime of public enterprise and determines cost and market price of public enterprise products. Uniform and multiple exchange rates determined by administrative decision affect relative costs and prices of public enterprise products.

(*e*) Monetary policy: (i) Policies relating to credit needs of public enterprise. Whether commercial banking criteria apply, whether these criteria are themselves determined by public enterprise, whether some enterprises or all obtain special considerations determined by administrative decision. (ii) Interest rate policy relating to public enterprise. (iii) Policies arising out of deficit financing of public enterprises through the banking system.

(*f*) Technology policy: (i) Policies relating to the investment priorities and modes of financing influence the choice of technology by public enterprise. To the extent that public enterprise concentrates on large-scale projects with a high proportion of external finance, the technology tends to be capital-intensive. This generates limited employment and has little direct potential for redistribution [redacted]

stands to be modified so that a matrix seeking to relate the character of the regime to each policy may be a fairly complex exercise. Here, therefore, we attempt to summarise the argument by relating at a more generalised level the policy preferences of particular regimes:

(*a*) A regime where national bourgeoisie is dominant and public enterprise plays a subordinate/supportive role to the private sector:

(i) The policy goal would be to reduce cost-price structure of public enterprise goods supplied to private sector. This would relate to policy decisions affecting costs in the area of budgetary policy, wages, and profit disposal, price of output including exchange rate policy. To the extent that inputs are supplied through the private sector, preference would be to keep prices down through reducing the cost of imported goods, higher productivity and even public subsidy financed through the budget; and

(ii) To control the market regime of the public sector by controlling at the wholesale level the supply of inputs and the marketing of output from public enterprises. This would aim at relying on the use of market mechanism on the supply side, and a regime of ex-factory price controls with public subsidies which keep the administered price below the market price. The market mechanism would, however, be free to operate at the wholesale and retail levels, with the scarcity premium being appropriated at the wholesale level.

(*b*) A regime where big and petty bourgeoisie are counterpoised:

(i) During the phase where the surplus from public enterprise remains contentious, the big bourgeoisie could favour minimisation of administrative controls on the market and price regime of public enterprise where such controls are used by the petty bourgeoisie to appropriate the surplus within the public enterprise. The economically stronger class would prefer to rely on its superior liquidity, expertise and domination of the market to procure public enterprise products and services on the market rather than to compete for governmental patronage with the petty bourgeoisie.

(ii) In contrast, the petty bourgeois elements in such a regime would use their political power to the surplus within the enterprise. This class seeks to use public policy to improve the incentive structure at worker and management levels, to reduce costs, maximise prices and control the market regime. Its commercial values remain not dissimilar to the big bourgeoisie, though in a mixed regime it may be in conflict with this class. Such a class is likely to favour capital-intensive technology to minimise problems of coping with a large and contentious labour force and also to increase its own power base.

(ii) Within such a regime the public sector executives may be in conflict with their workers over questions of incomes policy as well as participation of workers in management. It is feasible to mitigate this conflict by inducting workers into management boards and through profit sharing. This may make public enterprise workers into a privileged class in potential contradiction with the remaining masses of people. Alternatively, it may create conditions for the working classes as a whole to assert themselves. In this event a petty bourgeois-based regime would eventually begin to transform itself into a regime of the masses.

(iii) Conflict between public enterprise executives and party cadres as in (b-iii) above may manifest itself. To the extent that the regime has a clear commitment to the paramount role of public enterprise to build up productive forces and strengthen the class as a whole, the political leadership may initially seek to contain its cadres and give public enterprise executives the capacity to generate surplus and re-invest it in expansion of the sector. The extent to which this conflict is peacefully resolved will depend on the size of the surplus and the extent of private economic activity, as well as whether a multi-party elective democracy is practised. Multi-party parliamentary regimes, as opposed to one-party or military regimes, are much more inclined to favour party cadres for control of the surplus since these cadres need patronage to mobilise constituency support. Where such contraints are absent it remains easier to give public enterprise executives their "head," so to say, at least in the short run.

(iv) A petty bourgeois-dominated regime may, however, come into conflict with the masses when public enterprise executives and political cadres reach a coalition of interests. This class then becomes a privileged elite, which uses policies to maximise the surplus, uses it to improve the life styles of the elite and to fortify its strength by expanding the public sector. Pricing policies which move the terms of trade in favour of public enterprise and against workers and peasants; market regimes which allocate scarce resources to the coalition of elites: an incomes policy which favours this class in the name of incentives—all these could open up a big social and political gap between the petty bourgeois coalition and the masses.

(*d*) A regime of the masses:

(i) As with (*c*) above such a regime would support policies which seek to maximise surplus generation within public enterprise and its retention for expanding the productive forces.

(ii) Potential conflicts may, however, emerge over consumption and investment goals of the regime. Here workers at the enterprise level may want to appropriate a share of the surplus through incomes policy, by raising wages and investing the surplus in bonus payments or improving the facilities for workers. As a class, workers may favour market and price controls and/or budgetary subsidies as an instrument of resource transfer in their favour.

(iii) Conflicts may arise over policies affecting terms of trade between the farm and industrial sectors where the pricing policy becomes a crucial variable. These conflicts at the sectoral level are, however, of a different order from conflicts over terms of trade between class, where the privileged classes could manipulate policies to favour themselves.

VII

TO the extent that the application of our analytical framework to empirical studies of public enterprises yields meaningful results, some useful insights may emerge as to why public enterprises perform the way they do.[8] Positive results from this study may generate a degree of scepticism about seeking remedial solutions to the productive and distributive problems of public enterprise, purely in terms of policy, administrative and organisational changes. Our study would appear to suggest that these measures are themselves instruments of particular social forces and emerge out of the social forces contending for the surplus and even the very existence of public enterprise. Policy changes which seek a fundamental alteration in the distribution of the surplus must thus see how far a corresponding alignment of class forces can be realised preparatory to such a policy change.

Notes

1. For a fuller discussion of the nature of the state and its significance, reference may be made to the writings of Charles Bettelheim, M. Kalecki (1972), K.N. Raj (1973), and J. Petras (1977), among others.

2. For discussion of the nature of the Indian post-colonial State see Raj (1973), E.M.S. Namboodripad (1973), Ranjit Sau (1976), Ignacy Sachs (1969) and Bettelheim (1975).

3. For a discussion of African countries, see the work of Sik (1974), T. Szentes (1971) and Shivji *et al* (1976).

4. A detailed discussion of the role of public enterprise in relation to the nature of the liberation struggle and its impact on the post-colonial social format is found in Rehman Sobhan and Muzzafar Ahmed's work on Bangladesh. For Algeria, see Clegg (1971) and for Vietnam, see Fall (1963), among others.

5. This thesis has been initially discussed by Kalecki (1972) and fully elaborated in the specific context of Bangladesh by Sobhan and Ahmed.

6. For a discussion of Cuba, see Boorstein (1968), Paul Sweezy and Leo Huberman (1969). For Egypt, see Mahmoud Hussein (1974) and O'Brien (1966):

7. See Sobhan and Ahmed for an elaboration of this argument in the Bangladesh context.

8. An attempt to apply this framework to the role of public enterprise in Asia is being attempted in forthcoming papers by Rehman Sobhan.

WOMEN'S WORLD

Symptom of a Deep Malaise

GARGI CHAKRAVARTTY

OF late bride-burning and dowry deaths have assumed serious proportions and are being publicised almost daily in the local press. Such occurrences are taking place even in areas where the educated sections reside. Naturally, these incidents have caused a sense of revulsion among different sections of the people.

Movements, processions demonstrations and speeches are all no doubt necessary to focus attention on such inhuman atrocities. However, these alone will not suffice. For. dowry is merely the symptom of a deeper malaise and that is the prevailing inequality between man and woman. This inequality is deep-rooted in our society regardless of whether we talk of orthodox or modern, conservative or progressive families. Needless to say, even persons airing highly radical views in public may be utterly feudal on the home front.

A man still remains the privileged entity from the social viewpoint. In most families parents prefer to have a son rather than a daughter. But why? A daughter is equally capable of doing everything at home or outside, can be equally efficient in all professions, may earn as much as, if not more than, a son. Nevertheless, even educated people prefer to have a son. Here I am not speaking of the poorer rural populace in whose case the social problems are different. But the so-called educated people belonging to the middle class suffer from a dichotomy: rationally accepting the concept of equality of man and woman on paper, but not in reality, since there is no emotional acceptance. In essence, we regard the son as a life-long possession, while the daughter is meant for a different home.

That is why we find that although legally the son and the daughter have equal rights in property matters, this is hardly followed in practice. Wills and deeds left by parents by and large bear witness to the daughter being deprived of her legitimate share, although at times responding to the qualms of conscience the parents do give an amount in cash to the daughter. The pet argument is: After all, the daughter has a claim on her in-laws', property, in case the husband dies. But then here too innumerable ways are devised to deny the daughter-in-law her rightful claim, since the in-laws prefer to transfer the property to grandsons (irrespective of whether they are minor or major) instead of to the daughter-in-law. Thus the daughter generally has little legal foothold before or after marriage.

Recently I was amazed to find educated girls arguing in favour of dowry. Since they were not to get any share in their parents' or in-laws' property, why should they not take some amount in cash?

Inequality between man and woman is manifest in every part of society. Children in middle class families, both girls and boys, are broadly allowed to undergo the same education and share food and clothing fairly equally, although in the past a daughter was asked to sit at home while the son went to school because the son's, education was a 'must'. Only 50 years ago sons and not daughters, were treated to milk and special food. But now at least equal treatment is meted out in these spheres, though even now, wherever parents are unable to afford equal privilege it is the daughter who suffers. Yet, upbringing does vary. A girl is asked to help the mother in the kitchen while a boy is not. It is the girl who has to take it for granted that she would have to wash utensils or clothes or prepare food, whenever required. This very attitude forms a part of our social norms. People refer to 'tradition'. But tradition is created by man and many traditions have been the source of social injustice. The custom of 'satidaha' wife's self-immolation on the husband's pyre) could never have been abolished if one was so awestruck by tradition. Widows could never have remarried if reformers had not possessed the strength to break so-called tradition.

Evolution of society helps in the emergence of new ways of life. Or else society will forever remain static. The pattern of human behaviour must change without altering basic human values. A lecturer in one of the Delhi colleges, with whom I worked for a few months, told me: "I would help my wife in the kitchen, but not in front of my parents." Why? The answer was simple: "They don't like it. They are traditional people." What is the point of compromising with values which one is unable to accept? This kind of acceptance of something one realises as meaningless is surely a form of hypocrisy.

A daughter is meant for a different family, but not the son. Thereby a big cleavage between man and woman is created. A daughter's first duty is to her in-laws, and not to her parents. There is so much expectation from a daughter-in-law — she should look after the mother-in-law, the father-in-law, the aunt-in-law, in fact everyone in the household. But a son-in-law is treated as a guest by the daughter's parents. No expectations. No compulsions. No possessive attributes. The only daughter of a widowed mother stays with her mother during vacations and this is criticised by her in-laws though the son is

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staying with them. A son-in-law with his modest behaviour and innocent smile can win the hearts of everybody while the daughter-in-law with her sweated labour can never hope to achieve that. Because this is "normal"; after all, she is the "bahu"!

A child sees the mother doing everything for him. The mother falls ill. The father gives a bath to the child. The natural comment of neighbours: "Oh! What a good father!" Why cannot this too be taken as a normal feature of life?

There are innumerable examples of glaring inequality. Just by parading a woman Prime Minister we do not establish the genuine equality so vital for our nation's progress. Here lies our prime task: to change the entire mould of our attitudes, outlook, approach. Therefore, if one is keen to effectively combat the menace of bride-burning and dowry deaths, one has to reach the root of the problem and strive, with all the strength at one's command, to eliminate the deeper malaise which has left intact the age-old inequality between man and woman in our society. ☐

Nestle Rears its Head Again

VIMAL BALASUBRAHMANYAN

PRESSURE pays—or does it? Susan George in her famous book, *How the Other Half Dies*, referred to the growing opposition to hard sell of baby food in the 1970s and how as a response to criticism eight MNCs adopted a voluntary code in 1979, agreeing to stop promotional advertising. "This proves that pressure pays." The subsequent aggressive lobbying by MNCs when the WHO Code was being formulated, and their hoodwinking tactics after it was adopted in May last year has a moral in it for all — pressure only pays if you keep at it and never let up. This has once again been proved by Nestle's latest manoeuvres.

Last month the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN) called for a continued boycott of Nestle products in the face of Nestle's announcement of a 'new marketing policy which when analysed has turned out to be a disguised version of its old policy and includes all its old promotional tricks. The story of Nestle (though the firm has only a small share of this country's baby food market), has important lessons on the kind of preventive action that needs to be taken right away. The National Association for Nutrition of Infants (NANI), a coalition of Indian pressure groups, points out that "vigorous action *now* can prevent breastfeeding in India from deteriorating to the disastrous situation prevailing in countries like the Philippines where aggressive promotion in rampant."

It is relevant here to refresh one's memory about Nestle's style of functioning. Ms George in her book says: "There is a good deal of competition for the title of World's Worst Agribusiness Firm ... my own first prize, after careful consideration, goes to Nestle whose advertising policies have directly contributed to increasing infant malnutrition in Africa." Nestle's lethal role was first focussed upon in an interview with two child health specialists published in a 1973 issue of the *New Internationalist*. After this article the journal received letters from doctors and nurses all over Africa confirming the disastrous effects of Nestle's baby food. So deep was Nestle's penetration in that continent that in African hospitals, babies were being kept in beds marked 'Lactogen syndrome'. Before the MNCs announced their voluntary code, a radio jingle used to exhort African mothers to give their babies "Love and Lactogen". Ms George also describes how Dr Henri Dupin was amazed in 1970 to see mothers in the Ivory Coast give *Nescafe* to 19-20 month-old toddlers. The reason behind this inexplicable behaviour was that thrice daily the message broadcast over the national radio as: "Nescafe makes men stronger, women more joyful and children more intelligent."

Six months after the NI article, War on Want, a British pressure group, published an investigative report, *The Baby Killer*. It was translated and issued by a Swiss group under the title *Nestle Kills Babies*. Nestle sued but just before the verdict withdrew all charges except the one against the title. Nestle won but enough skeletons had emerged during the hearings from Nestle's marketing cupboard for the judge to comment that the company could do with a little heart searching.

This little extract from Nestle's history reminds us that voluntary codes result after pressure. What happens after that? Every time the baby food industry has found its image tarnished by revelations in the media, it has always responded with a hoodwinking 'reparation' act — a PR sleight of hand to fool the public but actually carrying on business as usual. Not surprisingly therefore, a 1980 IBFAN publication listed over 400 violations of the voluntary 'pledge' by Nestle and other firms.

In March this year, Nestle announced that it would henceforth adhere to all the requirements of the WHO Code, obviously to persuade pressure groups all over the world to call off the three-year-old boycott of Nestle products. IBFAN points out that Nestle has not given away an inch on any of the provisions that really matter. For example, Nestle will continue to provide 'mothercraft' nurses "when requested", will give free formula to *all* infants "when requested", will continue to give gifts, research grants, money for conferences etc to health personnel, and *will not* provide information on the hazards of formula feeding because that is supposed to be the "health worker's responsibility". In fact Nestle's sales training manual says: "We supply doctors, free of charge, with Nestle products to feed their own babies ... by doing so we ... maintain medical endorsement of our product." Thus the important articles of the WHO Code will not be observed by Nestle. Yet its massive PR compaign on its 'new' policy could deceive many unless the pressure by action groups is kept alive.

IBFAN has listed Nestle's unethical activities in the past year, after the WHO Code was adopted:

* In the Philippines, in late 1981, Nestle and three US companies (American Home Products, Bristol-Myers and Abbot Labs) pressured the government to accept a 15-page critique of the WHO Code which suggests full deletion or major revision of 10 of the Code's 11 articles.

* In India, Nestle tried and failed to get its own code adopted by the government, despite pressure and substantial financial offers to members of the government's code committee. *But Nestle has helped to block the government from implementing the committee's strong suggestions.*

* In Zimbabwe, Nestle attorneys delayed by six months the publication of a Ministry of Health report on the dangers of bottle feeding. When the report — highly critical of Nestle's marketing practices — was released this January, Nestle attacked it as "polemical and destructive."

*In several countries, Nestle has tried to justify its unethical marketing practices by claiming that the individual governments required Nestle to continue the practice. In Malaysia for example, Nestle states that it continues to use mothercraft nurses because the government requested them. But in March a government spokesman said that no such request had ever been made to Nestle or any other firm.

*In Thailand, Nestle justifies the pictures of babies on tins (prohibited by the WHO Code) by claiming that the Thai government required it. Ministry of Health sources stated in March 1982 that, on the contrary, it was the infant food industry — and Nestle in particular — which had argued for the retention of the baby picture.

Last August, *World Health* (the journal of WHO) pointed out that the adoption of the WHO Code was only a first chapter in fostering better infant health. It needs to be backed by "the framing of legislation, regulations and other measures aimed at protecting and promoting breastfeeding and the monitoring — mainly through consumer and community groups — of compliance with the Code." The journal adds that an evaluation will be done and a status report made at the 36th World Health Assembly and if needed, the Code would be revised in the light of the experience gained. There is obviously going to be massive lobbying in the months ahead as the evaluation day approaches and Nestle's whitewashing tactics may well be the first round in a fresh battle to subvert the Code.

The Nestle manoeuvre ought to be ringing alarm bells in this country. What has happened to the report of the Indian working committee on implementing the Code? Last year when the baby food debate filled newspaper columns, Amul (which has a 70 per cent share of the baby food market in India) released a few Boy Scout ads announcing that 'Mother's milk is best' and that the new Amulspray pack said so in 16 languages. Amul of course does not explain how any of the 16 assertions could mean anything to an illiterate mother. Quick to cash in on the baby food 'scare', the Horlicks group introduced 'Mother's Special' for lactating mothers and even claimed that it is 'recommended by doctors'. Any conscientious doctor would of course tell a lactating mother that she can get all the nutrition she needs from local foods at a fraction of the

After the Code...whose baby is it now?

* An editorial in a special issue on breastfeeding in *Health for the Millions* says: "Maternity ward and clinical practices often encourage bottle feeding. Health practitioners have often contributed to the problem. The abuse of anaesthesia, medication or surgery during delivery interferes with the initiation of breastfeeding. Very often health professionals are not motivated to the need for promoting breastfeeding. They have no time to inform or convince mothers to breastfeed.

* A report under the heading 'The Other Baby Killer' in a 1982 issue of *People* cites the findings of a survey in Penang, Malaysia: "A new baby killer, sweetened condensed milk, is taking its toll of thousands of infants in developing countries." Despite strict warnings by the UN Calorie Protein Advisory Committee, MNCs are shamelessly promoting SCM as being suitable and adequate for babies. The tins have pictures of mothers cuddling healthy babies. SCM is dangerous because it contains high sugar and low protein content and lacks important vitamins and minerals. The Penang survey showed that SCM feeding was widespread in rural areas and in city slums i.e., among the poor. It is cheaper than baby food and does not get spoiled at room temperature for at least a week. Thus adverse publicity for baby food instead of resulting in a return to breastfeeding is causing a switch-over to an even more dangerous breast milk substitute.

* The July 1981 issue of *World Health* reports that a survey in Papua New Guinea, carried out before and after legislation permitting baby food and feeding bottles to be sold only on prescription by pharmacists, showed a significant rise in breastfeeding. The law was passed in 1977 and during the 1978-80 period, there were no deaths from gastro-enteritis of babies under six months.

* An article in the *New York Times Magazine* last December says that heavy promotion of baby food through health personnel has been a feature in the US too. A selling manual prepared for its American staff by Ross Laboratories as recently as 1975 was saying (until it was withdrawn under pressure): "When one considers that for every 100 infants discharged from hospital on a particular formula brand, approximately 93 infants remain on that brand, the importance of hospital selling becomes obvious."

* The International Federation of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has designed a sticker in support for breastfeeding and the WHO Code. The evocative graphic has not been copyrighted so as to encourage its use "any where, in any way, to gets the message across."

price of the packaged product. Sanctimonious ad copy about breast milk being best is very much like the statutory warning on cigarette packets—it serves as a sop but leaves the sales intact.

Pictures of chubby babies continue to adorn the baby food tins. None of the manufacturers warn against the possible harmful effects of formula feeding. In an interview published in *Business Standard* last year, Dr V. Kurien of Amul fame insisted in so many words that India is not Africa. "India should not be equated with any Urundi-Burundi. UNICEF or WHO may think there are problems in this field but who is WHO?" Perhaps. But this time WHO's concern cannot be faulted. True, the baby food syndrome is yet to penetrate in a big way into this country's vast rural areas. The impact of baby food promotion has been relatively urban. But given the marketing enthusiasm of the baby food companies one can visualise them licking their lips at the prospect of conquering virgin territory. If today the baby food business in India has not yet assumed the proportions of a scandal, isn't now the best time to ensure that it doesn't ever happen?

However, it has to be acknowledged that all mothers don't abandon breastfeeding simply because of baby food promotion. Breastfeeding cannot be protected without provision of liberal maternity leave and benefits and extending these to the unorganised sector. In this sense it is much more a trade union and women's issue than a pediatric one. Also, the indifference of obstetricians and nurses as a reason for declining breastfeeding has not been given the attention it deserves. How many women going for ante-natal check-ups are taught to prepare themselves for successful breastfeeding? How many mothers, during the crucial post-delivery days in hospital, are encouraged in their early efforts at breastfeeding and how many are urged to have confidence in their ability to breastfeed? An easily available substitute for breast mik completes the circle especially if health personnel are more motivated to sell the baby food idea.

Another problem, especially after last year's media spotlight, is the belief, also fostered by baby food manufacturers, that formula is harmful only in unhygienic conditions. The fact that even bottlefed infants from the upper socio-economic stratum, where all cleanliness is observed, are more prone to infection than breastfed babies is not something the baby food companies are going to proclaim. And they will be the last to inform a mother that no baby food has the special ingredients that her own milk has and which is really her baby's birthright. Who then is supposed to educate mothers? Few doctors, midwives and nurses seem to bother. Isn't there a role here for DAVP? Occasional articles here and there and scientific studies published in academic journals won't reach even a fraction of the mothers concerned.

Formulating an Indian code without considering all these aspects and merely concentrating on curbing baby food promotion would be a meaningless exercise. It has to be backed by widespread promotion of breastfeeding through the media and health personnel as well as legislation to protect breastfeeding and make it feasible for all working women. Nothing less than that would have the desired impact.□

COMMUNICATION

Hand-rickshaws in Calcutta: Who Decides?

PERHAPS it would be appropriate to begin a rejoinder to Ms K Chaudhuri's very personal response (*Mainstream*, May 8, 1982) to our article on 'Handrickshaws in Calcutta' (*Mainstream*, March 27) by declaring that many members of our own group also "equivocate before hailing a rickshaw" and that some of us don't use them at all; but the point is — especially since she says she wants to address this question — this personal position does not even begin to answer our question, "How do you think it (the world) should change?" Indeed, if anything, it tends to avoid the question — which is something we learned in the course of doing research for our first major report on *Rickshaws in Calcutta* (1981, on both hand — and cycle-vehicles), and which led us on to further questions and the *Mainstream* article. Facing the question in terms of a trade so obviously and apparently 'anachronistic' as rickshaws, forced us to change our minds and to realise that as with much of the world around us, sweeping inconvenient images away is not an answer: we have to confront the question and find a better way of dealing with the world.

Perhaps we should also clarify that the emphasis of our article was on how decisions are being taken regarding rickshaws, on questioning this process and on putting forward factors which surely *must* be considered; and not just on preserving the vehicle. Given this, Ms Chaudhuri's careful calculations and argument that most rickshaw-users are middle-class, may be true, and the dismissal of this class ideologically correct — but how does this justify legislation which puts a lakh of people out of work? At a flippant level, by the same kind of extension of logic *ad absurdum*, we should 'remove' (or at least ignore) the half of Calcutta and all cities which is 'middle-class'; but more seriously, her concluding plea regarding rehabilitation of disemployed pullers "in rural employment schemes in the districts where they come from" reveals that while she might be well-intentioned, she is unfamiliar with the miserable experience of such schemes, not to speak of the complexity of generations of village-city citizenship which is the case of the other half of urban populations. Pullers have been in Calcutta for 10, 20, 30, even 40 years; whose right is it to say that they should "go back"? Would the "temporarily displaced" Ms Chaudhuri come back to Calcutta if a Delhi citizen told her to? Does she feel she should have something to say in such a decision — and if so, how does she feel the decision-making process should be organised?

To this should be added an important clarification, to get over a common misconception: It is generally not the *pullers* who are unlicensed, but the *vehicles*. Most pullers get a puller's licence for themselves, and therefore practise their trade legally — but given the obsolete (1939) ceiling placed on the number of rickshaws that can be licensed (6,000, ever since then), as well as the carefully benign attitude of the authorities which has allowed the number of unlicensed vehicles to outnumber the licensed by 6-7 to 1 (added to, no doubt, by the desire of owners to have large fleets of highly lucrative vehicles beyond the size permitted by the ceiling), the rickshaws the pullers are given to ply are too often unlicensed. This of course, from the authorities' point of view, also makes them conveniently available for extortion. (Indeed, the matter is possibly not even this simple. Some owners claim that the 12,700 vehicles licensed to ply by municipalities around but outside Calcutta, were legally plying in the city; so the 1980 delicensing under order of the State Government effectively 'illegalised' their operation with no good reason shown.)

Notwithstanding Ms Chaudhuri's attempt to belittle it, we have already argued the scale of the service network, which incidentally sees as many trips as trams do per day (does Ms Chaudhuri therefore suggest that trams are also dispensable?), as well as of employment; but whereas the sudden zeal of the authorities to deal with illegality might be applauded if it did not, as usual, pick on the most vulnerable link, surely this scale of activity demands that a responsible government — particularly a progressive government — also pay attention to alternatives, for employment as well as for transport? But on this count we are glad to be able to write that since the March article and other debate in Calcutta, the Government has publicly (if indirectly) acknowledged both these points — the need to compensate pullers (Prasanta Sur, Minister of Local Government and Urban Development, April 28, 1982, as reported in the *Statesman* and *Ananda Bazaar Patrika*), and the need for transport replacement if rickshaws are removed (Jyoti Basu, Chief Minister, April 20, 1982, as reported in the *Amrita Bazaar Patrika*). Whether or not this represents a concession by the Government against its earlier very rigid stand, is not so important (though the capacity of Government to accept points and to learn is certainly very positive); and equally, whether or not one agrees with the idea of compensation in terms of effectiveness as a rehabilitation measure, or of the proposed transport alternative (of auto-rickshaws), is another argument. What is important is that two principles are established: one of social responsibility of the state, and the other that public debate on issues of public interest, can be a constructive input.

But this is only some of what we were trying to say in our article, which Ms Chaudhuri seems unfortunately to have missed (though she does acknowledge that we have "raised pertinent questions") — and which thereby, in our view, has led her otherwise careful comment to fall into just the problems we believe are central to the question. For us, as yet, the answer to the question lies somewhere in the area of change in the nature and structure of decision-making, and in the understanding that participation in decision-making by all citizens, especially where directly affected, is a necessary part of the political process. Who should decide for whom?

It may be true that for Ms Chaudhuri, "the angle of the hand-rickshawala's arms, the lack of brakes, the bent back, all cry out to high heavens", but — aside from the fact that all these can easily be overcome by careful attention to ergonomic design, which we are presently trying to do in order to show that a humane rickshaw can exist — the question arises whether it is Ms Chaudhuri's, or Jyoti Basu's, or the rickshawala's right to decide to change this situation? And if all three have some right, then who should legitimately play what role in the process of deciding? The banning of the moving of night-soil as headload might have taken place — but does Ms Chaudhuri know what the headloaders now do instead? Whose dignity, and who decides? And on what terms? Does she think that the rickshawalas *enjoy* pulling weight around — or that rag-pickers *enjoy* sorting out other people's waste in Calcutta's Dhapa dumping ground; to make their living — or that miners *enjoy* being 600 ft underground in Chasnala? 'Out of sight, out of mind'; Chasnala is better than Dhapa, is better than Bhowanipur; does just banning an activity — and in this case, a socially useful activity — really achieve anything more than salving our consciences, than keeping our daily (and middle-class) experience 'clean'?

Our experience of working with pavement-dwellers and canal-side dwellers who are periodically physically removed from their homes (and their homes destroyed) and thrown out of the city "for their own good: the canal bank was *so* unhealthy" and that of 40 other people from all over the country who met in Calcutta in March for a seminar on *Banning the Unlicensed: Planning for the 'Unorganised Sector'?*, suggests that not only is nothing achieved but that this approach to what one might cynically phrase as 'welfare planning', is akin to systematic class violence: Whether it is premeditatedly systematic or subconsciously, culturally consistent, is immaterial; the fact remains that if one looks at the picture in different fields and across the country, there is an unbroken image of aggression against the unorganised sector. To put it crudely, the bleeding of liberal hearts, however empathetic, does nothing for the agony that others suffer — and does not even begin to comprehend the issue. Quite the opposite, the blood would seem to only compound the issue, by blurring the insight that we need to get past all the layers of intricate social and political webbing that go together to produce 'concern', that lead to welfare planning. It is this same web of circumstance and action that enables us to keep the unorganised, that systematically and continuously disorganises and disarticulates — and even criminalises — those who provide the cheapest labour, in their work and in their homes. Change in the rickshawala's life requires more than anguish for his aching body.

Frankly, we ourselves were not fully conscious until the seminar as to how widespread, common and systematic the whole business of banning the unlicensed has become; the 'system' being the careful, balanced use of law and all other instruments of social organisation to perpetuate and reinforce the status quo of inequality. Indeed, as we said earlier, we are finding that our minds not only were changed by the research but continue to be changed as we confront the question further. How, for instance, is Ms Chaudhuri able to accept — to even *suggest!* — the continuation of licensed rickshaws, even if changed to pullers' ownership, given the pain she claims to feel for the puller's agony? Is it just the legality which anaesthetises her feelings? It is interesting that the police authorities in Calcutta (the senior decision-makers, not the constables) feel the same way ("It is our job to protect the licensed vehicles"), as does the most influential union of rickshaw (non-puller) owners in the city: the licensed should continue, and not the unlicensed.

Could it be that Ms Chaudhuri is being deceived by the veil of sanctity provided by 'law'? Could it be that the existing laws and regulations covering rickshaws are ill-designed and mal-used — and that this is going to be even more the case with the proposed amendment, with the threat of destruction added to the authorities' arsenal but with no counterbalancing plan for either employment or transport service? Our argument is that even if the Government has learned in this instance, and has begun to acknowledge the need for alternatives, this kind of ad-hoc decision-making serves no social purpose and tends only to be amenable to misuse by vested interests (if not to directly serve their purpose); our proposal is that it is essential that we re-examine our laws and even more our process of formulation of such tools and other plans, and that we need laws which do not set out to penalise people but rather try to support disprivileged people in their struggles to become full citizens — and which include the mandatory requirement for society to provide alternatives if it disapproves of their efforts. This is especially the case in our situation, where people have historically been pauperised and dispossessed through the machinations, demands and failures of that same society, in the course of 'Calcutta's development'. Our belief is that such planning can only make sense if those directly affected, are also directly involved in the processes of making decisions, both as a balancing and as an emancipatory effort. This is, at present, totally absent from the Calcutta situation.

Given the above, it might be appropriate, even if contentious, to end by taking up Mr Chaudhuri's challenge of *reductio ad absurdum*: could it even be that planning in other cities and towns has been wrong *because* it has ignored such principles, *because* we have allowed it to be informed by warped ideas and class dominance; and that for local transport for instance (since that is the subject at hand), labour-utilising vehicles akin to rickshaws in cost, accessibility of ownership, ease of use, maintainability, and flexibility, but which have better angles of arm and back, brakes, and more efficient use of power exerted — could it be that such vehicles are in fact appropriate to certain uses and to certain types of towns and cities? Could it even be that the traffic organisation, even the land-use planning of our cities could be re-examined towards a more convivial and humane existence than their present madness of speed, noise, poison, and violence? This is not to say that 'planning' alone can solve all these problems (there is much, in fact, to indicate that planning is to a large extent compromised even before it starts); but it is to say that planning and decision-making offer us vehicles for direct participation in the processes of building society. Should we not use them?

Who decides? And where and how do we start?

Swapan Ganguly
Calcutta *Director, Unnayan*

Aakrosh Viewed from Bangladesh

SHAMIM AKHTAR
KARUNA BANERJEE

Aakrosh, *the powerful Indian film bringing out the grim realities that confront the under-privileged in our country, has touched many a heart across the frontiers. In Dacca, the film was screened for the members of the Bangladesh Film Society. The noted Bangladeshi critic, Shamim Akhtar wrote a sensitive review of the film, which appeared in* **Chalachchitrapatra,** *bulletin of the Bangladesh Film Society (February 21, 1982 . This came to the notice of Karuna Banerjee, who herself played a leading role in Satyajit Ray's masterpiece, Pather Panchali. She on her own translated Shamim Akhtar's review from Bengali and sent it to Mainstream, which publishes it here to let its readers know how cultural crosscurrents flow across the frontiers bringing neighbours nearer.* — Editor

If people like you stood by me now,
who knows,
I could have the urge to live again,
In anger and fury.

— Arka Chakrabarty

On my way back after seeing the film *Aakrosh,* I was mentally reciting these lines from a poem written by a poet on the other side of Bengal. It was addressed to a friend killed in the massacre of the extremists in the seventies. My companions asked a few questions But my mind was elsewhere. I did not know what they were thinking about. I was thinking of *Aakrosh,* written and scripted by Vijay Tendulkar and filmed by Govind Nihalani. I was thinking of the tribals whom I came to know about from the writings of Mahasweta Devi, and whom I saw in *Aakrosh* a little while ago.

Snatches of images from memory Fiery wrath on the pock-marked face of Lahania, an innocent, harmless creature, a heart-rending 'live-and-let live' appeal. Cluster of tribal huts mocking the wealth of Nature around. The futile attempt of a solitary man, consumed with passionate anger, to raise from the dead the men of that village. The vampires, who talk of progress, while devouring the luscious softness of helpless women, who strangle civilisation in the name of saving it. Snatches of images, those well known faces. A picture, just a picture, envelops me with innumerable questions.

The film-maker has made the film with an 'impersonal detachment'. There is no scope for sentimentality. He has shown the existing relationship among the three classes of society, man's helplessness in the face of exploitation and the brutality of the mighty. Although it is the framework of a story that holds the theme together, one can divide the story into three parts for the sake of discussion. The first part deals with the Lahania episode. The second part deals with Bhaskar and the middle class revolt, and the third one is the vicious circle.

Now to emit a sound is a sin.
Days and nights,
days and nights are dumb, blind and deaf
Your anger, hidden behind your breath
is bent like a question mark.
On your shoulders only the weight of silence

— Partha Raha

Vikhu Lahania is accused of killing his wife. His case is in the court. The charge against him is that there is no crime he has not committed. A drunkard, he not only extorts money by cheating people, his greed for money has led him even to compel his wife to sell her body. When his wife refused to commit such a crime, drunken Lahania killed her. Lahania does not answer, when questioned. He has not the slightest desire to refute the charge of debauchery. Lahania does not utter a single word. The Public Prosecutor fails to get any information out of him. Vikhu does not break his silence.

Vikhu Lahania is a tribal. His ancestors had fought against Nature. Now they have submitted to Man's authority, only for their survival. They have learnt that Man can be much more cruel than Nature. The forests all around are being cleared. The big businessmen of the city pay for their food in exchange of their service. The forest is now more dangerous because of the prowling human wolves. The wolves pounce on selective young girls, married or single, and take them away. There was a time when they used to protest, but the result was only a skirmish. And those who are powerful, always win. The Lahanias have submitted to the cruelty of fate. They have developed an unusual existentialism in their lives. Life means sheer living and getting boozed with rice-wine. Yet the Lahanias are just like any other human beings, they have love and affection, hopes and desires. Only they lack the right to fulfil them. They are human, yet not totally so. They succumb to their weakness and refrain from any protest. Instead of making fruitless attempt to fight injustice, they become confused and silent. This intolerable silence disturbs the Public Prosecutor Bhaskar Kulkarni. He sets himself the task of discovering the deeper meaning of this mysterious silence.

So, to escape from all sorts of doubts
I have chosen simple and plain living;
a surfeit of idleness after
back-breaking toil.

Pablo Neruda
(Retranslated from the Bengali translation)

A normal, good-natured middle class young man aspires for a normal, straightforward way of life. First comes education, then being established in life, after that settling down with his own little family. He dreams of an uncomplicated flow of life. To go out of this pattern, this circle, is equivalent to Adam's loss of Paradise. Because of his idealism, Bhaskar Kulkarni mistakenly steps out of this circle. Lahania is not dumb, nor a coward. Bhaskar cannot tolerate the fact that Lahania is so indifferently accepting the hangman's noose. Bhaskar did not see the darkness under the light. In his simple, straightforward search for truth, he does not realise when he has stepped beyond the circle. He fails to understand why people like him remain dumb, when they know everything. Why nobody comes forward to save a life? A progressive intellectual stops after publishing a sensational news. How can a political worker living among the tribals, remain silent at the time of their misfortune? Bhaskar finds the answer when truth stumbles at his doorstep. Truth is followed by ruthless suppression of truth. Truth means fear, and then follows a threat to life. Bhaskar discovers truth among the very people from whom he seeks shelter. By now he has realised that the road behind him is closed. For him only the road ahead is open. He can only go forward.

I am the dust from the feet of the paper tiger
It is I who rule the roost
I am the tom-cat among the pussies
Notice the mark I wear

Subhas Mukherjee

It is they who hold the reins. The peak of prosperity is their station. They have education, money and unbridled power. They are hand in glove with the mighty. They masquerade as cultured people, get together at the club and play bridge. At a large party, they open the car-doors in honour of their wives, and leave their seats to welcome them. The word 'mother' makes them emotional. Mother is Lakshmi, money, fame; they know how to honour her. Mothers are honoured during daylight, and turn into sluts in the darkness of the night. Then their honour rolls in the dust under hungry paws. This is one face. On the other hand, in social welfare gatherings they talk nineteen to a dozen. But when it hurts their interest, they do not hesitate to trample that very social welfare under their feet. Statuswise, they are senior bureaucrats, businessmen, established physicians, advocates, engineers, educationists, ruling party MLAs, even the so-called progressive intellectuals. They avoid confrontation with each other; the struggle for power co-exists with unbreakable fraternal bonds. Hence their unity in face of any danger puts the unity of the left to shame. The formidable advocate Dusan is aware of all the misdeeds of the local Civil Surgeon Patil. Dusan wins the case effortlessly with the help of Patil's false evidence. The distribution of land among the tribals piques the timber merchants. The pot-bellied MLA shares their anger. There are regular discussions in the local club on political, social and economic matters. They have their own hired thugs, a mercenary force. Much can be achieved by threatening people with the help of the thugs, without getting directly involved. Bhaskar Kulkarni is trained by the advocate Dusan, and their relationship is marked by the kind of regard that exists between the teacher and the pupil. On the basis of that, Bhaskar seeks protection from Dusan. The real face of Patil, Dusan, the judge and the Assembly member is revealed when Bhaskar is attacked by their toughs. Bhaskar wonders under what circumstances, normal human beings turn violent out of sheer greed for money, and attack their own brothers. At long last he gets the answer to all his questions.

Bhaskar's search for truth from various sources fails. The relatives of Lahania are silent, the neighbours are silent. The political worker's lips are also sealed. The attacks by the thugs terrorise Bhaskar; his nights are spent under police protection. Spies shadow him, the lonely sea-shore offers him no peace. He has to flee from their clutches. He is stabbed while returning home in the darkness of night. A sense of total insecurity dawns on him.

Hope suddenly knocks at his door in this despondent situation. The hitherto silent Naxalite worker opens up with the history of Lahania's fabricated case. Lahania's wife Nagi was raped and then killed by the people known as gentleman. His own tribesmen have given false evidence against him for the sake of money, but why? It all runs into a vicious circle. One by one, Bhaskar exposes the false witnesses. There is just a little left. A little more time. Just then Dusan reveals his true character. Asking for more time he closes the session for the day. That very night the Naxalite is kidnapped. At the beginning of the next session, the MLA makes a tempting offer of transfer to Bhaskar. To the disappointment of everybody, the lonely sister of Lahania, appears in the court with the news of the death of their old father. Lahania is taken to his village to perform last rites. The police and Bhaskar Kulkarni accompany him. Lahania performs the rites silently. And just before he is handcuffed again, just at that very tense moment, he suddenly snatches the axe from the hand of the nearest woodcutter and cuts the head off with one stroke — no, not of the police, but of his younger sister. And then, an inhuman scream. Lahania's fierce anger seems to burst out tearing apart his throat in terrible anguish.

In the last scene, Bhaksar and Dusan face each other. In the eyes of the public, Lahania is now accused of two murders. There is no chance of saving him. Lahania was the sole witness of the torture inflicted on his wife. His lonely sister would have been a prey to the same fate. Death was better than that. Lahania used to be distressed, if his wife returned home late; he loved his wife deeply. And it was of her murder that he is accused. And now he silently accepts the hangman's rope by killing his sister whose insecurity he was concerned about. Bhaskar knows everything and understands. Dusan will not hesitate to annihilate him in his own interest. Just as he has not hesitated to destroy the political worker, and to beat up the editor of *Rashtrahit* on the excuse of blackmailing. Bhaskar is determined to break the system that makes Dusans and Patils victorious. The film ends here.

The director is so much restrained in different scenes that it is difficult to accept it simply as a film and not as the portrayal of an actual event. For example, Lahania is introduced in the first shot with tied hands performing the last rites of his dead wife. Flames shoot up high from the funeral pyre. The title. The exquisite tidiness of the next shot is in itself a clear statement. Dawn is about to break. Along the shadowy garden path of a beautifully laid-out bungalow, an elderly gentleman proceeds to enjoy a morning walk. His dress and gait speak of bureaucratic sophistication. He has a cane in his hand. The cane represents his status symbol, and he use the cane to drive away the dry leaves scattered on the cleanly swept path. Walking along the sea-beach, he retreats before a rolling wave goodhumouredly. He is surprised to see a young man enjoying a bath among the waves. A lively young man, playing with water. The elderly gentleman is the District judge, and the young man is Bhaskar Kulkarni, a new Advocate attached to the same Court. The excellence and relevance of this particular shot lie in this that here the director presents two individuals of different age and different class. An established successful person is always afraid of losing his possession, and wants to preserve whatever he has got. And he who does not bother about any loss, can easily let himself go with abandon. The judge has not played an important role in the latter part of the film. Yet the main portion of the story starts with him, and the main character has been juxtaposed against him. In the dream sequence, Lahania's outstretched hand to grab at his past, now a painful memory. The agonised wail in the background without directly showing the rape scene and Lahania's angry face like a caged tiger around the closed room. Bhaskar running for life along the sea-beach seen through the trees. The combination of several forms of expression is wonderful.

On my way back after seeing *Aakrosh* many thoughts crowded my mind. I thought of the landless Ramizes and Gafurs in my country. They too are victims like the Lahanias. We are emotionally overwhelmed after seeing a film dealing with tribal life, but people around us are still suffering as they used to suffer in the past.

Nobody has thought of making a film with their lives, and those who have thought, know that, in the present situation, it is impossible to project the truth. We are not in a position even to say what can be or should be said. We have no freedom in our own homeland, our creativity is stifled. What can be more painful than this? ☐

Aboriginal Australians Seek Justice

PETER J. BROWN

In September 1982 the Commonwealth Games are due to be held in Brisbane, capital of Queensland, the north-eastern state of Australia.

Some groups of Aboriginal Australians have vowed to use this occasion to draw attention to the injustices which they suffer. In India this situation is little known. More likely to be known would be the fact that Australia will be celebrating her "Bicentennary" in 1988. Just two hundred years ago, the first White settlers — in fact, mainly convicts — landed in New South Wales, and Captain Phillip formally took possession of the entire continent in the name of the British Crown.

This land, however, was already inhabited; indeed, from time immemorial. The Aboriginals had in fact, been living in Australia for some thirty to forty thousand years! At the time of the White newcomers' arrival, the aboriginal population was probably about 350 thousand divided into some 500 clans or tribal groups. Each of these groups had its own territory with boundaries recognised by its neighbours. Virtually none of the land was unoccupied.

The Aboriginals were nomads in the sense that they had not established villages, but each group possessed its own defined territory. Their relationship to this tract of land was vital to them. It provided the economic basis for their existence, but over and above this, it constituted the spiritual and cultural foundations of their society. The land was theirs, not as something to be possessed and exploited, but as the universe with which they identified themselves.

Came the White colonisers who planted a flag and declared that henceforth the land of Australia belonged to the British Crown. Any Aboriginals who may have witnessed the ceremony, must have thought the whole thing some sort of joke. But this joke was to have cruel consequences for their race.

The history of the colonisation of Australia is also the history of the conquest and the destruction of Aboriginal society. It is the age-old story of the oppression of the weak by the strong, made the more odious by the hypocritical justifications frequently advanced in the name of Science or Religion. In simple language, the land of Australia was stolen from the Aboriginals.

The number of Aboriginals fell dramatically from around 350 thousand at the time of the arrival of the "First Fleet", in 1788, to some 60 thousand by 1920. By this time the south-eastern tribes had been virtually wiped out.

There were several causes of this decimation of the original Australian population. There were the massacres of the Blacks by the better-armed and organised Whites. There were the ravages made by diseases hitherto unknown in the continent, and to which the Aboriginals had no resistance. But above all, it was the theft of their lands which destroyed the bases of their culture and effectively doomed entire tribes.

The remnants were often herded into reserves of unwanted land where it was impossible for them to maintain their traditions. The result was often a degradation as they fell prey to new vices, such as drinking, which in turn further demeaned them in the eyes of the Whites.

Official Government policies towards the natives have long been based on the assumption that they would die out, and that the only course open for the few remaining, was to be assimilated into the White society. The various Churches' missionary endeavours almost always sought to cut off the Aboriginals from their old customs and traditions. The wonder is, that in spite of all this, the Aboriginals have survived. Their refusal to succumb or to conform, is a triumph of human courage and fidelity.

Actually the number of Aboriginals is increasing. Previous to 1967 they were specifically excluded from the Commonwealth Census. Since their inclusion the figures show that they are now increasing at a faster rate than the White Australians. The situation is, however, somewhat complex, as the

A Jungle Tale

PURABI BANERJEE

"A President is one who presides over meetings." The King of the forest patiently explained to his subjects, gathered about him, a trifle puzzled.

"But why should anyone preside over a meeting? In the past ..." The monkey, known to be a dissenter, burst out.

He was cut short: "A President lends decorum to a meeting. You junglees will never understand this sort of thing."

The angry roar had a hushing effect on the gathering. Nobody wanted to be pounced on. The King's wrath was well known.

"Now for the nominations," he said. Again nobody understood what he was saying, but for obvious reasons there were no questions.

For a while there was complete silence. The King's patience was almost exhausted and he roared for names: "This is a democracy and you should suggest names of those whom you would like to be the President."

The crafty crow had been watching everything from a branch overhead. He knew when to say what. Maintaining his distance, he said sweetly — that is as sweetly as a crow can, "Your majesty, this humble servant has a suggestion, if it is good enough for you. As our *Mai-baap* you know our virtues and weak points. Who could make a better choice in such matters than yourself?"

"Mark you, he is angling for the post," said the hedgehog to the tortoise, but no one listened to him.

The lion was obviously pleased with this 'suggestion'. In fact he had been hoping it would come from someone present. Surely they were bright enough to realise that much. He stroked his mane and tried to look modest before answering, but failed because he was not really a politician. "You put so much faith in me that I am overwhelmed (everyone applauded at this point). I'll do my best."

Saying this he looked at an old lion on his side, trying his best not to fall asleep. "Chaudharyji you are the perfect example of an elderly statesman. In your heyday you have achieved a lot. What could be a great tribute to you than the office of the President?"

He had expected a 'yes', even gratitude, but what he got was a few snarls. The old lion was wide awake now and rather offended. "So I am old, am I? Just because I am writing my memoirs, you think I have retired from public life? For your kind information, I am perfectly healthy (he flexed a few muscles) and nature therapy has showh me the way to remain young for ever." The old lion refused to shut up even when the king's stooges pleaded with him. What had offended him so much was not the offer, but being called old, especially when in his crisp white churidar Kurta, he knew he looked so fetching.

Totally demoralised (though he did not show it) by the retort, the King adjourned the meeting but not before he had thrown the gauntlet to the opposition to find a suitable President.

It was a challenge. The overweight tiger who considered himself the leader of the Opposition, and donned a Gandhi cap to remind everyone about it, collected his minions about him. "We should put up a candidate who can stand up to *him*." His glance fell upon the snake, coiled up in a corner, looking at him fixedly. "What about you?" The snake yawned 'I think you should choose someone more commonplace. I understand the office of the President demands nothing but presiding over public functions. I don't find it intellectually stimulating at all."

The tiger's eye fell on a rabbit. "You will be our candidate for presidentship. And I'm not taking no for an answer." The Poor rabbit nodded, though he quaked with fear and apprehension.

When the King of the jungle heard about it, he guffawed so loudly that even the crow was frightened and flew off from his perch with a nervous cackle. "Just to show you how right-minded and liberal I am, I'll accept your candidate."

So the rabbit became the President of the jungle, for a term of five years (that was how democracy functioned, explained, the King). In the beginning the rabbit was quite scared and felt like running off his chair and burrowing everytime any of the big shots approached him. By and by he got used to his office and even learnt to make speeches and quote Shakespeare and Ghalib.

Aboriginals have been divided. There are the tribal groups of the North and the Centre, who have retained much of the old Law. There are those of the Government settlements, Cattle Stations and Missions, who have been forced to adapt to a new situation but who have maintained a definitely Aboriginal style of life. Finally, there are the urbanised Aboriginals, often of mixed descent, who, apparently have lost much of their traditions but who still feel strongly Aboriginal, and who reject a simple conformity to the White Australian way of life.

One thing common to all Aboriginals is that they are invariably the under-privileged in the affluent Australian community. Whether one looks at the fields of Health, Education, or Employment, the general situation of the Aboriginals is always bad and often desperately so.

Recent history has given some hope of belated justice being done. A gradual awakening of conscience among some Whites has coincided with a new consciousness among Aboriginals of the need and possibility to organise themselves.

In the fifties and sixties, northern Aboriginals began to protest against the inhuman treatment meted out to them by the big Pastoral campanies. In the Wave Hill agitation of 1966, the Gurindji tribal stockmen working for the English Vestey Company walked off the station and settled in the heartland of their own country. They had some White supporters and, fortunately, the Whitlam Labour Government came into power at that time. The Gurindji were granted the freehold of their land. It was a psychological victory of great importance.

The Whitlam Government did much to improve the condition of the Aboriginals. In 1967 a national referendum was held to change the Constitution with a view to giving Aboriginals full voting and citizenship rights. For example, until then they were forbidden by law to drink in public houses. This referendum was accepted with a big majority. A Department of Aboriginal Affairs was established. Official policy began to veer slowly away from the goal of assimilation, and to timidly envisage the possibility of allowing the Aboriginals to decide their own destiny.

Although the Labour Government was replaced by a conservative Liberal Party one, the policy of the Federal Government was not changed. One reason is certainly the need for the Government to respect world opinion.

As in India, the Government structure in Australia is a federal one. Although the Central Government has now the power to legislate for Aboriginals, it has shown reluctance to risk conflict with some State Governments in this matter. The attitudes of the different States vary. South Australia has been one of the most advanced in granting Land Rights, whereas West Australia and Queensland who have large numbers of Aboriginals, have a distressing record of discrimination against them.

Queensland is currently the "get-rich-quick" State in Australia. Its Premier (Chief Minister) Joh Bjelke-Peterson seems sometimes to be almost a caricature of prevalent White attitudes. His oddly named National Party combines extreme indulgence towards Japanese Companies with extreme narrow-mindedness towards the original nationals of the country. Queensland Aboriginal legislation has long been repressive. Until 1971 it was an offence for an Aboriginal to "escape" from a reserve. As of present the Queensland Government refuses to entertain the idea of Land Rights, and Aboriginal activists complain of harassment by the police. The Aboriginals are too small a minority to hope to achieve anything through their mere votes, hence those in Queensland want to use the occasion of the Commonwealth Games to bring their situation to the notice of the world.

The position in Queensland and in West Australia is especially bad, but also in the rest of Australia much remains to be done. Various Governments are now prepared to spend some money on Aboriginal welfare, but too often it is used according to what the White man thinks is good for the Black man. Several Aboriginal-run health and legal organisations and schools have been refused funds, and everywhere the Aboriginals remain the under-privileged in a country which has been stolen from them.

It will be said that this problem is an internal Australian one. In one sense it is certainly that, because the root of the problem remains with the defective attitudes of many White Australians. What they have to recognise is that here is involved the question of basic human rights — that each and every human group has the right and the duty to conserve its own traditions and culture.

Australian Aboriginal culture is surely among the oldest in the world. Australia and the world have much to learn from these people. Their claims for justice deserve to be supported by all.☐

Any reader of Mainstream interested in having direct contact with the Australian Aboriginal organisations may contact:

Foundation for Aboriginal and
Islander Research Action
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and
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Victorian Aboriginal Health Service
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Fitzroy, Victoria 3005 (Australia)

BOOK REVIEW

Waiting for the Mahatma

MY INDIA: by **S. Nihal Singh** (Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd; pp 130; 1982; Price Rs. 60)

THE title, the familiar name of the author, and the attractive production by the well-known publishers, not only arouse great expectations but remind one of some earlier books. Jawaharlal Nehru's *Discovery of India*, full of deep insights provided by a great maker of modern history while still engaged in the liberation struggle; Minoo Masani's *Our India*, a slender well-written portrait of our land which inspired the younger generation and taught them much in simple terms; Palme Dutt's *India Today*, a Marxist look at the country's current history in the years of struggle; Indira Gandhi's *Eternal India*, which will be cherished for the pictures more than for the text.

Nihal Singh is a journalist with a name; former Editor of a prominent daily and until recently, Editor-in-Chief of a chain whose owner keeps his newspaper in the news. In short, a senior professional journalist occupying a ringside seat. The purpose of the volume under review, surprisingly slender, is to make, in the author's words, "an attempt at understanding why things were happening as they were" — an offering to "an audience larger than one confined to India".

That is the promise. But as one goes through the chapters one by one—there are twentythree of them beginning with "The Legacy" and ending with a question—disappointment grows gradually. And as you complete it and put it aside you realise that it is the handiwork of a man who wanted to get the book in circulation in a hurry, and did not have time to make use of the vast reference material at his disposal or to dig deep into memory even in respect of events that should have imprinted themselves quite sharply there.

The background part of the book is naturally tiny and sketchy. Right at the start comes the rather supercilious mention of Gandhi's arrival on the Indian political scene after his historic achievements in South Africa: "Gandhi returned home after his bouts of loyal service to the British Crown and agitation in South Africa." The dawn of Independence, despite reference to the Partition riots, reads like a breezy account of an elite cocktail party. Nehru's personality, many-splendoured and quite intriguing even to painstaking historians, hardly comes out in the narration of events like the Indo-Pakistan conflict or the introduction of the concept and practice of planned development. The Gandhi-Nehru relationship is disposed of with a knowing nod. But the verdict is there: Nehru indeed was "a gentleman and a great leader for all that."

A brief chapter on the Lal Bahadur "interregnum" is followed by the story of India under Indira Gandhi. This is where the book really begins. And from here on, even in the cursory picture the author paints of an eventful period, prejudices show through more forcefully than precision or comprehension. When Indira challenged the Syndicate, successfully, she had chosen "the path of confrontation". The issues involved are hardly analysed. Even on the Privy Purses question, the emphasis is on the "solemn undertaking" and on "some of the princes" being "poor men". Whatever may be uncovered by hindsight, while writing what purports to be an account of that period, the late sixties, one would have expected an assessment of the issue of bank nationalisation. There is none. Writing for an audience larger than the one in India, the author should perhaps have explained in some detail his unexceptionable statement that "Indira does not understand economics" and that "she delights ...in one-upmanship". Nihal Singh could at least have given us an idea of his own knowledge of economics.

Image-building, especially the "image" abroad, and the populist slogans of the early seventies surely deserve more than passing mention. The events of 1974-75, and Jayaprakash Narayan's role in these, are predictably treated with great sympathy. But one looks in vain for an honest assessment of JP's politics, of why he always began movements and left them unfinished, of why he could not keep the Socialists united, of his bhoodan-jivandan interlude and his forays into Nagaland and Kashmir. Perhaps all this was thought unnecessary in moving towards the crux of the book — the imposition of internal Emergency and "limited dictatorship."

But at least on the sordid happenings during Emergency one expected a senior journalist counted among the Emergency heroes to provide a vivid account that would offer a guide to democrats on what to guard against. From Turkman Gate to Muzaffarnagar to Sultanpur, not to speak of the reign of terror in all the northern States from Haryana to Bihar, there is a lot to be written about, especially when you produce a book to enlighten not only a wider audience than a merely Indian one but also posterity. Even newspaper articles have been more meaty than what our journalist author offers in these scrimpy pages. Only *The Statesman*, which he was serving at the time, and *The Indian Express*, which he is serving now, stood up, the rest of the press having been "cowed and become conformist". There were other papers, not so prosperous as these two, and other journalists not so well placed as the author, who fought Emergency and censorship in their own humble ways, but how could Nihal Singh take note of small fry? Or, even of those outside the press who kept up salvos of leaflets and pamphlets almost throughout the Emergency period? That Nihal Singh met some of the Emergency luminaries will no doubt be of interest to the wider audience in view. Others can wait. There is a short chapter on "the lessons" of Emergency, but it says little except that the people voted out Indira. One doesn't have to write a book to say that, surely?

Nihal Singh's survey of political parties and personalities is as superficial and hurried as the rest of his output in this volume. Only Morarji Desai gets a chapter to himself; he is something of a hero, at least to Nihal Singh. Next in order of importance is A.B. Vajpayee. The weaknesses that reduced the Janata experiment in office to a joke have been discussed, but hardly adequately, even if the author has made the point that "the disparate forces in the party could never be reconciled" and that personal animosities were decisive, not principles or ideology. To you and me the difference between the Congress leaders and the Janata (1977-79) leaders may not be perceptible — both seem to represent the same interests, social and economic — but to Nihal Singh it is clear that "the Janata leadership was much more indigenous, more part of the Indian milieu ..." Obviously he is paraphrasing the criticism conservative Congressmen as well as reactionary parties in the Opposition had always made against Nehru, pretending that they themselves were the true Gandhians. Didn't they take their famous pledge at Rajghat, even if they broke it the next day?

Then comes the return of Indira with son Sanjay, symbol of Emergency, in the forefront. The Indira Government's performance in the last two years, with the promise of "Government That Works" in tatters, is fresh even in the supposedly short public memory. So from the atrocities against Harijans to the Bhagalpur blindings to the rape of women by policemen to caste clashes and communal carnage, all this is summed up briefly. That the Janata rule was not free of blemish in any of these spheres is not glossed over, even if the facts are not etched sharply.

The chapter on foreign policy brings out the author's pro-Western predilections; not that snide references to the Soviet Union or the Communists are absent elsewhere in the volume. Nihal Singh should have tried to explain in greater detail why Morarji Desai, "despite the friendship that had flowered between Carter and Desai", could not secure "tangible gains for India" and could not jettison the foreign policy shaped over long years by Jawaharlal Nehru.

Correction

In last week's Editor's Notebook (*Mainstream* July 3, 1982) its contents were inadvertently misplaced on page 2, column 2, para 3. It should read as follows: - "...as recently as 1971, thirty thousand Sindhis could be admitted and settled within the Indian Union—in line with the pleadings of the Jana Sangh, let it be noted...." and not as wrongly put "...ignoring the protests of the Jana Sangh".

The error is regretted.

Editor

"... the farmers, constituting more than 70 per cent of the population as they did, were governed by an urban elite," says Singh. While it is true that the urban elite have a dominant position, one may question the validity of the term "farmers" being used to describe both the entire rural population including the exploited landless and semi-starving majority, and the well-to-do, exploiter following of Sharad Joshi or Charan Singh or Narayanaswami Naidu. A journalist should be careful in using words of this kind in a context like ours. On the other hand, there can be little dispute over the author's account of the doings and dilemmas of Sanjay's followers. And what does one say about a journalist's astrologer-like prognostication that "if Indira's time-table does not meet any serious setback, India will be under a Presidential form of government before the end of 1982"?

So which way salvation? "There is much to be said for a true man of religion taking the lead to regenerate the country". "Moral sense" is most essential. But let us come to the point. "Private industry ... is smothered in controls, and while our businessmen are geniuses in finding loopholes, they cannot give of their best." And "instead of using the Indian businessman's acquisitive instincts, which make him perform wonders, for the national good, he is stymied." Hasn't Nihal Singh heard of the concessions to the large houses, of unutilised capacities, and, most important, of Bearer Bonds? Nihal Singh is not afraid of multinationals, only the "Indian communists fan the flames against them."

What we need to do, then, is "to wait for the new Mahatma, after all, as we flounder from crisis to crisis." Or, instead of just waiting, shall we humbly request Nihal Singh with his roving eye to locate him for us?

C.N. Chitta Ranjan

As everyone knows, the choice today in this nuclear age is one of utter annihilation and destruction of civilisation or of some way to have peaceful coexistence between nations. There is no middle way.

It may not be possible to reach full disarmament in one step, though every step should be conditioned to that end.... (The) sands of time run out, and we dare not play about with this issue or delay its consideration. This, indeed, is the main duty of the United Nations today and if it fails in this, the United Nations fails in its main purpose....

—Jawaharlal Nehru at UN, 1960

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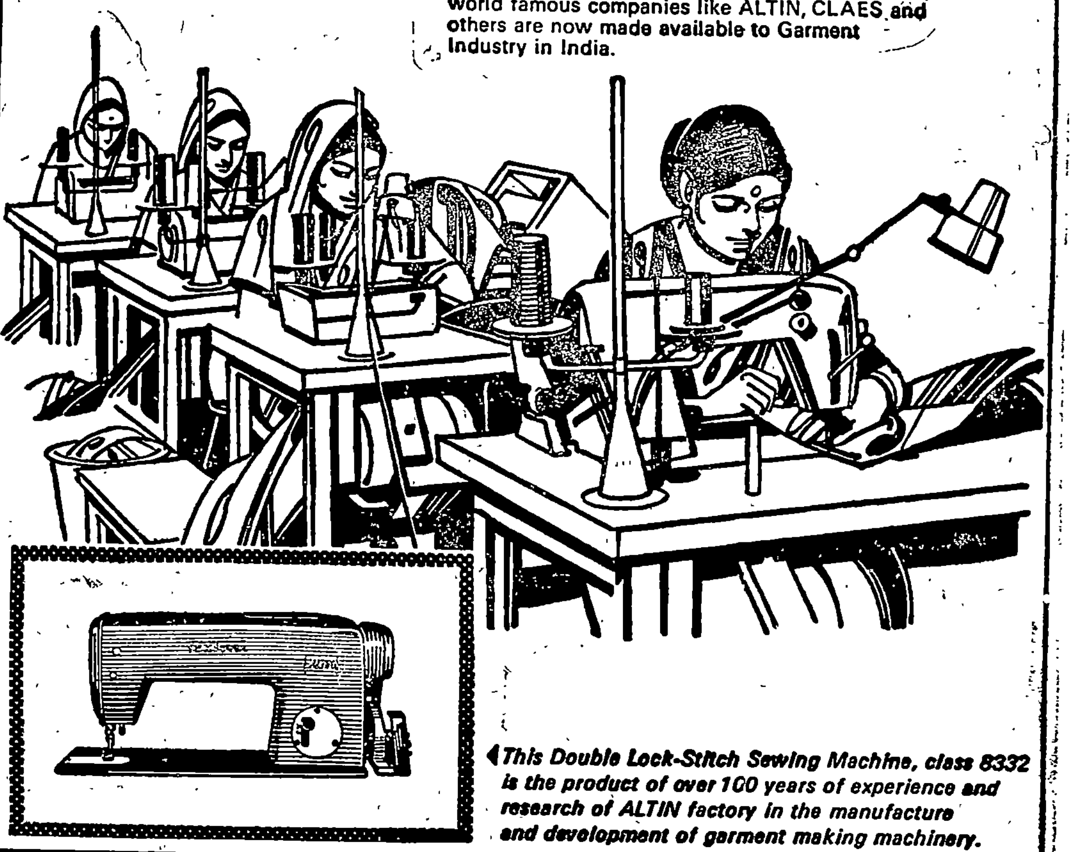

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Dissent in Israel • Bombay Strike and TUs

Mainstream

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Lessons of Presidential Poll

THE excitement over the Presidential poll having ended with Giani Zail Singh winning it — though the official results are yet to be known when these lines are written — it is perhaps time for a sober appraisal of its political fall-out.

Leaving aside the personal antics of the President-designate — who has already earned the distinction of being extraordinarily folksy — the implications of this contest need to be noted as these are important for an understanding of how Indira Gandhi and her opponents view the lines of future developments in this country.

By selecting Giani Zail Singh as the President for the coming five years, it is obvious Indira Gandhi is anxious not to be hamstrung by any advice or reservation from the Rashtrapati Bhavan on the policies to be projected or decisions taken by the Government in the next five years, a period which by all accounts is going to be very critical. There is a demonstration of shock in some quarters over the Prime Minister's choice of a rubber-stamp President. What is forgotten is that under the parliamentary system, every Prime Minister would like to have a rubber-stamp President: the problem arises when he or she does not get one, or a person looking like a rubber-stamp at the beginning might turn into a dissident, if not a veritable veto. Preoccupied with a sense of concern about the shape of things to come — unknown and inscrutable despite all the assurances of the astrologers — it is understandable why Indira Gandhi's choice fell, of all people, on Giani Zail Singh whose loyalty to her is legendary.

Precisely for that very reason, the brunt of the Opposition attack was directed against her choice. The significant sections of the Opposition are mainly composed of the most conservative element in the body politic: behind their campaign to curb the Prime Minister in any move towards absolutism, lies their anxiety to hold on to the status quo in the socio-economic sphere, an objective which can be safeguarded by holding on to what is described by them as the basic structure of the Constitution; that is, the supremacy of a largely conservative judiciary over both

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Parliament and the executive. Without in the least downgrading the personal eminence of Justice Khanna, there is no gainsaying the fact that his honest views on matters political, social and judicial, tally by and large with those of the Lok Dal and BJP who with a section of Janata Party certainly constitute the decisive core of the Opposition combine. In other words, the perception of this section of the Opposition about the future line of developments in India enjoins upon them to be alert and vigilant against any disturbance of the status quo, for it is only as the defender of the status quo that they can thrive in the socio-political milieu in the country.

Such an assessment of the present balance of forces in India may not be to the liking of the Communist establishments — at least there is nothing on record to show that they concede such an assessment. But the hard reality, inexorable and inescapable, is that the Communists are gripped by the mentality of a state of siege, withdrawing to their own strongholds in West Bengal and Kerala with a few extra pockets here and there in the vast subcontinent, unable in any way to influence the course of events, not to speak of reversing it. On the other hand, the Right Opposition, represented by BJP in particular, is actively trying to gain respectability in circles and segments of opinion which are far beyond its own flock; in other words, the forces of the Right are trying hard to come out of their own strongholds, to conquer the vast pastures beyond their own battlements.

This explains the sophisticated approach of a Vajpayee, claiming to be taking a wide national view of things, instead of any narrow sectarian one. Hence comes the ready acceptance by BJP of CPI leader Hiren Mukerji as the Opposition's choice for the Presidential contest — a dramatic gesture of magnanimity by which many beyond the pale of BJP could be won over. It would be a very serious error for the Communists to interpret the selection of Hiren Mukerji as an acknowledgement on the part of the Right Opposition of the growing strength of CPI; rather, it was a brilliant tactical move of the Right by which not only the gulf between Communists and Congress-I could be widened — let the two adversaries of the Right fall apart — but BJP could gain kudos from the vast unorganised and unattached sections of what may be called the nationally oriented masses, who could be impressed by the abjuration of a sectarian outlook and might be persuaded to regard it as a reliable custodian of national interest.

This well-thought-out tactical move of the Right should lead to rethinking on the part of the Communists about the validity of their own immediate slogan of Left-and-Democratic Unity: perhaps unexceptionable as a perspective in a period of fierce class battles bordering on civil-war conditions, the slogan of Left-and-Democratic Unity today can hardly fetch rich dividends but may lead to the grotesque situation in which the flock of Charan Singh and the ramshackle battalions of the Janata, if not the serried ranks of BJP, are preferred as democratic allies rather than the millions under the spell of Indira Gandhi. It is necessary for the Left to do a bit of self-introspection and consider if it would not be appropriate at the present moment to raise the call for a patriotic front in defence and furtherance of national interests.

There is another aspect of the Presidential poll campaign whose significance can hardly be overlooked by any careful observer of the Indian scene. Despite the dissensions prevailing inside the Congress-I State units, it is noteworthy that the party candidate could muster the support of the major regional parties — the National Conference of Jammu & Kashmir, the Akalis in Punjab, the DMK and AI-ADMK in Tamilnadu. At a time when regional consciousness is on the ascendancy, it is important to note that these three prominent regional entities — in which separatist tendencies could be discerned at some time or other — have voted this time for an unmistakable assertion of national integration.

Here is a case of interplay of dialectically contradictory forces. It would be a mistake for the Congress-I leadership to jump to the simplistic conclusion that the

Presidential poll is a vote for a unitary approach and a vote against regionalism. Rather, it denotes that while regional loyalties are asserting themselves, the need for an integrated India has not in the least been undermined.

Here is a challenge that the national leadership — as also those aspiring to national leadership — can hardly ignore.

July 14 *N.C.*

COMMENTARY

Bombay Strike: Posers for TUs

NARENDRA SHARMA

THE Bombay textile workers' prolonged strike has thrown up many issues for the trade union movement to ponder over. Launched on January 18 this year at the call of Datta Samant and his newly-formed Maharashtra Girni Kamgar Union, the strike will be six months old on July 18 and will thus be the longest strike of the single largest body of workers in the country. The call for strike had been given over the heads of the established unions which remained indifferent if not hostile in the initial period and later on had to act virtually as sappers and miners for the strike, for the 60 textile mills had come to a grinding halt. The complete strike by 2.5 lakh textile workers of the premier metropolitan city has shown up the irrelevance to which the established, recognised and unrecognised, textile workers' unions have been reduced by a solitary leader through his blustering posture.

The contrast between this strike of textile workers of Bombay and the one fought by them for a record duration of six months, under the Red Flag Mumbai Girni Kamgar Union, in the late-thirties is too glaring to be missed. If the strike in the thirties was the harbinger of a new era of trade union consciousness as an integral part of the freedom struggle — a consciousness which was displayed by Bombay textile workers in abundance during the subsequent battles for freedom from alien rule — the present strike in the eighties started as a challenge to the so-called textile workers' organised trade union movement in Bombay. How has this transformation of the textile workers come about? That is the question which established trade unions and their leaders must answer. The fact that the lakhs of workers and their families have braved all the trials and tribulations involved in such a prolonged, agonising strike is a pointer to their mood of which the established trade unions remained oblivious and which Datta Samant was able to capitalise on.

The Governments, both Central and State, on their part, had been taking the convenient plea that the cotton textile industry of Bombay is governed by the provisions of the Bombay Industrial Relations Act (BIRA) which is based on the twin principles of recognition of one union in one industry in a local area as the sole bargaining agent and the standardisation of wages and service conditions of the workers and employees in a local area. On this very basis, the Rastriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh (RMMS-INTUC) had enjoyed the status of sole bargaining agent on behalf of the workers since the inception of the BIRA in the early fifties. As in the case of earlier general strikes, once again the irrelevance of the RMMS has been proved.

However, the State Government, supported by the Central Government, had so long stuck to the position that it would look into the "legitimate demands" of the workers "through legally constituted machinery" only after restoration of normalcy in the industry. It also pleaded that a "subsisting agreement" on wages and other related matters between the RMMS and the Bombay Millowners' Association was valid until December 31, 1984, and the Government could not intervene in violation of that agreement. Another agreement between the RMMS and the millowners regarding bonus had provided for bonus for 1980, ranging between 8.33 per cent and 17.33 per cent. When the Government talked about looking into the legitimate demands through "legally constituted machinery", it again stipulated negotiations through the discredited RMMS which happens to be the recognised bargaining agent under the BIRA.

The current strike challenged all these stipulations: Datta Samant had launched the strike, demanding bonus at the rate of 20 per cent of basic wage; a wage increase ranging from Rs 250 to Rs 400; and regularisation of all temporary mill-hands.

Having unsuccessfully waited for over five and a half months for the textile workers to come to their knees, the Centre has at last come forward with a formula to resolve the stalemate: it announced its decision to set up a tripartite committee to go into the problems of the textile industry in the country in general and of Bombay textile industry and workers in particular; an ad hoc increase of Rs 30 per worker per month to be adjusted later after the tripartite submits its report; and an immediate cash advance of Rs 650 to each worker, to be deducted in six monthly instalments — the deductions to start six months after the payment of advance. The committee is required to give its report on the state of the industry as a whole in one year: on the problems of badli workers, on the demand for house-rent allowance and conveyance allowance in two months; and on the wage demands within six months. While announcing this decision, Labour Minister Bhagwat Jha Azad promised that the committee's recommendations would be implemented expeditiously.

The immediate response of the strike leader, Datta Samant, to the announcement has been to reject it as "totally unacceptable", describing it as "absolutely meagre."

It goes without saying that the Government has climbed down from its ivory tower, and contrived a face-saving device for all concerned. The immediate reaction of Datta Samant makes it obvious that the Bombay textile workers will have to suffer for some more time; this is also because the other trade unions of textile workers who support the strike and are not leading it, only follow what Datta Samant says. The fate of the herioc strike hangs in balance, for any weakening of workers' unity now would be disastrous.

The pitiable plight which the trade union leaders have landed themselves in, was seen from the deliberations of the parliamentary consultative committee attached to the Labour Ministry, which discussed the issue of textile workers' strike on July 5. The trade unionist parliamentarians in the consultative committee are understood to have admitted frankly that they did not agree with the strike methods of Datta Samant; they were however concerned about the textile workers' misery. When the Labour Minister asked them to sit together and suggest some way out, the consultative committee members, it is gathered, chose to maintain silence, obviously because Datta Samant is the deciding factor in this matter.

The proposed tripartite should provide an occasion for the central trade unions to take a comprehensive look at the industry and the workers' conditions of service. Many of the textile units are known to have been ailing, due to mismanagement. The Bombay textile workers' strike has forced the issue, and raised many vital questions concerning both the industry and the trade union movement. This is an opportunity for the trade unions to assert themselves and not allow an individual to dictate, to the detriment of the long-term interests of the workers and the movement. (*July 13*)

Cold Water on Disarmament

Our Diplomatic Correspondent

Beijing has blamed both the United States and the Soviet Union for obstructing and sabotaging agreement on a comprehensive disarmament programme at the United Nations. The Soviet Defence Minister, Marshal Dmitri Ustinov, has blamed the United States for lack of progress on the disarmament issue. India, with characteristic unwillingness to call a spade a spade, has refrained from apportioning blame, but has dissociated itself from the consensus conclusions at the Second Special Session on Disarmament (SSD II) which ended in New York last week in "complete failure". The reaction of the United States is not available, but one can imagine that it will be one of nonchalance and smug self-satisfaction that it persuaded itself to remain unaffected by the voice of peace heard at the session. However, regardless of the positions of participants, the fact remains that such hopes as were raised at the commencement of the SSD-II on June 7 have been dashed to the ground. We return to square one. Whoever caused the collapse of the session cannot be said to have served their own cause well, leave alone the cause of the survival of mankind.

Even midway during SSD-II, reports had begun circulating that, amidst the pious protestations in favour of disarmament articulated by the world statesmen who delivered high-faluting homilies from the pulpit of the United Nations, the three special committees set up by SSD-II were stymied in their work by the deliberately obstructionist postures adopted by the United States and its Western allies. Once the addresses by heads of state and government had concluded, and the time had come for the committees to concretise the views expressed on the floor of the Assembly, it became clear that SSD-II was poised for a collapse. India's Permanent Representative to the UN at Geneva, A.P. Venkateeswaran, took the floor at the meeting of the "committee of the whole" a day before the closing date to warn that "disturbing trends" were emerging in the other committees and these appeared to be calculated to sabotage the session.

Hectic last-minute efforts to save the session necessitated a day's extension in order to hammer out a consensus document which would reflect the basic objective for which SSD-II had been convened. Although the "committee of the whole" worked till late into the night, it appeared to have been engaged more in dotting the i's and crossing the t's in a document which had already been privately condemned as hopelessly non-committal, than in advancing a comprehensive programme for arms reduction and control. In the end, the strange situation developed in which the participants at the 157-nation Assembly adopted by consensus a document which they themselves knew was not worth the paper on which it was written. The Assembly president, Ismat Kittani of Iraq, described the consensus report as illustrating the gap between what the people of the world wanted and needed and what their governments were willing to do. "We cannot be proud of our achievements here," he said "They are too few and too insubstantial." What he left unsaid was that the five-week meeting was an exercise in futility and had actually nullified whatever good the 1978 SSD-I had achieved. The SSD-II need not have been held at all.

What SSD-II had set out to do was to give flesh and blood to the Final Declaration of SSD-I which had called for prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and warned that: "Mankind is faced with a choice: We must halt the arms race or face annihilation". What it ended by doing was to ignore the most important issue of providing any answers to the dilemma bedevilling governments and peoples, namely, the contradiction between arms race and development. In the words of N. Krishnan, India's Permanent Representative at the UN in New York, the conclusions of the conference failed to do even minimal justice to the depth of concern and anxiety felt by peoples all over the world at the prospect of the growing danger of a nuclear war. "The tragedy of this exercise in futility is that, having fooled ourselves, we are now trying to fool the world. But the cosmetics cannot hide the reality which lies behind."

It is ironical in retrospect that neither the Soviet Union's unilateral offer to desist from first use of nuclear weapons, nor the five-point 'action programme' enunciated by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, nor President Reagan's pious declaration that "we must not manipulate our people by playing upon their nightmares but we must serve mankind through genuine disarmament", nor President Brezhnev's acceptance of the concept of a nuclear freeze, were inducements enough for the participants to carry the international disarmament strategy evolved in SSD-I to its logical conclusion.

The inference is inescapable that while everyone shuns a nuclear war — "this new barbarism" as Indira Gandhi called it — the world community by itself is powerless to pressurise the United States and its Western allies on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other, to subject themselves to a pattern and guideline of discipline towards eventual arms reduction and control. The United States appeared to have taken the position that it would subscribe to a disarmament strategy but only on its own terms; the Soviet Union is willing to match American responses but cannot be expected to agree to unilateral disarmament; the French are even unwilling to abandon nuclear testing and feel that total nuclear disarmament and universal commitment to non-first-use as "Utopian". In other words, the nuclear-weapon producing states are only willing to talk about the need for disarmament without doing anything about it.

In such a situation, SSD-II was bound to fail. The tragedy, however, is that the developed world seemed to have known this all along and displayed a mawkish commitment to the SSD ideals and to have participated in it only to reiterate its positions. On the other hand, the developing world, exemplified by genuine peace-seekers like India, seemed to have placed too high ahope on the outcome of SSD-II and to have been naive enough to imagine that the majority of the world community could pressurise the minority.

And if India sounded so extremely disappointed and disillusioned at the outcome as to dissociate itself from the consensus document, it was because its perception is clear that the non-aligned and neutral and developing world is today at the mercy of the nuclear-weapon states, that the linkage between the arms race and development is too pronounced to be ignored and that there is even a stronger linkage between survival and the arms race. Indira Gandhi, West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, President Brezhnev, and French Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson warned against the East-West conflict being carried over into other regions of the world. "The non-alignment of the Third World countries has become a critical factor for stability and peace in the world as a whole," Schmidt said. Yet, SSD-II failed even to register an appeal to the nuclear-weapon states to consider the plight of the Third World. It failed to even issue a feeble call for the immediate stoppage of nuclear weapon production. Why?

It is worth quoting N. Krishnan. "We have failed because even that highest of priorities, the survival of mankind, has been a casualty *in the interplay of the narrow approach adopted by the powerful nations amongst us*. We have failed because for these states the *privilege that military power brings is more dear* than the special responsibility they owe to ensure world peace and security." (emphasis added).

So, attention must now turn to Geneva where the preliminaries to the START negotiations are being hammered out to ascertain whether there are any prospects at all for achieving a nuclear balance between the US and the Soviet Union. Perhaps, an SSD-III can even become possible if such a balance can be achieved. Meanwhile, there is no cause for countries like India to give way to despair. In advancing her five-point action programme, Indira Gandhi said she was raising her voice in the cause of peace. That voice must continue to be heard even more frequently and assertively, notwithstanding the fact that it fell on deaf years in New York. *(July 13)*

SPOTLIGHT

Communist Approach to BJP

ANALYST

THE Presidential poll campaign has brought out a significant development in the Indian political scene, and that is, the united stand of the Communists with the BJP in actively opposing Congress-I.

This development has an interesting history, and it is worth noting it at least to understand the arguments advanced on the Communist side for accepting such a strange bed-fellow as the BJP. Between the two Communist Parties, it is of course necessary to take into account that the CPI-M has never had any qualms about joining hands with the Jana Sangh (or BJP later) to fight Indira Gandhi. It has openly advocated an anti-authoritarian front which is to include BJP.

The only exception to this stand could be discerned when on September 18, 1979, the CPI-M General Secretary, EMS Namboodiripad, moved the resolution at the convention of six Left and Democratic parties which said: "The convention calls upon every other party, organisation and individual, even if they differ on innumerable other burning problems of the day, to come together and still further strengthen the unity against authoritarianism and communalism." This obviously meant that at that particular point of time, the CPI-M leadership felt the need to fight BJP simultaneously with the fight against Congress-I because in its understanding BJP is regarded as a communal party.

But the six-party convention did not last long and at its party Congress at Vijayawada (January 1982), CPI-M reverted to its call for a broadbased anti-authoritarian platform which of course includes BJP.

On this score, polemics were exchanged between CPM and CPI leaders. The Review of Political Developments adopted by the CPI at its Varanasi Congress (March 1982), made a critical reference to the CPM stand on this score:

"Earlier, influenced by national developments and efforts by our party, the CPI-M leadership agreed to leave BJP and confine united mass movements to only Left and secular-democratic parties. But now once again they have gone back and are trying to unite with BJP under the slogan of building a broadbased anti-authoritarian platform".

Officially, the CPI stand until then was that it would have no truck with BJP. There is however a minority opinion within CPI which has always preferred to go along with the CPM leadership on this issue. The first concession made on this score was that within Parliament CPI would have no hesitation in cooperating with BJP in attacking the Indira Government. The plea was that otherwise CPI would be isolated. What is forgotten is that in the past, as in the days of Nehru and the early years of Indira Gandhi, when CPI was a critic of the Government, it did not cooperate with, but demarcated itself from the Right-wing Opposition.

The first CPI collaboration with Jana Sangh came after the 1967 General Election when in the anti-Congress coalitions formed in Bihar, UP and Punjab, CPI could not resist the temptation of joining such coalition Ministries along with Jana Sangh on the rather fatuous plea that it could not ward off the mass urge; otherwise it would have been isolated. (Incidentally, this CPI hobnobbing with Jana Sangh in the coalition Ministries or 1967-69 has never been comprehensively reviewed by the same party leadership).

COMING to the present situation, it is to be noted that the CPI leadership in its Varanasi Congress review document (March 1982) characterised the BJP as "a rabidly communal, pro-monopoly, anti-communist, and pro-imperialist party, which is the spearhead of reaction in our country. We have to make all efforts to isolate it and fight its plans to extend its tentacles to newer sections of the people and newer areas." At the same time, a caveat was inserted: "it may be necessary to have to take a common stand with it on some issues." Significantly, the previous qualification that such common stand would be confined to the precincts of Parliament and legislatures was quietly dropped.

Equally significant was the formulation in an article published in the CPI central organ on the eve of the Varanasi Congress by its editor, Indradeep Sinha: "The CPI does not consider the BJP led by RSS to be an 'anti-authoritarianism' force. It is not only authoritarian but also communal."

However, in trying to refute the CPI-M charge that CPI regarded BJP as untouchable, Sinha conceded: "The CPI does not treat any party as 'untochable.' It cooperates with all opposition parties inside Parliament and State Legislatures. It cooperated with the Congress-I when it was in the opposition during Janata rule. It cooperates with the BJP now when it is in opposition. But such cooperation is strictly confined to the parliamentary sphere ..." (*New Age*, March 14, 1982). This condition that cooperation with BJP is "strictly confined to the parliamentary sphere" was, in less than two weeks, dropped at the Varanasi Congress where cooperation with BJP "on specific issues" — not only inside Parliament — was permitted.

The Varanasi Congress of CPI however saw a patchwork which perhaps tried to cover up differences within the party. The Political Resolution adopted at the very same Varanasi Congress warned that "in the coming period our party has to wage a sustained and intense struggle on all fronts against the forces of communalism, casteism and separatism, as an integral part of the struggle for the defence of India's sovereignty and integrity. Together with our fight against the anti-democratic and anti-people policies of the ruling party, our party has to carry out a sustained fight against BJP as a necessary part of the struggle for building up a Left and democratic national alternative."

What is strange and incomprehensible is that another Congress document (Review Report) permitted CPI to take a common stand with the very same BJP "on some specific issues" as mentioned earlier.

In the latest phase of CPI's policy acrobatics, this option of cooperation with BJP "on some specific issues" has been invoked to justify CPI's participation in the Opposition protest campaign against Haryana developments, in which BJP has figured prominently. In the latest issue of CPI organ *Party Life* (July 7, 1982), CPI leader Farooqi has justified a common stand with BJP on the Haryana developments, and specifically recalls the Varanasi Congress clearance for cooperation with BJP: "The Varanasi Party Congress had to take into account such specific situations developing and therefore laid down the guiding line to meet it." It is worth pursuing Farooqi's line to get at the logic behind this CPI cooperation with BJP:

"...while firmly adhering to our basic political position we have also to take into account specific situations coming up, where we cannot avoid the company of the BJP, in the course of struggle for defending the interests of people, and of the working class, and for preserving the norms and forms of parliamentary democracy."

And the very same BJP was characterised less than four months ago in the Varanasi Congress Political Resolution in the following gorgeous terms:

"The BJP has been gaining strength in different parts of the country. In addition to crass communal, caste and obscurantist appeal, it also demagogically exploits people's discontent with the economic policies of the Indira Gandhi Government to spread its influence and ideology. It is helped in this by the RSS cadres on which it is mainly based. It is also trying to spread its influence amongst the Harijans and tribals and other basic masses. A serious danger posed by the RSS consists in its steady infiltration among the youth and particularly the student community. The BJP relentlessly attacks the foreign policy of the Government from a pro-imperialist angle. The BJP represents the spearhead of Right reaction in our country and is rabidly pro-monopoly, pro-imperialist and anti-communist. It opposes takeover of wholesale trade and nationalisation of monopoly concerns in the name of so-called 'laborisation' and 'workers' sector'.

Incidentally, Farooqi's article chastised, and rightly, Governor Tapase's action in installing Bhajan Lal as Chief Minister. But it made no mention of Devi Lal's hooliganism in assaulting the Governor the next day: is it necessary at all for the Communists to make a wafer-thin distinction between Bhajan Lal's corruption and Devi Lal's goondaism? Had Devi Lal's brigade been firmly committed to democracy, would it have got disintegrated and a sizable chunk of it walked over to Bhajan Lal for the lure of heavy bribes offered? Was this not the opportune moment for the Communists at least to say: Plague on both your houses? Have the Communists in Haryana really gained in strength and influence by the participation of CPI and CPI-M leaders both at national level and at the State level in Devi Lal-BJP's "crusade for democracy" in Haryana?

The logic of CPI participation in the joint demonstrations alongwith BJP was not confined to Haryana developments: this cooperation on "specific issues" was next extended to the Presidential poll.

Although the Presidential poll marked a clear-cut political polarisation in the country, it is important to note that the Communists chose to remain in the company of BJP along with other parties not all of which can be regarded as even faintly Left and at least some of them have very feeble credentials to be regarded as democratic. It is important further to note that most of the regional parties from the DMK and AIDMK in Tamilnadu, through two groups of Akalis in Punjab to Sheikh Abdullah's National Conference in Jammu & Kashmir did not join the anti-Congress-I bandwagon, but CPI-M and CPI did.

Realising the hesitation and vacillations of CPI on staying on with BJP on such a major national issue, it was indeed a master stroke on the part of the non-communist opposition (and particularly BJP) to have put up CPI leader Hiren Mukerji as the candidate of the opposition combine to contest Congress-I nominee. It was another story that Hiren Mukerji was disqualified on the ground of his name being missing from the electoral roll, the significant fact to note is that BJP alongwith other opposition parties, put him up as their chosen candidate, which was obviously meant to pre-empt any second thoughts on the part of CPI to break away from a platform in which BJP was a leading light.

This tactic on the part of BJP and other Opposition parties worked, and CPI after Hiren Mukerji's disqualification, was willy nilly drawn to support the next choice, that is, Justice H.R. Khanna, whose official polling agency was given to a CPI MP.

It is fashionable in CPI circles to explain away this latest ganging up with BJP as just a temporary stand, not to be repeated in future. What is important to note is that the Presidential poll this year has been a highly political operation: because, parties of the Right like BJP were quite candid that they wanted the President to act as a curb on the office of the Prime Minister, and the Communists' sharing of the common platform with them would

(*Continued on page 31*)

FOCUS

USA and India: Conflict and Convergence

C.P. BHAMBHRI

With Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's visit to USA scheduled towards the end of the month, *Mainstream* has been carrying contributions on Indo-US relations. The first article appeared in last week's *Mainstream* (July 10, 1982) by India's Ambassador in Washington, K.R. Narayanan. This contribution is from the Chairman, Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Subsequent issues of *Mainstream* will carry more articles on this subject from different veiw points.

MANY social scientists and commentators have explained that the United States has not been able to maintain close and cordial relationships with India because our country is very close to the Soviet Union and Indo-Soviet friendship is responsible for our distance from the United States. This is a very facile explanation of the nature of relationship between the United States and India. The complexity of relationship between the United States and India can be interpreted and analysed in a framework based on an appreciation of the goals and interests of these two countries. Many contradictions and a large area of collaboration between India and the United States can be comprehended if the areas of convergence and conflict between these two nations are properly identified.

The United States is a global power and its foreign policy strategies and goals flow from its primary desire to maintain global hegemony. The Communist countries and some of the non-aligned nations are the only threat to the US objective of global domination and exploitation. The US foreign policy makers have evolved a complex network of alliances and strategies to meet the foreign policy decisions of the Third World non-aligned countries, and in this effort the US foreign policy makers have achieved many successes and they have tried to break areas of resistance with the help of military and economic power. Global domination cannot be a smooth operation, and the US Government has evolved many specific strategies to deal with post-colonial nation-states. The mutual relationships between India and the United States should be examined in the context of certain specificities and peculiarities of foreign policy goals of these two countries.

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THE basic postulates of India's foreign policy are the product of its anti-colonial struggle and a commitment to build a modern society. The Indian leadership had a clear comprehension that our economic development required international cooperation and they looked towards the United States for a positive contribution towards India's gigantic task of economic regeneration. Our economic planners did not opt for an 'open door' policy towards the industrialised countries, but they were very clear that a policy of isolation or autarchy would mean a perpetuation of under-development and poverty.

The foreign policy of India was an attempt towards a reconciliation between self-reliant national economic development and inter-dependent global reality. Such a balance between internal and external sources of development is difficult to achieve, but India's foreign policy makers accepted this as a challenge. In this foreign policy framework, India did not start its journey on an anti-American stance or posture. Professor S. Gopal's biography of Jawaharlal Nehru, Volume II, clearly brings out that the Indian leadership did not have any *a priori* hostility towards the United States. On the contrary, a very powerful pro-US lobby existed in the Congress party, in Parliament, in the Cabinet and in the bureaucracy. Jawaharlal Nehru made many appreciative statements about US society and leadership, and his first visit to the USA in 1949 was an attempt to show the importance that India attached to its relationship with the United States. Nehru's impressions of his US visit in 1949 were generally positive. Writing about the formative period of India's foreign policy, Nehru's biographer, Professor Gopal, observes:

> "But the fact remained that, whatever the theoretical premises of non-alignment, India was much nearer to Britain and the United States than to the Soviet Union. It was to the Western Powers that India looked for economic and technical assistance; and her political and trade connections were also mostly with them. So it was but logical that Nehru, strengthened by the Commonwealth connection, should be willing to explore the chance to develop direct relations with the United States."[1]

Professor Gopal refers to a conversation between Nehru and Krishna Menon where Nehru remarks, "Why not align with the United States *somewhat* and build up our economic and military strength?[2]

The initial positive response of the Indian leadership towards the United States did not last very long, and a few significant factors responsible for this may be identified.

The United States' foreign policy makers failed to understand the meaning of Indian nationalism and the nature of the Indian ruling class. India had won its freedom from British rule after a long struggle and its bourgeoisie was not a *compradore* class. The Indian bourgeoisie and political leadership of the national liberation movement had struggled to achieve control over the Indian market, and they were not willing to change their masters from the British to the Americans. The Indian bourgeoisie had an objective experience of British exploitation of our market. This was an integral part of their consciousness. This class wanted to develop the home market, and this could be achieved by a foreign policy of non-alignment, peace and self-reliant economic development.

Thus, three factors are primarily responsible for a conflict of relationship between India and the United States. *First*, the Indian bourgeoisie and its political leadership were objectively conscious of the potential of development of the Indian market, and its benefits to the Indian ruling classes. The US Government failed to recognise that India was not a small 'banana republic' and its ruling class could not be completely subservient to the US strategy of global domination. India was different from other Third World countries in terms of its historical development and class formation. The US Government required a specific new strategy to deal with India. Nehru observed: "...the United States Government had expected acquiescence...on all issues, and were unwilling to assist India for anything less".[3]

Second, India and the United States have different perspectives on problems of world peace, war and militarism. Since the end of the Second World War, the United States, as the leader of the world capitalist system, has relied upon its military power to protect and promote its global interests. Indian policy makers have expressed their opposition to the US policies of military alliances and military solutions to world problems. The reasons for India's opposition to the US policy of military intervention are very clear. First, Indian policy makers have argued that the policy of military solutions leads to competition for arms build-up. Any policy which leads to an acceleration of the arms race is a threat to peace. Second, India as a developing country has a vested interest in peace. Excessive expenditure on defence for India is at the cost of its economic development. A fundamental contradiction exists between expenditure on defence and the goals of economic development. If the global environment is hostile and military compettiveness is accentuated, every country would be compelled to reorder national priorities and spend more resources on military preparedness. India believes that neither military solutions can achieve peace nor can we afford to be involved in an arms race without sacrificing the goals of economic development. Thus India's opposition to the US policies of military alliances and bases is based not on moral postures or a sense of moral superiority but on the firm calculation that excessive expenditure on defence would hurt and retard our economic development.

Third, India has experienced that US foreign policy makers do not hesitate to exercise pressures in periods of crisis. During the Sino-Indian border dispute of 1962, Anglo-American pressure was exercised over India to settle the so-called Kashmir dispute with Pakistan. During October-November 1962, the Indian nation was in distress, and the US wanted to pressurise India for a settlement with Pakistan. The role of the USA during the Sino-Indian border conflict of 1962 has not been forgotten in our country, and the lesson is that during a crisis period the US is not a reliable friend or supporter. On the contrary, Indo-Soviet relationship is based on mutuality, reciprocity and confidence based on predictable reliability. The experiences of nations during periods of crisis condition their perceptions of friends and opponents in international affairs. India has experienced hostility from the US during periods of crisis. The US has always demanded a price for friendship from India.

To sum up, the one dimension of relationships between India and the United States is based on divergent perceptions and bitter experience. Further, the awareness of US pressures on India is a part of our national consciousness and their lesson is that the US believes in a policy of dictation and domination, and not in a policy of equality, mutuality and reciprocity.

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CONTRADICTIONS and conflicts between India and the US at UNCTAD, or GATT, or the Group of 77, or the supply of uranium for the Tarapur plant do not provide a complete picture of the quality of relationship between the two countries. India and the United States have many areas of close collaboration and cooperation which are as fundamental as the areas of conflict between the two countries.

India cannot build capitalism without estabilishing proper linkages with other capitalist centres of the world. Market economies of the metropolitan and peripheral countries establish close relationships to perpetuate the world capitalist system. It is correct to state that capitalism in the metropolitan countries has many areas of conflict with capitalism of the periphery, but these conflicts between developed and developing capitalism are resolved by broadening the areas of cooperation and collaboration.

The Indian capitalist classes want to exercise their sovereignty over the domestic market for the maximisation of profits, but the objective situation demands that they collaborate and compromise with the developed capitalist countries. The Indian capitalist classes do not want an 'open door' policy for world-capitalist penetration, but they also want linkages with international capitalism for development. This *'duality'* is the chief characteristic of the capitalist class of the periphery in its relationship with the meteropolitan capitalist class.

A few concrete facts would reveal the nature of linkages between India and the Western countries.

(*a*) India is the most important client of world imperialist institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The world capitalist countries consider India a stable and trustworthy market for investments.

(*b*) For the last twenty-five years the Aid-India Consortium has coordinated India's strategies of economic development.

(*c*) During 1980-83, India will receive five billion SDRs from the IMF under a special facility. This is the largest amount of aid extended by the IMF to any developing country. In return for the IMF assistance, India has willingly surrendered its economic sovereignty and has permitted officials of the IMF and the World Bank to sit with officials of the Government of India and scrutunise strategies of development.

(*d*) The world capitalist system has provided an umbrella to the Indian capitalist classes, and all important state capitalist enterprises and the private corporate sector have collaborative arrangements with international banks and multinational corporations. A few illustrations would reveal the generally prevalent picture.

(*i*) The steel plants, the heavy machine tool factories and petro-chemical enterprises in the state capitalist sector have financial and technological collaboration agreements with capitalist countries. Air India has been a beneficiary of loans from the capitalist countries. Only in 1982, Air India is raising a loan of 198 million dollars through the Lloyds Bank International. Out of $ 198 million, $ 110 million will be provided by the three Exim banks of France, West Germany and the United Kingdom and 88 million dollars will be arranged by Lloyds. This is the story of all state capitalist enterprises in India.

(*ii*) Big Business in India has established firm linkages with the world capitalist countries. Birlas, Tatas, Modis, DCM, etc, are beneficiaries of relationship with foreign investors. JK Tyre Industries Limited has a collaboration with General Tire International Co, USA. This collaboration between the Indian and American companies has facilitated the Indian partner to raise funds from the Export-Import Bank of the USA and Citibank NA, USA. The Zuari Agro Chemicals Ltd was established by the Birlas on May 12, 1967, and out of fifteen directors, six are Americans. A collaboration between the Birlas and the American firm is an important feature of the relationship between Indian and American capitalism. The Tatas have raised funds in the international capital market and with the International Finance Corporation, an affiliate of the World Bank. Coromandal Fertilisers Ltd of Bharat Ram of DCM has raised funds from the International Finance Corporation, Washington. Coromandal Fertilisers Ltd has a collaboration with Chevron Chemical Company, San Francisco. The Indian capitalist class has thus evolved close linkages and collaborations with the Western capitalist countries.

(*iii*) India has attracted multinational corporations, and they have been assured of profits and repatriation of funds. Dr S.K. Goyal and Nagesh Kumar have experienced difficulties in identifying the number of branches and subsidiaries of the foreign companies operating in India. Such an exercise has become difficult because foreign companies are diluting their equity to beat the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act. The Reserve Bank of India in 1972-73 identified 537 companies as FCRCs and 197 as foreign branches.[4]

The multinational corporations are permitted to raise funds in the Indian capital market, and if they are for hundred per cent export of goods, the Government of India extends full patronage and protection to them.

(*iv*) Specifically, the Indian capitalist class has established good contacts with the US monopolies, and US private investment in India is currently estimated at 500 million dollars. The trade turnover between India and the US was $ three billion in 1981. The Government of India and the Indian capitalist class are negotiating collaboration with the US private corporate sector in new areas like electronics, oil exploration and refining equipment, power generation, ship-building, food processing, auto industry, etc.

Radharaman Chakrabarti reaches the following conclusion in his study of *The Political Economy of India's Foreign policy*. He observes:

> "It is therefore significant that the principles of mixed economy at home and non-alignment abroad admirably complement each other in the efforts of the ruling forces to steer clear of the complications of an ideologically divided world.... The consensus at the national level therefore is in favour of a gradual transformation of the economy by the joint efforts of state and private enterprise with resources supplemented by foreign assistance coming from sources which may not interfere with this middle-of-the-road development strategy".[5]

Radharaman Chakrabarti misses the basic point, that is, the private corporate sector and so-called market economies have international linkages, a point which was observed by Lenin. 'The capitalist enterprise...inevitably outgrows the bounds of the village community, the local market, the region, and then the state".[6]

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THE foreign policy thrust of Indira Gandhi during the eighties is to establish India's pre-eminent position in the South Asian region. The policy of non-alignment, peace and self-reliant economic development, a Nehru package, is subservient to the basic goal of establishing India as a regional power. Indira Gandhi has a basic belief in *realpolitik* whose essence is amoral power politics. India and the United States are in contradiction in the South Asian region. The US Administration has its own interests in this region, and it is well known that India cannot be treated as a client of the US. Hence US foreign policy makers are concentrating on Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Indian Ocean to contain India from emerging as a pre-eminent regional power. Indira Gandhi is pursuing this foreign policy goal with great commitment. India's friendship with the Soviet Union is quite solid, and the USSR is not an obstacle in the way of our regional power status. Indira Gandhi has broken pro-Pakistan lobbies in Western Europe. The Government of India has bought arms from Western Europe, and it has encouraged West European capital to invest in India.

In 1981, the FRG accounted for 49.80 per cent of the total of Rs. 108.70 million new foreign investment approved by the Government of India. India has received Rs 2,250 crores either as grants or as soft loans from the FRG. The important projects aided by the FRG are the Singrauli power plant, the Neyveli Lignite Corporation, the Rourkela Steel Plant, Telco, and Trombay power station. British investment in India was about Rs 7 billion at the end of March 1974. This was against a total foreign investment of Rs 19.4 billion — about 36 per cent of all foreign investment in India. In terms of the number of collaboration agreements also, Britain maintains the lead. Out of nearly 7,000 agreements as at the end of 1981 as many as 1,717 or about 25 per cent were with the British companies.[7]

The British Government played a leading role in favour of India's application for loan to the IMF. President Mitterrand of France in his foreign policy statement identified three developing countries — Mexico, Algeria and India — for special treatment. The net result of these developments is that Pakistan has ceased to occupy a special position in the West European capitals, and India has emerged as a special favourite of these governments and the European banks. India it encouraged to raise commercial loans in the European markets. India has positive foreign policy linkages with the Soviet Union and the West European centres of power. The obstacle in the way of Indira Gandhi's new regional thrust is the United States, and this is a basic contradiction between the two countries.

This new thrust of Indira Gandhi's foreign policy is based on new demands of the Indian capitalist class. The crisis of Indian capitalism demands solutions, and one strategy to overcome this crisis is to encourage Indian capitalists to invest in neighbouring markets. The Indian capitalists are struggling to establish joint ventures in Africa and South-East Asia. About 125 Indian joint ventures are engaged in commercial production and they are repatriating profits. But their cumulative repatriation of foreign exchange earnings was only Rs 104.21 crores. The *Financial Express* in an editorial on "Joint Ventures" (June 10, 1982) observed:

> "If our enterprises have to emerge over a period of years as multinational corporations, the Government must give them all facilities in setting up and nurturing subsidiaries abroad and even limit their exposure to the market forces by involving governments of host countries in their growth. Our banks in various foreign countries must be asked to assist Indian ventures on a priority basis".

India's Joint Ventures

Name of Country	*No. of Joint Ventures*
ASEAN countries	80
African countries	41
Middle East	30
South Asia	20
Europe	19
USA	12
Oceania	3

Note: As on January 1, 1981.

The Indian capitalist class feels that its crisis can be resolved by entering markets of underdeveloped countries, even as junior partners of world monopoly capitalism. If this is the strategy of capitalist development, neighbouring markets in South Asia should be made hospitable for Indian investors. Thus Indira Gandhi's foreign policy goals have solid support from the capitalist classes. The United States is proving a stumbling block in the pursuit of such a foreign policy because the US would like to dominate and exploit the markets of Pakistan and Bangladesh. India and the USA are not able to establish a *quid pro quo* in South Asia. The result is that India's defence expenditure is growing, and it aggravates the economic crisis. If Indira Gandhi can succeed in establishing a working relationship with the US in South Asia, she would be very happy to do it. If she fails in persuading the US to her viewpoint and establish an identity of interests in the region, she will not hesitate to strengthen the military defence of India. Military pre-eminence in the region would create difficulties for the Indian economy, but in Indira Gandhi's calculations, means are not very relevant. The US also has an ambivalent attitude towards Indira Gandhi's aim of regional influence. US allies in South Asia have a very fragile social base, and military regimes in Pakistan and Bangladesh cannot provide a stability of power relationships to the US. Thus both India and the US have foreign policy dilemmas and these will persist in the eighties.

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An analysis of foreign policy is possible if interconnections are established among the various domestic and global factors, and a distinction is maintained between permanent factors and transient international episodes.

The United States has a solid base in India because the Indian capitalist class collaborates with international capitalism. But foreign policy cannot be reduced to vulgar economism of aid, trade and private foreign investment and technological collaborations. Basic economic interests of the ruling classes can be achieved only if foreign policy has a framework of power relations on a global scale. India and the United States are in a conflict situation, because both are competing for their respective zones of influence in South Asia. While the Indian policy makers view their goals in South Asia as legitimate, US penetration is considered an act of hostility. This is the area of contradiction in the foreign policy goals of the US and India. Since foreign policy does not operate at one level only, India and the US have many areas of collaboration, and both are searching for increase in cooperation. India could not have obtained the IMF loan, if the US Government had decided to really oppose it. Not only this. The second instalment of SDR 1,800 million loan was released by the IMF with the positive approval of the USA. □

FOOTNOTES

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1. Sarvepalli Gopal: *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography:* Volume Two (1947-1956): 1979: p 57
2. *Ibid*, p 57
3. Gopal, *op cit*, p 60
4. Nagesh Kumar: "Regulating Multinational Monopolies in India", *Economic and Political Weekly*, May 29, 1982.
5. Radharaman Chakrabarti: *The Political Economy of India's Foreign Policy:* 1982: pp 113-14.
6. V.I. Lenin: *Collected Works*, Volume 3, p. 66.
7. *The Economic Times*, Bombay, June 20, 1982.

Legitimacy and Change

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This is the reproduction of a chapter from the author's book, *Reflections on Our Times*, just released by Lancers Publishers, (Price: Rs 60). The volume is based on Sarojini Naidu Lectures 1981 which the author delivered under the auspices of the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University.

THE processes of social, scientific, technological, economic, cultural and political transformation do not carry within them an in-built chronology of change. One cannot, therefore, predict the time-frame within which certain changes will take place. All that one can assert is that change is inevitable, sooner or later.

Time as a measure of change also varies enormously. Twenty-four hours measure the time taken by the earth to revolve round its axis but it takes 365 days for it to go round the sun. Time taken by light to reach us from distant stars is measured in light-years. But when we come to human history and contemplate human destiny, we must have a different kind of perception for the passage of time. The biological and cultural evolutions of human beings are set in different time scales. In his book *The Ascent of Man*, J. Bronowski gives us a comparative time scale of the two evolutions:

> The history of man is divided very unequally. First there is his biological evolution: all the steps that separate us from our ape ancestors. Those occupied some millions of years. And then there is his cultural history: the long swell of civilisation that separates us from the few surviving hunting tribes of Africa, or from the food-gatherers of Australia. And all that second, cultural gap is in fact crowded into a thousand years....
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> It took at least two million years for man to change from the little dark creature with the stone in his hand, Australopithecus in Central Africa, to the modern form, *Homo sapiens*. That is the pace of biological evolution even though the biological evolution of man has been faster than that of any other animal. But it has taken much less than twenty thousand years for *Homo sapiens* to become the creatures that you and I aspire to be: artists and scientists, city builders and planners for the future, readers and travellers, eager explorers of natural fact and human emotion, immensely richer in experience and bolder in imagination than any of our ancestors. That is the pace of cultural evolution; once it takes off, it goes, as the ratio of those two numbers goes, at least a hundred times faster than biological evolution.

In a study conducted by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration of America, we have a rather dramatic presentation of humanity's surge forward towards knowledge. In a report published in 1966, titled *Assessing Technology Transfer* by R.L. Lesher and D.J. Howick, we have the following insight into the way we human beings have changed within a time span of some 50,000 years:

> Eight hundred life spans can bridge more than 50,000 years. But of these 800 people, 650 spent their lives in caves or worse; only the last 70 had any truly effective means of communicating with one another, only the last six ever saw a printed word or had any real means of measuring heat or cold, only the last four could measure time with any precision, only the last two used the electric motor; and the vast majority of the items that make up our material world, were developed within the life span of the 800th person.

In his book titled *La grande metamorphose du XXe siecle*, J. Fourastie presents to us another interesting way of contemplating human destiny:

> We may believe today, without speaking of the vanished races, that *Homo sapiens* has existed on earth for sixty to a hundred thousand years, and that the present state of the cosmos promises him a posterity of some several million years. Limiting the duration of the human phenomenon to a million years, we can estimate that we have lived perhaps a tenth of it and that nine-tenths still remain to be experienced. Thus the duration of humanity would be in a relation of 10,000/1 to that of the individual. Humanity today would be to mature humanity as the child of ten is to the old man. A thousand years of humanity corresponds to a month of individual life. In the life of humanity, we are ten years old. During our first five or six years, without parent or master, we were scarcely able to distinguish ourselves from the other mammals; subsequently we have discovered art, morality, law, religion. We have known how to read and write for less than a year. We built the Parthenon less than three months ago; two months ago, Christ was born. Less than fifteen days ago, we began to identify clearly the experimental scientific method which permits us to know a few realities about the universe; two days ago, we learned how to utilise electricity and build airplanes; we are a little boy of ten, brave, strong and full of promise; as of next year we shall know how to write themes without mistakes in spelling and how to do our arithmetic correctly. In two years we shall enter our last class of school, and we shall then take our first communion. In a hundred thousand years we shall attain our majority.

Perhaps I should explain why I am so obsessed with time and the changes which it has wrought in the way we human beings have lived on this earth. Our individual lives are small segments of time when measured against the time-frame of biological or civilisational history or the time taken by light to travel from distant stars. And yet each one of us wants a measure of fulfilment of our own dreams, of personal fulfilment or of the destiny of the society in which we live. But history does not move to fulfil our personal desires. Inevitably, we feel frustrated; we then seek refuge in magic, in *tantrism*, in astrology, in alcohol, video tape recorders, sex and godmen. There are thousand and one ways in which each individual can drown his sorrow and smother his frustrations. I have personally sought comfort in a different sort of way. And it is by contemplating human drama and the way it has unfolded through the evolution of human society. If one could discover some basic laws governing social evolution, we would then, perhaps, view our own individual lives differently. And not merely look at things differently but understand the dilemmas and perplexities of our time in a different way and seek to resolve the tensions between our personal aspirations and the limit imposed upon them by the historical reality.

If some of us are inclined not merely to contemplate our predicaments but also to do something to change the sorry scheme of things, a feeling for history might impart a measure of stability even to our individual lives. That is why I felt that perhaps a closer look at the history of our own times in this century might give us some interesting clues to our understanding whither we in India are going, seeing our evolution in the context of the wider world in which we live and in the midst of which we must work out our destiny. Let me then turn to the eight decades of our own century. We are not dealing here with the dim and distant past. I am dealing here with my own lifetime which began a year before World War I.

Let us cast our mind back to the opening years of this century. Only 80 years have passed since then. Let me recall the year 1901 and briefly survey the world as it existed then. Since the sun rises in the east, we might as well begin with the east and begin with Japan of 1901.

The Japan of 1901 was a product not only of its past but, more specially, of a specific period of that past. And that period began in the year 1868 with what is known as the Meiji Restoration. This historical period in Japan's history was, in its turn, the reflection of the tensions within it of an earlier period of Tokugawa Shogunate. Sometime in the middle fifties of the 19th century, Japan became conscious of receiving the attention of the United States of America. Earlier, Japanese intellectuals had learnt through the Dutch connection about great changes taking place in Europe. They also learnt about the activities of the European and, more particularly, the British traders in China. Japan had intimations of fear of being forcibly opened up as China was. The situation prevailing in Japan on the eve of Commodore Perry's arrival there is described by a historian, Professor Gubbins:

> The central authority was nominally vested in a shadowy personage in Yedo, whose exact relationship to a still more shadowy personage in Kioto it was not easy to determine. There was a feudal system under which the *daimios* ruled their own territories, or under Shogunate supervision, those of their neighbours, certain localities, including what were known as the Shoguns' dominions, being reserved for the direct administration of the Yedo government, and the central authority was exercised by means of Councils of State, and of a vast assemblage of executive and judicial officers. This central authority was weak, and growing weaker, an uneasy feeling was abroad, and the first sign of the troubles which culminated in the downfall of the Shogunate were beginning to show themselves. Clan jealousies and feudal restrictions hindered national progress in many directions, there was much distress and discontent, and the currency of the country was in a state of great confusion. Foreign intercourse was confined to the Chinese and Dutch traders visiting Nagasaki, and, when it was not Chinese, Dutch was the medium of intercourse with the outside world.

Commodore Perry's insistent knocks at the Japanese door created an extremely difficult situation for the Shogunate. Increasingly, the weaknesses of a system of government where the power rested with the *daimio* while the titular head was the emperor, began to become evident to all those who feared loss of Japan's identity. The *daimio*, who was described as the "barbarian-subduing Generalissimo" was incapable of protecting Japan from the barbarian knocking at its gate. Out of this realisation was born the rallying cry of *sonno-joi* which meant "Revere the Emperor! Drive out the Barbarians". Soon a movement took shape — a movement led by discontented young *Samurais*, with the object of saving Japan from foreigners and for reforming Japan, relieving it of the Shogunate and creating a new government with the Emperor as its head. In time, this produced the Meiji Restoration.

Thus began the building of a modern state of Japan, dedicated to the task of acquiring knowledge from the West and learning all that was to be learnt in the arts and sciences appropriate for creating an industrial society. All this happened in 1868. Instead of loyalties based on a feudal structure, the Japanese people began acquiring loyalty based on the concept of a nation. However, Japanese industrial transformation took place within the framework of a community based on authority. But that authority was throughout sustained by higher purpose. Within a short period of 32 years Japan grew sufficiently strong and powerful internally to challenge the power of the Czarist Empire in the famous battle fought in the Tsushima Bay in 1905.

The modernisation of Japan did not take place without a great deal of internal conflict between those who nostalgically looked to the past and those who looked to the future. A historian of modern Japan, Dr. McGovern, describes this conflict:

> ... the Military Bureaucrats were what might be called the Reactionaries, those who regarded the Restoration as a reversion to the past, who looked with suspicion towards ideas imported from the Occident, who regretted the downfall of feudalism, were uninterested in social reform, and

looked forward eagerly to Japan's expansion on the Continent of Asia, who desired Korea, Manchuria, and a large portion of China and Siberia. They pandered to the intensely chauvinistic spirit of the nation, and were somewhat impatient of the respect paid to treaties contracted with the Western Powers. This was the prevailing spirit of the large majority of the Daimio and Samurai, and in the oligarchy was chiefly represented by Saigo Takamori, Ooto, Soyejima and Eto.

The second party, or the Civil Bureaucrats, were those in favour of reconstruction or reform, the introduction of the culture, the efficiency, and the methods of the West. They were opposed to militarism and imperialistic expansion. They desired to foster education, industry and commerce, to codify the laws and to inspire scientific research. ... This section, which constituted the core of the new Government, and was the party which guided the ship of State through all the troublous waters of the early days, had for its leaders Kido, Okubo and later Ito.

While one admires the response of the new elites of Japan, of Satsumas and of Choshus, to their perception of national danger, the growth of industrial capitalism in Japan pushed it on the path of seeking an imperial destiny because of the unresolved conflict between the Military and Civil bureaucrats. The story of Japan from 1901 to 1946 is thus a story of a search for imperial destiny and its crash. Between 1868 and 1946, there is a period of less than hundred years.

The story of China is well known to Indian audiences. Between 1901 and 1949, China went through turbulence and turmoil in re-establishing its own identity on a basis different from its past even while that past hung heavily. Within a short period of 47 years, the Manchu imperial system was overthrown. Kuomintang under Sun-Yat Sen led China to a new destiny. However, after Sun-Yat Sen's death Kuomintang was severely tested for its legitimacy as a guardian of China's national honour. Under Chiang Kai-shek, the Kuomintang failed in the simple test. The custody of the national flag was seized by the Chinese Communists under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung. The final triumph in China under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party was a triumph of Chinese nationalism against Japanese imperialism. It was also a revenge against the humiliations suffered at the hands of the British, the European and the American imperialists. The special genius of Mao lay in establishing a nexus between the needs of China's national resurgence and the oppression of the Chinese peasantry by the feudal-cum-military landlords.

Further west of China, lay the vast sprawling Czarist Empire which received its first blow at the hands of Japan in 1905, that was also the year of the first Russian Revolution. World War I dealt an even more severe blow to the Czarist system of autocracy and generated that vast upheaval which goes under the name of the Great October Social Revolution.

World War I consigned to the limbo of history not only the Czarist Empire, it also obliterated the Ottoman-Turkish and the Austro-Hungarian Empires.

The remaining imperial systems carried over from the 18th and 19th centuries crumbled under the impact of World War II. The British Empire, over which the sun was never meant to set, finally crumbled. So did the French, the Dutch and the Portuguese Empires.

PERHAPS I should pause here to quickly look at our own country in the opening years of the 20th century. The British rule over India was firmly established. There were no intimations of any change coming over the scene despite a great deal of questioning generated by British liberal philosophy. Lord Curzon ruled with confidence and aplomb. The Indian National Congress was no doubt founded in 1885 but its approaches were prayerful. The band of dedicated people who founded the Servants of India Society referred to the "British rule as an inscrutable decree of providence, as though it were a permanent part of the political horizon". And yet there was questioning. There was questioning by Dadabhai Naoroji. There was questioning by Surendra Nath Banerji who had founded his Indian Association in 1876.

By 1905, things began to change rather dramatically. Two events — one internal and the other external — precipitated the change. The first was the partition of Bengal by Curzon and the other the victory of, what our people thought of as an Asian country, viz Japan, over a powerful European empire. Lord Curzon remarked: "The reverberations of that victory have gone like a thunderclap through the whispering galleries of the east". The partition of Bengal became an all-India question. Balgangadhar Tilak coined the word *Swaraj*. The word *Swadeshi* was also born. Vast meetings were held in Bengal protesting against the partition and for promoting Swadeshi.

In 1757, when the battle of Plassey was fought and Clive installed Mir Jaffar as the Governor of Bengal, historians have not recorded any stir in any part of India; even when the fiction of a sort of sponsored state in Bengal was terminated after the battle of Buxar and the British themselves became the real rulers of Bengal and Bihar, there is no record of any stir in India similar to the stirring among the Samurais of Japan on the eve of Meiji Restoration. However, between 1757 and 1905, Indian consciousness was gradually emerging. It became strong enough to assert itself sufficiently to cause the annulment of the partition of Bengal in 1911. Thus the British rule over India which seemed so immutable a part of nature in 1901 came to an end after barely 46 years of this century. And yet it must be recorded that Indian nationalism which asserted itself to annul the partition of Bengal acquiesced not only in the second partition of Bengal in 1947 but also in the partition of the Punjab. Quite obviously, our nationalism has still to acquire an inner consistency of definition, vision and purpose.

Irrespective of the theoretical frame within which change might be explained, the changes witnessed by the first eight decades of this century are uncontestable. These decades witnessed two world wars, the decline and fall of the Manchu Empire, the Czarist Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Ottoman-Turkish Empire, the British, the French, the Dutch and the Portuguese Empires. These decades also witnessed two revolutions — the Russian and the Chinese, and saw hundred and odd new states emerge in Asia, Africa, West, East and Central Europe, in the Carribbean, and in the Pacific Ocean.

While the dramatic changes which we have witnessed in our lifetime can be clearly perceived, it is by no means clear what precisely brought them about. There are of course historians working in Britain, who would have us believe that the British Empire, at any rate, came to an end when it had fulfilled its mission. And that mission was to bring the blessings of Western civilisation to the Oriental and African barbarians. The arguments are of course more sophisticated. But the essence and substance remains, presented in the language of Kiplingesque romance. Of course, imperial or post-imperial historiography does not quite fit in with the fact that even when the British Empire was visibly decaying during the closing years of the Second World War, Sir Winston Churchill, in defiance of historical process, declared that he had not become the Prime Minister of Britain to preside over the liquidation of the British empire. He did something even more pathetic. He sent a peevish telegram to the Viceroy Wavell on July 5, 1944 asking why Gandhi hadn't died yet!

As for France, efforts were not lacking on its part to re-establish its empire in Indo-China with the help of the British. So did the Dutch in Indonesia by means of that infamous police action in that country in 1949. It took a long time for France to withdraw from the little enclave of Pondicherry and it was extraordinary how a medieval Portugal resisted change in little Goa and, of course, in Africa even when mightier empires had fallen. And so, the mythology of West European empires vanishing from the face of this earth in fulfilment of their self-appointed mission wears thin even as a contrived mythology. Imperial systems had as their motive force greed, rapacity, plunder wrapped up in the false consciousness of glory and romanticism.

Amidst the vast and varied causes contributing to the disintegration of the empires in this century two are of decisive importance: the first relates itself to the explosion of consciousness among the people of this earth leading to the assertion of their national identities. The second cause is the loss of legitimacy of various imperial systems in the eyes of the people on whom these systems exercised dominion. I shall deal with the concept of legitimacy a little later. In the meantime, let us consider the factor of consciousness. The Western dominance over large parts of Asia and Africa generated the consciousness of identity whose systematic suppression further crystallised that consciousness. Thus millions upon millions of people across this shrunken earth have gained a new awareness of human destiny and the possibilities of improving their condition rather than passively accepting it.

It would be interesting to study the growth of human consciousness since we emerged as *Homo sapiens*. Human beings are by nature endowed with a capacity to observe, to correlate, and to connect things and to conceptualise. There is of course intuition through which one gains knowledge. However, I have often wondered whether intuition is not really the capacity of the human brain to extrapolate by processes as yet unknown to us but which operate on the cumulative knowledge lying dormant in some part of our brain.

The growth of consciousness is derived from valid knowledge on the basis of which we human beings act. Over the centuries, knowledge has gained both in its range and in its depth. Consequently, the growth of consciousness is the concomitant variable. Since our knowledge of nature as well as of society and even of ourselves has grown enormously during the last hundred years, it is not surprising that all this knowledge should affect the consciousness of human beings in general.

We do not have to go very far to study the phenomenon. I will recall only my experience of the days of my early boyhood. In our villages and even in our towns, the periodic outbreaks of cholera, smallpox, of plague, were attributed to God's wrath. It is no longer so. Even in the remotest villages of India people now know that there are ways of preventing or even curing diseases. People also know that crops can be assuredly gathered if one had a parcel of land which is irrigated and if one had the right seed, the fertiliser and the pesticides. This knowledge and the consciousness which it generates, is demonstrably of a different kind and order of magnitude than what existed in the time of our forefathers and even in my boyhood. The impact of such consciousness on the stability of social, political and economic systems in our contemporary times is palpable. Political arrangements, systems, structural designs in defiance of consciousness of human beings are apt to be fragile. Let us consider some of the arrangements arrived at by politicians and diplomats in recent times.

In 1955, there was a man called Noori Saeed Pasha who ruled over Iraq. With him as the cornerstone, there was built a structure called the Middle East Defence Organisation. It is fair to assume that the architects of this edifice must have thought the structure to be durable. The wide mass of Iraqi people did not. Within three years of the creation of the Middle East Defence Organisation, later christened as the Cento, the entire structure collapsed. And Noori Saeed Pasha met a tragic fate. Undaunted, politicians and diplomats gathered together, to create another structure — the South East Asia Treaty Organisation. That too vanished in thin air.

A long, cruel and prolonged war was fought in Vietnam. We were regaled by the Domino theory. We were told that the earlier French involvement and the later American involvement was to fight the phenomenon of Communism and we know how it all ended. The passionate concern of the people of Vietnam for their national identity was not understood. In Nigeria where I served as India's first High Commissioner from the years 1960 to 1964, I observed that the constitutional structure cleverly contrived by the British was artificial and fragile. It failed to take into account the factor of consciousness of various ethnic units of Nigeria. Within a short time that structure collapsed, and Nigeria went through a period of civil war. Undaunted by reverses in Iraq, in Vietnam, the politicians and diplomats were at the game again. They built an entire edifice of security around the person of the Shahenshah of Iran. The people of Iran, apparently, thought differently. And we know now what kind of fate befell the Shahenshah Arya Mehr and through what kind of travail Iran is passing. Successive attempts by Britain and then the USA to involve Pakistan in military arrangements by smothering Pakistan's internal political evolution had the predictable result — a break-up of those arrangements and internal upheavals. One can go on multiplying examples.

Once we overcome the benumbing effect of the word "Communism" on our thought processes and perceptions, we can see more clearly the motive forces behind what happened in Cuba, what is happening in other parts of the Caribbean, in Central and South America, and in Africa south of the Sahara as well as in the Horn of Africa. Everywhere waves of consciousness of identity of human beings are lashing against the existing social, political and economic structures and overflowing them.

Let me come back then to the concept of legitimacy of political, economic and social systems in our contemporary times. The Oxford Dictionary explains the meaning of the word "legitimacy" as follows: "Of a government or the title of a sovereign: The condition of being in accordance with law or principle. Now often, with reference to a sovereign's title: The fact of being derived by regular descent; *occas*, the principle of lineal succession to the throne 1817." Of course, legitimacy is not something *sui generis*. In order to be functional it, requires acceptance and acquiescence by the dominant power group in a society and acquiesced in by those sections of a society who are subjected to that power. And acceptance or acquiescence is a mathematical function of the level of consciousness.

In explaining the meaning of the world "legitimacy", the Oxford Dictionary refers to "sovereign" or to 'descent'. But the concept of legitimacy has an older history. In the time of the Mongols, the act of conquest itself conferred legitimacy. Years later, William, a conqueror who was himself a French bastard, acquired legitimacy by his conquest of England. The entire colonial system and the European imperial systems acquired legitimacy by conquests. In 1884, a handful of European powers sitting in Berlin could divide up among themselves most of the continent of Africa. Right up to the 19th century, acquiring right to dominate and to rule over peoples and territories by force and conquests was accepted as legitimate.

A major homage was paid to the increasing doubts about force conferring legitimacy by inventing ideologies to justify imperial pillage and plunder. It was called "civilising mission", "white man's burden," etc. etc. However, such ideologies began to wear thin under the impact of the rising consciousness of their national identities among submerged peoples. And out of it was born President Wilson's beguiling slogan of the right of self-determination which effectively undermined both the Ottoman-Turkish and the Austro-Hungarian Empires and raised hopes in India. When the institution of kingship arose in Europe and elsewhere, legitimacy was merely a function of descent, of being the legitimate son or daughter of one's father. In the course of the American War of Independence, this concept of legitimacy of a dynasty and of descent was fiercely attacked by Tom Paine in his famous pamphlet *Common Cause*. It might be worth recalling what he said:

> To the evil of monarchy we have added that of hereditary succession; and as the first is a degradation and lessening of ourselves, so the second, claimed as a matter of right, is an insult and imposition on posterity. For all men being originally equals, no one by birth could have a right to set up his own family in perpetual preference to all others for ever, and tho' himself might deserve decent degree of honours of his contemporaries, yet his descendants might be far too unworthy to inherit them. One of the strongest natural proofs of the folly of hereditary right in Kings, is that nature disapproves it, otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule, by giving mankind an Ass for a Lion.
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> Secondly, as no man at first could possess any other public honours than were bestowed upon him, so the givers of those honours could have no power to give away the right of posterity, and though they might say "We choose you for our head," they could not without manifest injustice to their children say "that your children and your children's children shall reign over ours forever." Because such an unwise, unjust, unnatural compact might (perhaps) in the next succession put them under the government of a rogue or a fool. Most wise men in their private sentiments have ever treated hereditary right with contempt; yet it is one of those evils which when once established is not easily removed: many submit from fear, others from superstition, and the more powerful part shares with the kind the plunder of the rest."

Tom Paine goes on to denounce the absurdity and the evils of hereditary succession which may not be inappropriate to recall:

> But it is not such the absurdity as the evil of hereditary succession which concerns mankind. Did it ensure a race, of good and wise men it would have the seal of divine authority, but as it opens a door to the foolish, the wicked, and the improper, it hath in it the nature of oppression. Men who looked upon themselves born to reign, and others to obey, soon grow insolvent. Selected from the rest of mankind, their minds are early

> poisoned by importance; and the world they act in, differs so materially from the world at large, that they have but little opportunity of knowing its true interests, and when they succeed in the government are frequently the most ignorant and unfit of any throughout the dominions....
>
> The most plausible plea which hath ever been offered in favour of hereditary succession is, that it preserves a nation from civil wars; and were this true, it would be weighty; whereas it is the most bare-faced falsity ever imposed upon mankind. The whole history of England disowns the fact. Thirty kings and two minors have reigned in that distracted kingdom since the conquest, in which time there has been (including the revolution) no less than eight civil wars and nineteen Rebellions. Wherefore instead of making for peace, it makes against it, and destroys the foundation it seems to stand upon.

The only way of looking at "legitimacy" in our contemporary times is to see to what extent, in a given social, political and economic system, it is capable of reflecting and responding to human consciousness in our times. No doubt, political democracy is a means of both acquiring and testing legitimacy. However, it is not sufficient. The continued legitimacy of a system can only be a kind of mathematical function of a large number of variables. These would include quantifiable socio-economic variables such as the extent and degree of economic satisfactions and dissatisfactions; it would also include non-quantifiable variables like the state of shared moral values in a given society and the extent to which the society allows human beings to feel a sense of involvement and not of alienation. In point of fact, the greater the material satisfaction of human beings, the more insistent would be the demand for moral satisfaction. All this testifies to the continuing validity of the cliche that human beings do not live by bread alone. Human beings as individuals and as aggregates search for and seek satisfaction of the hunger of their heart, of brain and of their body. This incessant yearning crystallises the moral universe.

I shall endeavour to state briefly the way I look at the moral universe. Though ethics and morality are still dominated by organized religion, I rather suspect that concepts of right and wrong, of good and evil, are being increasingly secularised in our contemporary times. At the dawn of human civilisation and more particularly after the birth of organised religions, religion did not constitute a separate domain but affected and touched every aspect of a human being's existence in society. Gradually, increasing areas of activity of human beings got separated through a process of secularisation. Thus it was that education got secularised. In course of time divine right of kings got secularised. Economics got separated and politics too. In the same way, we are on the eve of separating ethics and morality from the domain of religion. No doubt, this would entail a period of confusion and even anarchy but this is inevitable in a period of transition.

How then are we to look at the moral universe in the light of reason and rationality? I believe that there exists a moral universe side by side with the physical universe.

While the origin of the physical universe is a subject matter of investigation and debates among the scientists and, of course, among the protagonists of established religions, the moral universe has its origin in the constant tussle between the contradictory nature of motivations of human beings. It expresses itself as a tussle between reason and unreason; between selfishness and altruism; between intolerance and tolerance; between competition and cooperation; and between love had hate.

These contradictory impulses might have their origin in the genetic nature of the human species; or, in the thousands of years of experience of social living. But human nature has within it these observable dichotomies. I cannot recall who said it but it was well said that the difference between a saint and sinner was not that a saint never had sinful ideas but rather that having them he recognises them and puts a curb on them.

The gradual evolution of the moral universe finds expression in a series of ever closer approximation of social systems, value system, cultural systems, economic and political systems to that universe. If the balance between the negative and positive elements in human nature expressed in social terms had not been tilted in favour of reason, altruism, tolerance and cooperation, human beings could not have possibly survived. This is why some of the most perceptive minds who have appeared on the scene of history, sometimes in the garb of messengers of God, have prescribed the imperatives of the moral universe as a condition precedent to the satisfaction of humanity's material and spiritual needs. And they sanctioned the moral code in the name of God; they prescribed punishments and rewards by concepts of Heaven, Hell, the Judgement Day and by the assurance that when *dharma* declines and wickedness prevails, there would be a new incarnation of God to re-establish *dharma*, to punish the wicked and to protect the kindly and the decent.

If one examines the evolution of the moral universe, one discovers the causal connection between the concepts of right and wrong on one hand, and the need for social solidarity on the other. Societies which divided human beings between masters and slaves, between noblemen and clergymen and serfs had to yield to social structures based on wider solidarity. Liberty, equality and fraternity summoned up solidarity, corresponding to a new consciousness which asserted individuality of a human being against the rigidities of the feudal social order.

I believe as I have argued, that the essential condition for the survival of any system — political, economic, social, etc., — is its legitimacy. And legitimacy, in its turn, is a derived function of the state of the moral universe at a given time and place in the process of evolution of the human society.

Finally, I believe that human beings having attained knowledge of their social and natural environment, change has increasingly become a conscious process. It has become what might be called a secular process. It is not susceptible to prayer and supplication even if, at the individual level, prayer, supplication and meditation may help in producing mental stability.

One can of course look at the question of the need for solidarity from a variety of angles. We already have in our country a solidarity based on caste. *Varna ashram dharma* provided an ideological framework within which were subsumed thousands of functional and tribal groups arranging them in a hierarchy of rights and duties. Quite obviously, social and moral solidarity created by *varna ashram dharma* is inconsistent with a wider need for transcending the caste divisions. Consequently, any concept of right or wrong based merely on caste solidarity would be non-functional in our contemporary times. There can be a solidarity based on class. Karl Marx exhorted the workers all over the world to unite. And yet we know from actual experience that a sense of solidarity is not a disembodied thing. It operates within the framework of a given national tradition and national consciousness. The problem then, arises: How to ensure that there is no contradiction between a solidarity affected on the basis of class and national identity? We must explicitly recognise that for a long time to come in human history, the social and political systems cannot overcome historically determined consciousness which goes by the name of national identities. Unless I am seriously mistaken, this is the conclusion I draw from my observations of the problems of structuring societies on the basis of scientific socialism. The national question keeps on obtruding in ever new forms.

I hope I have succeeded in pointing out that the historical experience of social, economic and political changes which have taken place in the first eight decades of this century gives a new meaning to the old but still valid concept of legitimacy.

The concept of legitimacy is important not merely for social, political and economic engineering of various countries but also for fashioning stable and durable international order. I made a passing reference earlier to the fate of the Shahenshah of Iran. In terms of a classical definition of legitimacy, he was certainly legitimate in the sense that he was the son of his father. He sought to buttress that legitimacy by linking himself up with the memory of Cyrus the Great. In creating this mythology he spent vast sums of money. He thought he had also acquired legitimacy in terms of pure technology of economics. Certainly, Iran had impressive growth rates. Iran had no foreign exchange problem. And yet the Shahenshah of Iran could not give moral legitimacy to the Iranian political and social system. Increasingly, his intelligentsia and his people got alienated from him. And we all know the result.

There are of course diplomats who seek to impose upon the international order a state of repose. One could say with confidence that while such attempts might have partially succeeded between the years of the Congress of Vienna and World War I, they have hardly any chance of success in what remains of this century and after. And even after the Congress of Vienna there were critics who could see that the rather rigid point of view of Prince Metternich did not quite correspond with the realities of the situation. That very astute observer of diplomatic history, Harold Nicolson, has the following interesting things to say about another character in the Congress of Vienna drama, the British Foreign Minister, Castlereagh:

> The essential fallacy of Castlereagh's political philosophy was that by exaggerating the general need for 'repose' he sought to enforce static principles upon a dynamic world. Obsessed as he was by the long years of struggle against French militarism, he identified liberal thought with revolution and revolution with war. He failed to realise with sufficient clarity that an Alliance based upon the maintenance of the existing order could not preserve its unity in a Europe in which interests and ambitions were in a state of constant flux. He was apt to interpret the Concert of Europe in terms of the personal relations which he had himself established with the leading European statesmen, forgetting that politicians or monarchs retire, die, or change their moods. He refused to face the fact that both Metternich and the later Alexander were fundamentally averse from democratic or even constitutional thought and that whereas he desired to use the Grand Alliance to protect the small nations, they desired to exploit it for purposes of repression. Nor did he foresee that a system founded avowedly upon the combined strength of the Three Great Powers would incur the suspicion, and finally to hostility of all those Smaller Powers which had been excluded from the directorate.
>
> More damaging, as has already been indicated, was his indifference to, and even his contempt for, parliamentary and public opinion in his own country.

Harold Nicholson's analysis of Castlereagh's foreign policy assumptions are extremely relevant for our contemporary times. ☐

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At the Press Council 'Bar'

D.R. MANKEKAR

The distinguished journalist has completed writing his memoirs (1932-1980) entitled, *Sheer Anecdotage — Leaves from a Reporter's Diary*". The book is due to be published soon. *Mainstream* is reproducing a chapter from the book dealing with freedom of the press, by courtesy of the author. — *Editor*

IT came to pass that one day in 1973 S.K. Rao, editor of *The Searchlight* of Patna, a Birla paper, called on me with a strange request.

As editor of *The Searchlight* he had filed a complaint before the Press Council of India against the Government of Bihar. His charge against the State Government was that it had violated the freedom of the press by withholding advertisements and in other ways penalising his newspaper because it had been editorially critical of the State Government's policies and actions.

Rao wanted me to argue his case before the Press Council. He said his management had requested M.C. Chagla of Bombay to appear for his paper before the Press Council, but Chagla had, at the last minute, cried off. At such short notice, Rao could not think of any advocate at hand and decided to ask me to step into the breach.

Rao reasoned that a journalist conversant with the issues involved could argue better his paper's case before the Press Council than any lawyer who was unfamiliar with newspaper practices, conventions and concepts of press freedom. The Press Council Act permitted a non-lawyer to represent a complainant before the Press Council.

And thus began my practice at the Press Council bar. I found it fun, apart from being provided with an opportunity to strike a blow for freedom of the press and benefiting from the valuable experience.

The Government of Bihar was represented by its Advocate-General. I found him a most reasonable and courteous person. Realising he did not have a strong case, he first questioned the jurisdiction of the Press Council to entertain a complaint against Government. That argument was easy to dispose of.

Since it questioned the authority of the Press Council to entertain the case, the Chairman of the Press Council Justice Rajagopal Ayyangar took it upon himself to rebut the Advocate-general's argument and to underline the unqualified authority given to the Press Council by the Press Council Act to decide issues involving threat to freedom of the press arising from any source, not excluding the Government.

The Advocate-general then claimed that the Government had the inherent right to withhold its own advertisements from any party and that it did not amount to penal action against a newspaper by government. He contended that distribution of advertisements by the Government was governed by the financial budget available for the purpose, and that it was not practicable for the Government to proffer advertisements to every paper in the State. The Government had to exercise its discretion in the matter.

For a journalist who had listened to this argument many times before, it was all old hat. The Government of India, long ago, when Vallabhbhai Patel was Home and Information Minister, had laid down clear-cut guidelines on the subject, and therefore the Government could not act arbitrarily in the distribution of advertisements. I could therefore make mincemeat of that plea.

The Advocate-general himself was too knowledgeable to be serious in putting forth that argument. Nor did he seem to be very spirited in his advocacy. He did his duty.

It was easy victory for *The Searchlight*. The Press Council in its verdict duly censured the Bihar Government for its action in withholding ads from *The Searchlight* pronouncing it a clear infringement of freedom of the press. *The Searchlight* paid me Rs 1,000 per day for two days.

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AMONG the members of the Press Council listening to the proceedings and sitting in judgment on *The Searchlight* case was Narendra Tiwari, the proprietor-editor of *Nai Dunia*, the most influential paper of Indore.

Some six months later, *Nai Dunia* brought before the Press Council an unprecedented case. It was a complaint against the Chief Justice of Madhya Pradesh, P.K. Tare. *Nai Dunia* engaged me to argue their case before the Press Council.

Here was a Chief Justice, who, expected to defend and protect freedom of the Press, was found assailing that freedom and taking the law into his own hands, and then trying to bluff his way through it all! In the first place, Justice Tare made indiscreet statements in the sensitive sphere of India's foreign policy. In the course of a public speech at the Indore Rotary Club, he declared that the Third World War was inevitable; that India should become a super-power; that in the next war, India would overrun the whole of Pakistan, and the UN would be able to do nothing; and that India should have a navy strong enough to defend the entire Indian Ocean.

Nai Dunia reported the speech and in an editorial, took Justice Tare to task for making "half-baked and shocking" statements in that speech.

The Chief Justice was furious that the newspaper had dared criticise him in such terms. He charged *Nai Dunia* with maliciously misreporting his speech and took the law into his own hands and punished the paper through a secret order stopping all judicial advertisements to the newspaper. He behaved like a high and mighty feudal lord and demanded that the Editor of *Nai Dunia* should come grovelling to him and seek his forgiveness before the advertisements were restored to the paper. He even claimed that *Nai Dunia* had committed contempt of court by criticising a judge — and at the same time he also insisted that he spoke at the Rotary Club in his personal capacity and not as the Chief Justice of a High Court, failing to notice the contradiction between the two claims.

When the Editor of *Nai Dunia* filed a complaint before the Press Council, Justice Tare withdrew his secret order banning advertisements to *Nai Dunia* and then pleaded before the Press Council that the case should be closed now that the cause for the complaint had ceased to exist!

All these contortionist tricks were shocking conduct on the part of a Chief Justice of a High Court. On behalf of *Nai Dunia* I strongly objected to the case being closed at this stage. I insisted that unless the Press Council gave a clear-cut ruling in this case, it might provide a dangerous precedent which might be copied by other public personalities and authorities. The Press Council's ruling on this case should serve as a deterrent for the future in similar issues.

The case dragged on for several hearings, until the other side ceased to turn up when the case was next resumed.

The Press Council duly censured Justice P.K. Tare for his conduct against *Nai Dunia* in withholding ads from the paper and thereby infringing freedom of the press.

●

MY brief practising career at the Press Council 'bar' culminated with my arguing before the Press Council in the *cause celebre*, the Verghese Affair.

K.K. Birla sacked George Verghese from the editorship of *The Hindustan Times* some time in 1975. It was apparent that Verghese was sacked because of his outspoken editorials critical of the Government of India's foreign and domestic policies and of news reporting exposing corruption in high places. His dismissal amounted to violation of the freedom of the press and independence of the editor. But Birla had prevented the citing of the requisite evidence to be found in the correspondence between K.K. Birla and Verghese by denying Verghese the right to disclose the contents of those documents to the public under the Rules of Conduct that claimed confidentiality to correspondence between an employer and his employee.

Under the Press Council Act, as a responsible member of the public and a journalist, I had the right to take interest in the Verghese case. I filed a complaint charging K.K. Birla with constricting freedom of the press and independence of the editor by intimidating him through critical letters and ultimately dismissing him.

Subsequently, an ad hoc committee of *The Hindustan Times* editorial staff, also filed a similar complaint before the Press Council and engaged M.K. Ramamurthy as their Advocate. Frank Anthony, instructed by Dadachandji & Co., represented the management of *The Hindustan Times*.

The case dragged on for several months, thanks to the delaying and filibustering tactics of the respondents. As the latter felt convinced that they would lose the case, they resorted to every kind of dilatory method, including the familiar tactics of "if your case is weak abuse the man in the witness box"!

I also learnt from this as well as my earlier two experiences of legal proceeding that lawyers are not interested in ensuring justice but only in winning their case. It has been truly said that law has as much connection with justice as Shakespeare has to grammar.

I was astonished at the amount of cynicism, deception and hair-splitting that passes for legal arguments in proceedings where simple facts are deliberately sought to be clouded with extraneous matters and citations of legal precedents solely designed to confuse issues and miscarry justice, particularly when one's case is weak.

Frank Anthony's melodrama and feigned sense of outrage and shock was first class "theatre" worthy of a criminal lawyer in a criminal court but completely out of place at a hearing of the Press Council which was too civilised a place for that kind of tactics and where the audience are too hard-boiled to be impressed. Anthony even argued at one stage that the plaintiff's case against *The Hindustan Times* was nothing more than a bunch of journalists ganging together to protect each other's jobs in the present and in the future!

Frank Anthony however succeeded in his aim of frustrating the entire effort on our part by delaying the proceedings until the life of the Press Council Act came to an end and thereby preventing that body from delivering its verdict before it died. The Press Council was to expire in December 1975 following the lapse of the Press Council Act on that date.

It is interesting to note that about the time Birla was seeking to penalise George Verghese for his editorial conduct, Verghese became the recipient of the prestigious Magsaysay Award (1975). The citation praised the "intimate knowledge of the subject, combined with historical perspective" displayed by Verghese in his writings and stated: "Verghese practised journalism within these exacting criteria with a perspicacity matched by few of his colleagues anywhere."

K.K. Birla, proprietor of *The Hindustan Times*, decided that Verghese's kind of journalism was too courageous and hazardous for the proprietor's tastes and interests, and therefore Verghese should be got rid of. Verghese's forthright editorials and news coverage critical of the Establishment were disapproved by Birla as such a policy adversely affected his business interests and political ambitions.

The complainants pointed at the "gross impropriety" of Birla's action which, we maintained, was a clear violation of the freedom of the Press, and prayed that the Press Council should intervene in order to protect that freedom. We further pointed out that Verghese had in no way violated the editorial policy as laid down by the proprietor for him to follow in the conduct of the paper.

I invoked Section 14 (1) of the Press Council Act to secure the production of the correspondence exchanged between Birla and Verghese on the subject so that the facts that prompted the management to terminate Verghese's services could be made available to the Council as well as the public. I had no doubt that the correspondence would prove to the hilt the charge that Birla's action against Verghese amounted to a violation of the freedom of the press and independence of the editor.

The Press Council summoned Verghese to the witness box and called upon him to surrender the correspondence which Birla was strenuously trying to suppress and hide from the public.

The contents of the correspondence corroborated the charge that (a) K.K. Birla was subjected to and yielded to external pressure in deciding to change the Editor, in that different persons such as politicians and MPs had advised Birla that he should change the Editor of *The Hindustan Times*; and (b) the proprietor interfered in the day-to-day editorial conduct of the newspaper to the extent of instructing the Editor in regard to presentation and selection of news content of the paper. The letters revealed, for example, that Birla took the Editor to task for the coverage given to the court proceedings against S.K. Mody in the hoarding case; censured dispatches from the paper's Patna correspondent about Bihar Congress politics and references to the late L.N. Mishra; and "advised" the Editor on other matters.

Proprietorial interference in the day-to-day editorial conduct of a newspaper was bad enough. It was contrary to the norms laid down by the Press Commission. Tampering with the news content of a paper, as Birla seems to have done, was considered an even more heinous offence, as it violated the well-known jornalistic tenet: facts are sacred, comment is free.

I cross examined Birla for two hours to establish my contention that he was not qualified, intellectually and educationally, to instruct the Editor on his functions.

●

IN a persistent attempt to prevent the Press Council from adjudicating on the case before it, the Hindustan Times management at the outset objected to the Council entertaining the case on the ground that the Council lacked jurisdiction in a complaint against the proprietor of a newspaper on behalf of its editor. The Council overruled the objection and proceeded with the hearings on the complaints.

Thereupon the respondent filed a petition before the High Court of Delhi praying for a stay order against Press Council hearings in the Verghese case and challenged the Press Council's jurisdiction to hear the complaints, and for good measure, also made charges of partisan bias against journalist members of the Council and of prejudice against the Chairman of the Council.

A High Court Bench, consisting of the Chief Justice T.V.R. Tatachari and Mr Justice S.S. Chadha, rejected the petition and fully affirmed the Press Council's jurisdiction in the case and dismissed the charges of partisan bias and prejudice levelled against journalist members of the Council and its Chairman. The judgment was a classic whose *obiter dicta* serve as well reasoned guidelines to the press, the Press Council and the judiciary, and, as such, a landmark in the history of the Indian Press. The judgment was also unmistakably a moral censure on Birla's action in sacking Verghese. On the concept of freedom of the press, the judgment pronounced:

"Freedom of press is commonly understood as the freedom of expression of opinion, ideas, views, and information through the printed material and published for circulation; and free from interference, pressure, restraint or compulsion from whatever source, governmental or social ... The Press Council is to safeguard the freedom of press against threats of its violation originating from any source whatsoever. It is the Press Council which must preserve the liberty of press against insidious attempts constantly made to restrict, impinge upon or infringe. ..."

"Whenever there is infringement or impingement of the freedom of the press and independence of the newspaper, the jurisdiction of the Press Council is attracted.."

Of Editor, the judgement stated: "The editor is the living, articulate voice of the press and speaks through the paper. The value of the newspaper is in its contents, the selection of which is the sole and undivided responsibility of the editor."

And then again:

"The person responsible for the contents is the editor who controls the selection of the matter that is published in the newspaper. Thus the independence of the editor is included in the independence of the newspaper as used in Section 12 of the Act."

Of the proprietor-editor relationship, the judgment stated:

"The proprietors or owners of a newspaper are entitled, if they so wish, to lay down any partisan policy. The readers of the newspaper would know in advance that the particular newspaper is partisan. ... But once having laid down the policy, the editor has to be left to work independently within the framework of that policy."

Dealing with the proprietor's prerogative to terminate the editor's services the judgment stated: The proprietor is at liberty to exercise his right of 'hire and fire' by issuing to the editor notice in terms of the contract of employment or sever his relationship for any cause that seems to it proper "save only as a punishment or for discouragement of the editor's responsibilities and functions which relate to freedom of the press or independence of the newspaper. When this is done the jurisdiction of the Press Council is attracted under Section 12 of the Act to preserve the editor's freedom to maintain its independence."

The judgment points out: "The action of termination or dismissal may be legally correct, but at the same time it may constitute a threat to the freedom of the press. In such cases the Press Council may pronounce its opinion on the propriety of the termination or dismissal".

The judgment further states that if the editor travels within the boundary of the basic policy and any hurdles or checks are placed in the exercise of editorial control which relates to his freedom and independence then the jurisdiction of the Press Council would be attracted.

The judgment spelt out the role of the Press Council as follows:

"The Press Council has jurisdiction to find out the motive behind the termination of an editor's services and ascertain whether any improper or undue influence was being brought to bear on the editor in the discharge of his duties as an editor. The Press Council has jurisdiction to decide whether on the facts of the given case there has been any pressure on the editor subversive of the freedom of the press or violative of the independence of the newspaper in its context."

What constitutes infringement of Press freedom? The judgment answers the question:

"Any interference with the presentation of the news, views or comments or any attempt to suppress or constrain it would be impairment of that freedom. The selection of the news is the sole responsibility of the editor."

Spelling out the scope and impact of a verdict of the Press Council, the judgment states that the opinion of the Press Council acts only on the moral plane and it serves to inform the public and the parliament about the impropriety that has been committed. "If any undue pressure has been exerted on the editor and a pronouncement of impropriety is made by the Press Council," states the judgment, "it will act as a deterrent to undue pressures. Such expression of opinion by the Press Council will discourage or even restrain the others from similarly acting or proceeding, as through fear of being pronounced upon. It will dissuade others from infringing the freedom of the editor."

The Verghese case constituted a landmark in the history of the Indian Press for more than one reason:

—— This is the first instance in independent India of an editor paying the price of courageous journalism.

—— This is also the first time the editorial staff has banded together to stand by their editor on a matter of principle, at considerable risk to their own careers.

—— It is a classic case of proven proprietorial interference in the day-to-day editorial conduct of a newspaper and of affirmation by a High Court ruling that such proprietorial interference in the sphere of editorial functioning amounts to illegitimate and improper pressure and therefore to encroachment on freedom of the press.

—— The judgment establishes beyond doubt that in a newspaper the editor is the fountain-head of freedom and independence of the Press and that an editor cannot be sacked by the proprietor at his whim or fancy.

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MEANWHILE the Press Council had yet to pronounce its verdict on the main issue in the Verghese case, namely, the impropriety of Birla's action in terminating the services of Verghese for illegitimate reasons as established by the Birla-Verghese correspondence, and whether that amounted to encroachment on freedom of the press.

Birla's legal manoeuvres to avert the delivery of the Press Council's verdict intensified. A sense of urgency and piquancy was imparted to the entire proceedings what with the tenure of the Press Council coming to an end on December 31, 1975. Legal stalling for three and a half months was not difficult, and that was all that was needed to achieve Birla's objective.

No sooner the ink dried on the High Court judgment of September 22, 1975, Birla filed another petition in the High Court seeking permission to appeal to the Supreme Court against the former's verdict.

It was not until December 12 that the High Court could give its ruling refusing Birla leave to appeal to the Supreme Court.

On December 17 Birla filed another petition before the High Court now putting forward the plea that the Press Council could not pronounce opinion in the complaints before it in view of the High Court's earlier pronouncement that two members of the Council were biased against Birla and therefore, Birla claimed, the Press Council's deliberations were vitiated.

On December 19 the last working day before adjournment for Christmas, the High Court Bench consisting of Chief Justice T.V.R. Tatachari and Mr Justice S.S. Chadha, accepted Birla's plea and restrained the Press Council from proceeding further in the complaints against Birla.

Meanwhile, the Government promulgated an ordinance winding up the Press Council as an institution, whose tenure in any case was coming to an end on December 31, 1975.

Thus Birla's tactics won. It was a "photofinish" conclusion for a *cause celebri*.

Birla succeeded in preventing the Press Council from pronouncing an adverse verdict on him but could not avert the moral censure by the public against his action in sacking his editor that amounted to encroachment upon freedom of the Press and independence of the editor. For that matter, even the Press Council's verdict had no sanction other than moral.

The comprehensive *obiter dicta* pronounced by the Delhi High Court's judgment of September 22, 1975 unequivocally indicted Birla and articulated that moral censure beyond doubt.

Incidentally, while the Verghese case was on the tapis for over six months, one noticed a hunt among lawyers and judges for reliable and relevant literature on the problems and issues of the Indian Press involved in the case. The only book relating to conditions prevailing in the Indian Press available in the market was mine titled *The Press under Pressure*. It constituted a critical review of the history, performance and structure of the Indian Press and the Government's postures towards freedom of the press. For a few days, as I attended the High Court as well as Press Council hearings, I found almost every other lawyer interested in the issues involved in the case carrying a copy of my book. Passages from the book were cited by counsel on both sides, and by Frank Anthony too.

Another book much in demand among lawyers and journalists was the report of the American Commission on Freedom of the Press, commonly known as the Hutchins Report, so called after its chairman. It was then discovered that there were no more than three copies of the Hutchins Report available in the city of New Delhi — and the American Centre Library was not one of them. There was much bidding for the loan of my personal copy among the Advocates appearing on both sides of the case, particularly during the High Court hearings.

My brief experience of proceedings before the Press Council convinced me that professional lawyers should be kept out of the Press Council arena and the Press Council should dispense commonsense layman's justice. That would be cheaper, fairer and less time-consuming. For, a lawyer is not interested in ensuring justice but in winning his case, whatever its impact on the truth.

I am also more than convinced that at the head of the Press Council there should always be a judicial personality. preferably a retired Supreme Court judge, so that he may not be bamboozled or intimidated by the lawyer's "theatre", pyrotechnics and other tricks. ☐

The Chaos that is Admission

PURABI BANERJEE

YEAR after year it follows the same pattern, getting more nightmarish everytime. The heavy police bandobast and the plainclothesmen to prevent eve-teasing makes the campus lose its serene charm. The student-politicians contribute their share — dharnas, gheraos, demonstrations etc, etc. Yes I am talking about the incidents that seem to have an inseparable part of the admission scene. Anyone connected with the university or its colleges, would surely agree with me that it is much more enervating than the heat and dust of July.

Judging from the admission rush, the purpose of the 10+2+3 system has failed entirely. After all, wasn't an extra year in school meant to divert young boys and girls and to other fields after the senior secondary stage. If that had succeeded, only those interested in academics or a white collar job would have gone in for college and then university education. One might as well go back to the old system where a student spends eleven years in school.

To come back to admission, the university insists that merit should be the only criterion and a list put up from time to time, after which candidates are admitted on a first come first serve basis. But how is merit to be judged? An aggregate could mean little or nothing. A student who has secured 70 per cent with a distinction in Physical Education and Painting, is considered superior by this yardstick to another with 68 per cent with low-scoring subjects like History and or Civics. Is that fair? The thought probably struck the university authorities and in a press release (Times of India p. 3, June 22) they said that weightage could be given to marks in individual subjects, provided the admission-seekers were given prior notice. What, one might ask, is the use of such a statement at the end of June when the last date for submitting forms drew close? If the colleges had been told about this in time for a note to be inserted in the prospectus, such a notice would have served some purpose. A small point perhaps but worth considering. It is very difficult for those on the admission committee to convince irate parents (plus friends and relations) that the student concerned is not eligible for a particular subject in spite of an impressive aggregate, either because he/she has not studied the subject in school, or has not scored well in it. By the same yardstick, scores of science students who go in for subjects like Economics because it it open to more avenues since they have not been able to get admission in the science course of their choice, should also be screened in some way or other.

Holding entrance exams at least for the more popular courses, is not such a bad idea. IITs and Medical colleges have always held these tests and maintained a certain standard even though entrance tests to Medical colleges in Delhi have come in for a lot of criticism of late. If the tests consist of objective type questions and assess the examiner's intelligence and aptitude, those admitted would be well-adjusted to their courses of study, and not the type who have opted for a course just because it's 'in' or would help them to earn a lot of money in the near future.

Career orientation is an important thing, especially now with so much competition everywhere, but it is equally essential for a student to have the aptitude for the course which he is going to study. There could be no better way of finding it than through a test.

The other day I noticed in the papers that seats were still available in certain colleges whereas the more prestigious institutions have closed admissions. This elitism can be avoided if the university follows a more centralised policy of admission. Why not have the admission done at a central level (with committees made up of lecturers from various colleges) and then make the allotments to different colleges? Factors like distance should be considered and a student allotted an institution close to his house, so that he/she does not spend a couple of hours commuting everyday (never mind the all route bus pass). To avoid any favouritism such allotment should be computerised. I know students of certain prestigious colleges will find this shocking and point out that such a step will affect the high standard always maintained by their institutions. To put their doubts at rest, I have another suggestion, put forward by a friend who is not associated with the university and feels he can take a detached view of its functioning.

Certain colleges, he argues, are more well known than others, mainly because of good teachers (there could be other reasons also, like good libraries, laboratory facilities etc.). So year after year, students interested in a particular course, flock to these institutions, and those who do not get in feel disappointed. Since all colleges are under the same university, why can't a good teacher be sent on deputation to other institutions, or at least be invited to lecture (the latter is done quite often). A mutual exchange of teachers from time to time, would be a healthy step. While this would lead to a uniformity of standards, I'm sure teachers would take it up as a challenge. What is most important is that this should curb the elitist feeling, rather an unhealthy trend, that has prevailed in students of certain institutions for quite some time.

This is a long term measure. To be implemented it has to be discussed by the statutory bodies of the university and then pass through yards and yards of red tape. Till such time as it can be introduced, one can at least introduce a bit of centralisation. With the present system of a first list and a second list, and students applying in a number of colleges, a lot of confusion is created. While those with a higher aggregate check in their preferences before they finally decide, the less fortunate one's just cool their heels. It has been seen that quite often students take admission in one college while waiting for the second or third list at another (which had been their first preference). Getting one's fees refunded is quite simple, and they want to keep all their options open. While one cannot really blame them, one does have to go through a bit of paperwork — a futile exercise. And then there is the applicant waiting, hoping to get in. The whole process is like a chain reaction.

The university authorities feel that by opening new colleges or increasing seats in existing ones, they will overcome the problem at least for the time being. But this is not the remedy. If the rush to technical institutions like the IITs, Polytechnics or even the College of Vocational Studies, be taken as a pointer, job oriented education is what young boys and girls give priority nowadays. So if new colleges are opened, they should provide these types of courses, rather than the run-of-the-mill — type that are already there.

A major problem still remains. What should one do about the first generation education seekers, a majority of whom is out to have a gala time for three years, if possible hitch on to a politician's bandwagon (still better), and create trouble for everyone. One finds them everywhere, loud in dress and voice, bullying their way through and turning to their mentors when the situation gets too hot to handle. They come armed with letters of recommendation from MPs and refuse to budge till they are admitted. Perhaps this aspect of the problem should be referred to students to see what their viewpoint on the matter would be. ☐

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Indian Development

The perspective of Indian development is fast becoming a matter of crucial concern for the polity of the nation. Taking into account the need for serious discussion of the state of our political economy and the options before the country, *Mainstream* (March 20, 1982) published a contribution from a distinguished observer of the economic scene. This was followed by nine thought-provoking contributions (*Mainstream*, April 10, April 24, May 1, May 8, May 29, June 12 and June 19). Here we publish a contribution from an experienced administrator posted in a sensitive area, writing under a pen-name. —*Editor*

Is Politics to Blame for Failures?

V.M. MARIETHU

'A Student of Political Economy' has sought to discuss the state of our political economy and options before the country in the article 'Indian Development: Options and Choices' (*Mainstream*, March 20, 1982). It has been pointed out that the Indian economy has made substantial progress in the fields of agricultural growth and industrial development over the years; diversification of the industrial structure, absorption and development of new technology, the Green Revolution and marketable surplus in the form of overflowing silos are the achievements of planned development. However, India has not achieved what it ought to have achieved through economic planning. It is impossible to dispute his assessment that something had gone wrong in our process of development.

Can we attribute our failure to achieve the objectives set before the country to the role played by politics? Has 'politics' an important role in determining the course of economic development? The answer, I submit, is an emphatic 'no'.

Given the broad objectives of national policy, there can be a number of ways for achieving them. Our objectives are clear. Article 38 of the Constitution enjoins that "the state shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting, as effectively as it may, a social order in which justice, social, economic and political shall inform all the institutions of national life." According to Article 41, the state must make " effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement and in other cases of undeserved want." The Directive principles of state policy set forth in the constitution provide the base for the objectives enshrined in the various Plan documents and the social premises that give content and meaning to them. Growth, modernisation, self-reliance and social justice constituted the basic objectives of planned economic development in India over the last thirty years. Depending upon the exigencies of circumstances and the prevailing social and economic compulsions, these goals have been phrased differently in Plan after Plan. All the same, the core remained intact.

The objectives of the Sixth Five-Year Plan, which seeks to launch an assault on poverty and unemployment, are increase in production, modernisation of the economy, progressive reduction in the incidence of poverty and unemployment, and improvement of the quality of life of the people, redudction in inequalities, strengthening the redistributive bias of public policies, bringing about rapid institutional changes, etc. In other words, a progressive economy is to be built up to usher in a social order based on justice, offering equal opportunity to every citizen to lead a good life. In this the poor, the weaker and the less priveleged must constitute the target-groups. Those below the poverty line have to be brought above this line. All this means the adoption of a basic human needs oriented strategy of growth. Here two important features of the strategy need to be emphasised: increased production of food and increased employment. If production is to increase, demand must be there. If the demand of the poor has to be effective, they must have adequate income. More income has to come from increased employment. Employment is a function of investment and the technology adopted. Therefore, to help the weaker sections of society, employment generation is the prime requisite. For this, labour-intensive programmes have to be taken up to generate enough employment opportunities in the country so that an adequate level of sustenance is assured to one and all. The basic objectives are therefore the removal of poverty and unemployment. A 'socialist society' is our goal and this has to be achieved at any cost.

Anatole France once said, "My religion is to do good"; the same can be said of 'politics' also. Politics must do good; and politicians must always strive to do good only. If that be the case, politics cannot be blamed for our failure in the matter of economic development. The factors that immediately come to mind are the absence of an adequate data-base, insufficient in-depth and detailed studies about constraints to development, non-adoption of well-defined economic and spatial strategies, heavy population pressure, mal-distribution of assets, technological backwardness, etc. These factors are not in any way relatable to politics. 'Politics' of bureaucracy may share some responsibility for this.

There is no denying the fact that the achievements of the Indian economy in the last three decades have not been glittering.

We have built up an industrial structure; but not self-reliance. Our dependence on others for oil, fertiliser and chemicals, paper, iron and steel, non-ferrous metals, capital goods, etc, has been increasing. A recent study by Dr V.K.R.V. Rao indicates that the share of the secondary sector in Net Domestic Product in the first decade of planning fell marginally, though it increased subsequently. The proportion of the working force in this sector showed a significant fall from 12.6 per cent to 11.2 per cent over the period 1951-71. The structural progress shown by the changes in the share of the NDP is not reflected in the proportion of the working force. This raises a major question which is relevant in the context of our eagerness to reduce unemployment and accelerate employment-generation. Again, though domestic savings have increased rather fast, the growth of gross national product has not kept pace with this. The most important and critical sector of our economy, the agricultural sector, has not been as buoyant as it is made out to be. If performance of an economy is to be judged in terms of its capacity to feed its population on its own, we cannot claim much credit; for our food imports in the first thirty years of our 'independent' existence, we spent about Rs 8,000 crores. To cap it all, the 'unreported' activity in 1978 has been estimated at 49 per cent of the GNP. In 1982, this could be more than half of the GNP.

IT is pointed out that we have achieved a level of foodgrains production of 134 million tonnes in 1981-82. Our foodgrains production went up from 53 million tonnes in 1947 to 134 million tonnes in 1981-82. Recently we have been a little euphoric about achieving self-sufficiency in foodgrains. If we are self-sufficient in foodgrains, how de we explain the import of 15 lakh tonnes of wheat in 1981-82? The imports in 1981-82 are said to be the results of a fall in the buffer stock from mid-1979. How much are we going to import in 1982-83? We must ask ourselves whether we have actually turned the corner. We have all along been dependent on import of foodgrains to meet the requirement of the public distribution system. Our total foodgrains procurement during the period 1960-80 was about 135 million tonnes, whereas total distribution through the public distribution system was 197 million tonnes. The difference of 62 million tonnes must have naturally come from imports which amounted to 79 million tonnes during 1960-1980. Thus, apart from meeting part of the requirements of public distribution, import of foodgrains has helped us to build a buffer stock of 17 million tonnes. The total expenditure on account of foodgrains imports during 30 years after Independence is equal to the Plan expenditure for the country as a whole during the first three Five-Year Plan period.

During 1951-81, foodgrains production has grown faster than the increase in population. On the face of it, the growth of foodgrains production looks really impressive; but the per capita availability of foodgrains has not gone beyond 480 grams per day. Even the level of 480 grams of foodgrains was achieved only in two years—1965 and 1979. This is against what class 'C' prisoners are said to be entitled to, that is, 685.5 grams of foodgrains per day. This is the position after the advent of the 'Green Revolution'. The 'Green Revolution' in our country is only 15 years old. The new Agricultural Strategy was introduced in 1966-67. The impact of this strategy was felt for the first time in 1967-68, but this is restricted to selected areas and that too to one crop only, namely wheat. Wheat production increased from 11.39 million tonnes in 1967-68 to 16.54 million tonnes in 1968-69. Thereafter it has been a veritable march to new and newer heights of production. During the 12-year period 1966-67 to 1978-79, wheat production increased by 200 per cent, which is unheard of in any developing country. But a single swallow does not make summer.

What about rice? The per capita availability which was 159 grams per day in 1951 increased to 199 grams per day in 1981. This is after the area under HYV had increased from 2.5 per cent (of the total area) in 1966-67 to 46.5 per cent and the yield had increased from 668 kg per hectare in 1951 to 1338 kg in 1981.

The growth of foodgrains output has not been steady and a 3-4 year cyclical movement is discernible in the total output. For the period 1967-68 to 1981-82 the foodgrains production (three years' moving average) increased on an average by 2.42 per cent per annum. The population growth has been a little more than this. This makes it clear that increase in foodgrains production even during the post-Green Revolution era has not been vastly higher than the population increase. Thus we are now face to face with a wheat revolution which has lost its punch, and a rice revolution which is still uncertain.

India has a growing population. According to the projections made by the Planning Commission, by 2001 AD we may have a population of 940 million or 1003 million. If the latter figure is accepted, foodgrains requirement would be about 226 million tonnes. It has been pointed out by M.S. Swaminathan (in his 17th Sri Ram Memorial Lecture) that it should not be difficult to produce this amount of foodgrains. Prof Raj Krishna also is credited with the view that we have the potential to increase our food production three times.

One cannot, however, ignore the development context in which we are living. Population growth and food supply interact in a very complex manner. In our country, we have decided to get rid of the scourge of unemployment in a period of 10 years. Fortyeight per cent of the people are below the poverty line. Those in the lower 20 per cent of income groups spend up to 90 per cent of their incremental income on food products and 60 per cent of these increments on foodgrains alone. At the other end of the spectrum, only about 5 per cent of their income additions are spent on food. Thus the effective demand for food is determined by income distribution. An increase in income would lead to a decline in population growth. The last three decades of economic development has not brought down population growth. Maybe because the broad participation of the rural population in the growth process has not been significant. It is pointed out that "countries experiencing rapid economic growth where the participation of the population in general is very limited, have experienced relatively little decline in birth rates and population growth rates." Integrated Rural Development Programmes and Block Level Planning adopted in the country are designed to enlist popular participation. It is expected that popular participation would be forthcoming in an increasing measure. This should also substantially bring down the birth rate.

Given this scenario of foodgrains production and population growth, one cannot be complacent about the state of our economy. No doubt Dr. Swaminathan and Prof. Raj Krishna are optimists. But with the debilitating experience of dependence on foodgrains from outside, even after our much-proclaimed self-sufficiency and Green Revolution, one cannot be blamed if one shows a little pessimism. This pessimism is based on a number of considerations:

(a) Rapid increase in food production requires massive investment in irrigation. While the setting up of a Water Development Council may help planning, availability of funds for development of irrigation acts as a constraint.

(b) With the labour-intensive strategy of growth adopted now, the pressure on food supplies would mount.

(c) The increase in population has led to a decline in the land-man ratio. The per capita availability of land has declined. The pressure on land is growing and the law of diminishing returns naturally starts operating.

(d) As a country moves into the middle stage of economic development, the demand for agricultural commodities is bound to outstrip supply; this will push up prices and also increase the demand for imports (supported by political parties).

(e) Once the pace of industrialisation and employment generation is accelerated, the demand for food will rise sharply in both industrial and agricultural sectors.

(f) Rapid growth of per capita income for a large section of the population would push up the demand for food.

(g) Shift of income from developed to developing countries can increase per capita consumption of food.

(h) Rapid population growth leads to an increase in the labour force. Whether they have work or not, they have to eat. Transfer payments like unemployment doles may be necessary in such cases. Such transfer payments also increase the demand for food.

INDIA is a Third World country which has already developed a sound institutional base. The general assessment is that a growth of 3.5 per cent in foodgrain production and 6 per cent in gross national product should be possible on the base already built. However, the pecentage growth of industrial production has not been very high. The index of industrial production rose from 100 in 1970 to 149.5 in 1979, an average increase of about 5 per cent. Despite our claim to the tenth position among industrialised nations, a combined definition adopted by Sutcliffe suggests that we are not even an industrialised country. According to this definition, a country 25 per cent of whose GDP arises in the industrial sector, of which at least 60 per cent is in manufacturing and which has only one-tenth of its total population employed in industry would be counted as industrialised. Any country which does not satisfy these criteria would not. Power and transport sectors have failed to live up to expectations on account of planning failures.

We have been importing foodgrains for some time; but recently we have started importing vegetable oils also. Already a shift in the composition of agricultural imports is noticeable.

The growth of GNP over the years has not been spectacular. At 1970-71 prices, the growth of GNP and NNP (at factor cost) has been rather erratic. The per capita net national product declined over the previous years at least thrice in the last decade (in 1974-75, 1976-77 and 1979-80).

This, in a nutshell, is the picture of our economy now. This state of affairs has been brought about neither by monopoly houses nor by multinational corporations. The roles that large monopoly houses and multinational corporations play in the urban areas and large farmers with a marketable surplus play in the rural areas has also been discussed in the article referred to. It is feared that this would lead to what may be called export-dependent growth which has adverse economic, political and economic consequences. The dependence on the 'foreign' market, as opposed to domestic market, arises out of the high prices perpetuated. The domestic market could lift all that is produced only at a low price, that is, if the prices could be reduced. But such price reduction is possible only through a reduction in the cost of inputs including labour of import of sophisticated technology. Cost of inputs can be reduced only through massive subsidies; it is not possible to bring down wages because of a 'ratchet effect'. If the technology imported is labour-saving, it conflicts with the very objective of employment generation. It is here that the public sector can assume a crucial role. While the public sector can command all the finance and favours necessary from the Government, the experience in the last few years has shown that it cannot maintain the level of managerial efficiency expected of them. Also, the professionals in charge of these undertakings are not free to act on their own, hamstrung as they are by the rigmarole of government procedures and rules. In other words, the autonomy enjoyed by them is unreal. Consequently many of the enterprises in the public sector sustain large losses year after year. But that cannot detract from the contribution the public sector is capable of making in bringing about a socialist order. This has been briefly touched upon in an article recently published in this journal (Planning and Public Sector, *Mainstream*, February 27, 1982).

Here a word about monopoly houses and multinationals may be in order. They certainly can promote growth and development, given the climate necessary. One need not be scared of them. The multinationals cannot come in at their sweet will. Their operations in developing countries depend on the foreign investment policies of the host countries and the latter's requirements of foreign investment. Of late, multinationals are not very enthusiastic in going over to developing countries because of political and other reasons. They would rather confine themselves to the home countries, if that would suit them. However, technology and finance should be welcome in developing countries, if the multinationals are not on an 'exploitative spree' in the host country. They can promote and indigenise capital and operations within the broad framework of policies laid down by the host countries. As regards monopoly houses, they are naturally subjected to a series of regulations. There is nothing unusual about putting curbs on monopoly houses and multinationals. Even the USA, the biggest capitalist democracy, did introduce some anti-trust legislation to limit development of monopolies. The development strategy the Government adopts has to be necessarily dictated by socio-economic compulsions and the need to tackle problems like poverty, unemployment, inequality, etc.

Monopolistic capitalist development, it is pointed out, can give rise to concentration of economic power in a few hands. But ours is a modern mixed economy. Mixed economy is not 'capitalism in an oxygen tent'. And therefore the interest of the 'few' may not clash very violently with the interest of the many, as is assumed.

The Industrial Policy Resolutions lay down the policy governing the development of industry; what the private sector can do and to what extent this sector is likely to influence the pattern of development, etc. is taken note of. We are haunted by the theory of capitalist exploitation; but labour in India is organised; minimum wages have been fixed and conditions of work are settled, leaving no scope for ambiguity. It is perhaps the worker who is at an advantage vis-a-vis the 'capitalist'. The worker's rights are safeguarded and aggressive trade unionism tries to get more and more for labour. Every political party has its own trade union wing. But there is no legislation laying down the 'minimum work' to be done for a specified 'minimum wage'. While the rights have been laid down, perhaps the responsibilities have been left a little vague, particularly in the case of agricultural labour. Intimidatory trade union activities also have been reported from a number of places. But whether 'irresponsible' trade union activities have led to a decline in production or not is a matter for investigation. Responsible trade unionism and organisation of the poor and weak can get for the workers what is legitimately theirs, without giving rise to any class conflict. What is required is enlightened 'capitalism' and enlightened trade unionism and organisation of the weak and poor workers, avoiding extreme postures and militant politics. One has to bear in mind that labour cannot claim all the product. As Prof Samuelson has pointed out, labour is the only 'input that is human and can sweat, cry and pray'; and perhaps this quality places this factor of production in an advantageous position vis-a-vis other factors of production.

Where do we go from there? We are now living in a world which no economist predicted. One may have to concede that the Indian economy has not thrown up a lead sector, a sector where surpluses are generated that could be ploughed back for purposes of development. There is no doubt that agriculture has to bear the brunt of this responsibility. Agricultural development strategies can strongly affect income and employment in the economy at large. How strong their impact is would depend on the policies pursued. A study by Y. Mundlak had indicated that the major contribution of Japanese agriculture to the development of the economy was that of labour and not of savings as is generally believed. In our country, we are not short of labour; but can the experience of Japan be replicated? In a limited way, in some States agriculture has come up as the lead sector. Hard work coupled with substantial investment in irrigation, subsidised inputs, etc — fertiliser and pesticides — have converted States like Punjab and Haryana into the 'grain bowl' of India. Availability of adequate irrigation facilities of the right quality explains this phenomenon at least partly. A recent study by IFPRI (Research Report 20, Dharam Narain and Shyamal Roy) indicated that the amount of irrigation expansion called for in the Sixth Plan — 15 million hectates — would yield a 5-6 percentage point increase in cropping intensity or a 1 per cent increase per year in gross cropped area. This would lead to a 3.5 per cent increase per year in agricultural production.. If however tube-well irrigation is emphasised a 4 per cent increase is considered well within reach.

IT has to be seen whether the provision made for irrigation in the Sixth Plan is adequate. No doubt large farmers have benefited more than the small farmers. Obviously this has given rise to social tensions; still one cannot forget that it is the large farmers who generate surpluses. With the experience gained in the functioning of the economy so far and fully aware of the advantages that can accrue, if all the rural energy is harnessed, the Government has come out with a programme which is at once well-conceived and target-group oriented; the success of this programme would depend upon popular participation. This is the Integrated Rural Development programme announced by the then Finance Minister in his Budget speech of 1976. A massive attack on the problem of rural poverty and unemployment is the hall-mark of this programme. The idea underlying it is not new; it has a history of at least six decades in our country, if we refer to Tagore's rural reconstruction programme (Sriniketan) and Hatch's programme launched at Marthandam (in the old Travancore state) in 1921. There have been other programmes initiated later. All these programmes were followed by the Community Development programmes of 1952 under Government auspices.

However, it was only with effect from October 2, 1980, that all the 5011 development blocks in the country were brought under the Integrated Rural Development Programme. This programme is designed to take care of specified target groups like small farmers, marginal farmers, petty traders, etc. While this programme would transfer assets and skills, thus ensuring redistribution of income, another programme, namely the National Rural Employment Programme, would offer employment in the slack season. IRDP would help the poorest in the rural population and during the Sixth Plan about 75 million people (13 per cent) are expected to be covered. An amount of Rs 4500 crores (Rs 3000 crores from institutional finance and Rs 1500 crores from the Plan) is expected to be deployed to achieve this.

The number of unemployed has been increasing year after year. According to information given in Parliament, as late as April 21, 1982, by Bhagwat Jha Azad, Union Labour Minister, the number of job-seekers as per the live register has more than tripled over the period December 1971-December 1981. The number has gone up from 5.1 million to 17.8 million during this period. The Sixth Plan is expected to generate employment in standard person years by 34 million which would match the expected increase in labour force during the Sixth Plan period.

GROWTH in GNP is not enough; growth has to be supported by social consumption and the Minimum Needs Programme provides this support. This programme was introduced in the Fifth Plan period and is being continued in the Sixth Plan period.

The major thrusts of the Sixth Plan are towards fighting poverty and creating employment. The IRDP, NREP and TRYSEM are some of the instruments for achieving these objectives. The IRDP would enable 75 million persons in the rural areas to rise above the poverty line; another 6 million persons in urban areas would also be enabled to go above the poverty line. Under NREP, 30 million families would be benefited. This is apart from the employment created during the Plan period through investment in the various schemes under the Sixth Plan. Landless labour households numbering 6.8 million, will get house sities and another 3.6 million assistance for house construction. This is apart from social assistance of Rs 1070 crores being given for raising the economic levels of Scheduled Castes and Tribes.

All these are programmes for the poor. They have been taken up on a gigantic scale and on a priority basis only recently. The right lessons have been learnt; it has taken almost three decades for us to learn them. Better late than never is the adage.

What the Left in India could do, had they appreciated the logic of politics, has also been discussed in the *Mainstream* article referred to. What is Left and what is Right is essentially a matter of opinion. Right and Left can be looked at as two extremes of a Right-Left continuum and in the middle there is a patch of grey. There are different shades of grey, pale grey, light grey, dark grey, etc. Coming to economics, there are the radical economists and the conservative economists. The radical economists would say that the shares of national income going to workers and the 'capitalists' are largely determined by the relative power of the two groups, although relative factor supplies set limits within which the power exerts itself. Even among radicals there are the New Left and the Old Left. China and Yugoslavia present the two extremes in the Left movement, Russia positioning itself somewhere in between. In this vast medley of Right and Left, sometimes it becomes impossible to pinpoint what is White and what is Black.

It is debatable whether the problems of the developing countries are political or otherwise. The problems are: (a) increase in population, (b) social injustice, and (c) the advantages enjoyed by the advanced countries vis-a-vis the developing ones in matters of trade. Erik Dammaun is of the view that solution to the above problems does not lie in politics; it lies in a general change in attitude of the affluent nations and the people living therein and the rich in the developing countries. The rich must come forward to reduce their standard of living in favour of the poor. This change in attitude cannot be brought about by the political leaders. A beginning has to be made with the people who can contribute to the welfare of those who constitute the less fortunate majority. A humane society should be aimed at, not a society that reduces man to a consumer machine needing tranquillisers keep him intact or a society that strives hard to keep the people within its fold and prevent them from running away. Such a society is built on the basis of brotherhood and mutual consideration. Politics has hardly anything to do with it.

So long as there is no change in the attitude of people who are well-endowed, the state must strive to achieve the objectives enshrined in the Constitution. This would mean generation of employment for the educated, skilled, semi-skilled and manual workers, besides small and marginal farmers, petty traders and also the under-employed and the 'disguisedly unemployed'. But large-scale employment generation would lead to an increase in the requirements for foodgrains. Foodgrains production has therefore to be stepped up. This would call for higher investment in irrigation, fertiliser, etc, than hitherto provided for in the Plans. But all these programmes are to be organised on the ground by the administration. A strong, competent and clean administration alone can do it, keeping the national imperatives in view. The implementation of programmes for fighting poverty, creating employment and provision of minimum needs poses a challenge to their honesty and integrity. They should rise to the occasion. If they fail to do so, the programmes cannot be faithfully implemented and the targets set will not be achieved. Poverty, will not be reduced and unemployment can only increase. Can we blame 'politics' for such failures?

The Leftist and the Rightist parties are equally patriotic. In the ultimate analysis, they both aim at the good of the country. Ideology does not militate against unexceptionable national goals and priorities laid down. As in other areas of human activity, certain laws operate in politics also; Gresham's law of politics is one of them — bad people drive out good people. All this only points to the fundamental fact that it is the human being that is important. It is of little consequence whether he dons the mantle of politician or bureaucrat. ☐

WOMEN'S WORLD

New Lead for Anti-Dowry Campaign

ANJALI DESHPANDE

THE All India Coordination Committee to combat dowry has come into being, with the more meaningful name in Hindi as Chetana Manch. A large number of the Capital's women's groups with a couple of trade unions and student organisations, in a lively session in the NFIW office on July 7 planned a campaign to culminate in a march to Parliament on August 3.

Besides the National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW), Janwadi Mahila Samiti (JMS) Mahila Dakshata Samiti (MDS), All-India Women's Conference (AIWC), All-India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA), Delhi State Mahila Federation, All-India Coordinating Committee of Working Women, the AITUC, CITU, AISF, SFI and several individuals participated in the meeting. As the Hindi name Chetana Manch aptly suggests, the platform will take on the task of consciousness-rearing among the people. For long, several women's groups have been fighting against dowry in their own way. Chetana Manch is to be seen as a beginning of their united action, says Vimala Farooqui, Secretary, NFIW, supported by Pramila Dandavate, President, MDS.

Only a few months ago after a lot of persuasion and discussions, a couple of neighbours could be drawn out to support a demonstration against a family where a bride had been burnt to death. Neighbours still consider it more expedient to be on good terms with the family that is alive than to be on the side of a woman already burnt to cinders. Persistent efforts to effect a change in attitudes have now started showing results. In Gulmohar Park and nearby Safdarjung Enclave, people from the locality have shown more initiative lately in taking up such gruesome cases of bride burning.

The criminal callousness of the police is harder to break. After a long press campaign against the evil, and a protracted movement by women, one had to sit for four hours in the police station to get an FIR lodged in the case of Chandramohini Saluja who had died mysteriously while holidaying with her advocate husband in Simla. Yet the first stage in instituting criminal cases looks ridiculously easy when compared to the difficulties encountered in getting the accused convicted. The abetment to suicide case, which provides for as hard a punishment as a murder case, is so hard to prove that according to Additional Commissioner of Police Nikhil Kumar, only in one such case related to dowry death has a conviction been possible throughout the country.

The toughest fight yet to be put up is with the parents of daughters eligible for marriage. It is amazing that men who have been sufficiently put to shame and earned ill fame with the death of their wives, with criminal cases against them, out on the strength of an anticipatory bail alone, have been able to remarry with handsome dowries. Daughters are such unwanted creatures in our society that they are handed over to the first suitor that comes their way without a single thought given about their future well-being. After listening to the current uproar against dowry deaths, after reading the tragic case of one bride reduced to ashes a day, if parents can scrape together a dowry to satiate the lust of future in-laws of their daughters, what sympathy do they deserve?

It does not end with the wedding itself. It is a continuing phenomenon of gifts extracted on certain festivals and other occasions. Whenever a demand is made the parents have to pay with the hope of buying a few days respite for their daughter. Such misplaced affection ends up in her live funeral. It does not occur to the parents that had they spent all this money on her education in some vocation or invested it on her behalf she would perhaps have been better off than being subjected to daily insults in another man's house. Jobs are not easy to find and for women it is a harder proposition, yet a wedding without a guarantee of the basic right to live is hardly worthwhile as an alternative. To make the latter acceptable, the very roots of social mores have to be assaulted and reversed. Marriage and motherhood are not the necessary ends of a woman's life. This has to be grilled into everyone's head including the young girls themselves.

Only when dowry no longer remains a matter of pride inviting competition among neighbours and relatives, a status symbol after which every mortal hankers, then the evil can be eliminated. Dowry should acquire the status of immorality enough to make anyone hang his head in shame at the very mention of it. There are miles to go for this ultimate end but the pace of the march shows a slight quickening. The fight for more stringent law has begun; a private bill awaits discussion in Parliament. More amendments are being sought.

Chetana Manch marks an important endeavour at coordinating and federating the isolated fights of various groups that agree and disagree on many points, that have worked together spontaneously and have generally lent a helping hand to each other.

As yet we are a long way off from bursting into ostentatious and not-so-ostentatious weddings with anti-dowry slogans, not yet in a position to make and maintain inventories of dowry given, but we are in the process of acquiring the strength and legal sanction to do it. It is the administration's job but unless public pressure operates on it the unholy alliance of a somnolent administration and a lethargic police force will not work—especially when it is being paid to be lethargic. The third of August March to Parliament is not to be the end of Chetana Manch, it is to be yet another milestone in women's fight for the most fundamental of human rights — the right to live and live with dignity.

Most organisations that participate in such meetings enthusiastically promise support and mobilisation. Ultimately it turns out that they were banking upon two or three of them to bring along the masses while they themselves are content with sending in a couple of representatives, their banners not forgotten to cash in on the publicity. (One such pitiable exercise, incidentally, was the Anti-Asiad 82 demonstration where the police actually outnumbered the demonstrators and the demonstrators themselves were hardly double the number of participant organisations.)

No doubt there have been impressive demonstrations of mass support to a cause. The Mathura rape case movement was one such. Small street-corner skits, though shoddily produced and badly enacted, extensive leafleting, small group meetings culminated in an impressive rally in the older part of Delhi. A large number of casual observers were also compelled to join by the sheer momentum of the rally. But a vast reserve of organising skills and well-handled publicity efforts went into its planning.

In this context a suggestion by a prominent activist, to set up a sub-committee that would visit areas in which the participant groups claim influence and check on mobilising efforts could be regarded as commendable, emanating as it does, from a sufficiently long experience. Though it may have the effect of putting off several interested groups, it need not be really ignored as it was at the July 7 meeting, but should be given serious thought as to whether a long list of organisations and unions with a record of unenviable fanfare is preferable to a small committee of fewer groups but more sustained and dedicated efforts. In the long run it is the sound of marching feet that makes itself heard, not that of loud trumpets. ☐

July 12

COMMUNICATION

Corruption and Electoral Process

I agree with almost all that C.N. Chitta Ranjan has written in his article "Corruption: Who Is to Fight It?" (*Mainstream* May 15, 1982). I do not find any substantial difference between his approach and mine which he has summarised in that article.

His answer to the situation is "in organising public opinion, especially among the exploited majority, to rise against corruption and its practitioners." My concrete suggestion is to provide for the people's right to reject all candidates and parties through the election process. He has correctly referred to the implications of my suggestion, that "it is a question of educating the voter, and strengthening his/her will to register resentment." He further remarks, "It is true that if it happens it will bring about a sea-change in the atmosphere, for it will then not be a choice of the lesser evil as those who cast their votes see it but an assertion of popular will not to allow undesirable groups to hold office and fatten themselves and their kind." But he considers this "an exercise in fantasy" in the present situation. I do not think so. Both our suggestions refer essentially to mass education and mass mobilisation. Hence they are nearly similar.

I agree that tinkering with the electoral system is not the answer. What is required is a shake-up in the electoral process. All the attempts that have been made for electoral reform so far are only tinkering with the problem, whether these are attempts by different political parties or independent groups including the Tarkunde Committee and the Chief Election Commissioner. The term 'electoral reform' evokes a very passive, inarticulate and insipid impression on our minds because of its history during the last thirty years. Merely increasing the limit of permissible expenditure, reducing governmental interference and some more facilities for candidates and parties, even governmental assistance, will not help tackle the malady. The disease is much deeper, and a feeling is growing that none of the parties has the answer or is capable of giving the answer in the current socio-economic conditions and in the prescribed limits of the process within which they have to function and fight electoral battles.

While Chitta Ranjan admits that elections do form the most important pillar of democracy, he considers that the "rot begins elsewhere" which he specifies as "in the primary and secondary schools, in the universities, in the 'temples of learning'." He correctly says that "there is corruption in the education system, which affects and shapes future rulers even if it serves little purpose so far as the vast poor millions of the country are concerned". The question is: From where has the rot set in and how is it to be removed?

I am reminded of what Acharya Vinoba Bhave had said many years back, that if education is set right, everything will be set right. Vinoba Bhave was asked who would set it right. At that time a non-matriculate was Education Minister for University Education in one of the most populous States in India. The Education Ministers in the States do not know much about education. Now in many States even Chief Ministers are not aware of what education is or should be. Their main interest lies in the selection, posting and transfers of teachers and prescribing books for different classes in return for bribes from publishers or authors. Rate of bribe is fixed for each appointment, posting and transfer and this rate increases with increase in inflation. The teacher plays a part in the elections of MLAs and MPs. So they try to get such teachers appointed who belong to their caste or can influence voters in their favour. Villagers are afraid to complain in writing against bad teachers. The teachers do not teach well and want posting in or near their own villages so that they can look after their personal and family interests. But no action can be taken against the teacher because he has the protection of the local MLA or Sarpanch. In this process honest and hard-working teachers suffer.

This climate is prevalent in almost all educational institutions. How can such schools and educational institutions produce model citizens? With every succeeding election — Panchayat, Block, District, Assembly, Parliament — this deterioration has steadily increased. The prevailing political climate and electoral process have infected the so-called 'temples of learning' with all their malpractices and the subverted value systems. The toughs and wielders of money-power-control the educational institutions, and all of them have political protection.

Vinoba Bhave wanted total absence of governmental interference in education. This is only a hypothetical proposition now. Many of the private institutions are gradually being handed over to the Government because private bodies do not have the required finances and are unable to pay new UGC grades, etc. So all institutions become directly dependent on the Government for grants, etc. Promises are made and favours shown by persons in political authority on the basis of the help a person, family or group gives in the election process at different levels. Any attempt to catch and punish the corrupt and the inefficient is frustrated by approach to the MLA, MP or Minister who cannot afford to say 'no' to any request by the voter or vote-bank operators. Today, education is different from what it was in olden days. Now it is totally regulated and financed by the Government. The character of the Government machinery, and especially of the political authority which controls the Government, affects the character of education.

When I emphasise the importance of the electoral process, I do not mean that everything is solely dependent on it. But what I assert is that it is the determining factor in the Indian situation. It is not so in the developed economies. We cannot isolate any social, economic and political activity from the effects or aftermath of the electoral process. That, being the dominant determining factor, sets the pattern of social attitudes and economic and political behavioural norms. No rectification process can be effective unless the electoral process is rectified. All attempts at reformation and rectification get rocked on this. If we try to trace the source of any evil or corruption we soon come to the point where we find that all evil and all corruption get protection from the political authority, from the lowest to the highest level. Just as Government has permeated all walks of life, in the same manner evils indulged in the electoral process have permeated all sectors of social, economic, educational or political life. Norms and values for society are set by the electoral process. Politics affects everything. Politics, political leaders and political parties are no more independent agents to set norms, values and standards. They are subservient to the evils and corrupt practices of the electoral process. The process which brings success always becomes a model to follow in other walks of life. So the rot does not set in from the 'temples of learning' which are subject to the rot in the value system in the all-engulfing electoral process.

I agree that this rot cannot be set right 'by law or pious declarations' as 'experience shows that it cannot'. I further agree that "B.K. Nehru's proposals for a total overhaul are as unrealistic as the latest suggestion for committees and codes." I totally agree that 'the answer is to organise public opinion, especially among the exploited majority, to rise against corruption and its practitioners. For such mass awakening and action will mean redemption, if not in the short run, at least in the long term."

While referring to my proposal for positive rejection of candidates/parties, Chitta Ranjan has rightly commented, "Again, it is a question of educating the voter and strengthening his/her will to register resentment." I do not think there is any basic difference between his answer ('to organise public opinion') and my suggestion for "educating the voter to register resentment". My suggestion gives a concrete shape to the object against which public opinion is to be organised and which has come to be the centre point of rot in the present system as practised in India. This is specifically so for the exploited majority to rise against corruption and its practitioners. In India, Governments are formed by people's votes. There is an overwhelming percentage of voters who are exploited and live below the poverty line. But by their vote they elect a Government which exploits and oppresses them. Can there be a better focal point against which people should be aroused and organised? If he considers the prevailing climate 'doubtful' for this, it should be the duty of all of us to create such a climate, "for only such mass awakening and action will mean redemption, if not in the short run, at least in the long term", as he has rightly emphasised. I would assert that this proposal needs to be pursued "even if such a course upsets elections and electoral calculations of our parties, including the Left. This proposal may seem an "exercise in fantasy" but it seems to be the only realistic approach which I arrived at after talking and discussing with at least 200, 300 persons at various levels from the poor, landless worker, labourer, rickshawala, driver, clerk and others. Those who do not have a vested interest in the present socio-economic culture should take it more seriously and discuss it.

There are reports that even during the recent mini general election, some villagers in Bayana and other constituencies have refused to vote. So the climate for the proposal is not hostile. The situation seems to be ripe. What is required is a national debate, and arriving at concrete strategies which can reflect the people's frustration and anger with the present system, preferably in a constitutional and peaceful manner. If it cannot be found, the time may soon come when the question will have to be answered: Why should the present system survive? If instead of electing mediators who will mediate in the interest of the people, they become another layer of corruption and goonda power and become a source of exploitation and oppression, the democratic logic of the electoral system is knocked out.

My basic parameter has been the democratic multi-party system when people should feel involved and continue to have faith that it is they who can shake the system by their active participation and struggle in the direction of egalitarianism. The suggestion is open for discussion and suitable constructive modification. Most of the political leaders and parties are so much engrossed in the game of power through number that it becomes difficult for them to calmly ponder over and shake the electoral process. So it becomes the duty of the democratic elite, irrespective of party labels or groups, to discuss and find out necessary changes which may strengthen the democratic ethos of the people along with the system.

Krishan Kant

New Delhi

Spotlight

(*Contd. from page 6*)

certainly imply in the public mind that the Communists subscribed to such a concept of the Presidents' role. It would be unconvincing if the CPI leadership underplayed the political significance of this presidential poll contest: in fact, this has been the most politicised presidential poll campaign since the one that took place in 1969 when Giri defeated Sanjiva Reddy. To discuss this as only a common stand on a specific issue and not a platform amounts to semantic quibbling.

The question that persists in the mind of many a supporter of the Communists is that if they were keen on putting up a candidate in the presidential poll as a means to put across their point of view, would they not have gained if they had put up their own candidate independently? With the fore-knowledge that the Opposition candidate had little or no chance whatsoever of winning the presidential poll, would it not have been better for the CPI leadership to set up its own candidate in a symbolic contest and not let Communists be mixed up with the other opposition parties including BJP?

While the CPI-M position is is clear, namely that it would support any party that would oppose Indira Gandhi, CPI is caught in the coils of the anomaly of its own creation: it denounces BJP as the most pernicious element in Indian politics, but at the same time, has been trying to join hands with it to fight Indira Gandhi. The alibi of cooperation on 'specific issues' is wearing rather thin. It looks like a fig leaf which can hardly preserve politicle-ideological chastity.☐ (*July 14*)

Inside Israel, War Maniacs are Denounced

MARION WOOLFSON

This report from inside Israel, published in **New Statesman** *(July 8, 1982) reveals that powerful voices inside Israel have been courageously denouncing the ghastly war mania of Begin, Sharon and Co.*

ISRAEL's latest war has provoked more internal criticism than anything the country has experienced before in its thirty-four year existence. In part, as the western press has reported, dissent has taken the form of mass demonstrations — in Tel Aviv on July 3 as many as 100,000 marched to protest against the invasion of the Lebanon.

More significant than such head-counts, however, is the depth of the protest movement, which now spans Israel's entire political spectrum. More than ever before, the fundamental tenets of Zionism are being questioned.

For years, Polish-born Professor Israel Shahak, who was in a Nazi concentration camp as a child and is Professor of Organic Chemistry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and chairman of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, has been mounting a lonely campaign against the 'Nazification' of Israeli society. As a result, he has been ostracised by many of his academic colleagues. Now, however, some of them are saying — also publicly — that he was right.

Even before the invasion of Lebanon took place, the dissenters were holding press conferences, buying advertising space and writing letters to the press, and now they are becoming increasingly out-spoken — and desperate. At one press conference, on June 14, Professor Yeshayahu Leibowitz, a world-renowned expert on Judaism and one of Israel's most brilliant scholars, used the term 'Judeo-Nazi' to describe current Israeli Government policies. 'We have already done what Hitler did in his first six years in power,' he said, adding that, if the right to self-determination of the Palestinians continued to be ignored, there would be 'periodic slaughters, internal disintegration and decay.' There were only two options, he believed: either to fight on to total destruction or to partition the country between the two peoples.

Challenged on the subject of Palestinian terrorism, Professor Leibowitz pointed out that Israel's present Foreign Minister was a member of the Stern gang who had murdered the UN mediator in Palestine, Count Bernadotte. At the same press conference the famous Israeli poet, Nathan Zach, spoke of Israel's 'final solution' to the Palestinian problem; he also said Israel had become 'ugly and barbarous' and, looking at its leaders, he was beginning to feel doubts about the justification for establishing a Jewish state.

More than two months ago, on April 25, Professor Abraham Wasserstein wrote, in a letter to the independent daily *Ha'aretz*, that, as an Israeli who had been born and brought up in Germany and whose parents and sister had been murdered by the Nazis, he was aware that mass genocide did not happen overnight. It had begun in Nazi Germany with 'spontaneous' attacks on individual Jews, and 'German professors did not stand up and say they were ashamed of being governed by gangsters'. He added that he was ashamed of having a government 'that did not punish Jewish terrorists who attacked Arabs and which 'uses the Holocaust as a counter in its political haggling and calumniates those who disagree with it as anti-Semitic.'

Professor Wasserstein concluded: 'I want to be able to say to my grandchildren that we did not keep quiet like those "good" Germans. And I therefore, ask you to publish this letter while we still have a free press.' *Ha'aretz* printed a number of replies supporting his letter which was also published in the *Jerusalem Post.*

One development which has caused Israel's ultra Right-wing Government much concern has been that officers who have served in the occupied territories have been publicly condemning what they describe as 'widespread and official brutality and violence'. At another press-conference, organised in May by the recently resurrected Peace Now movement, Major Benny Barabas from Tel Aviv and a number of other officers said it was now legitimate to treat Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza with extreme cruelty. Reservists, they claimed, were ordered to shoot at and beat up people. A captain called Neria spoke of 'repression, humiliation, maltreatment and collective punishment.' Inhuman behaviour had become legitimised, he said: 'Soldiers are sent into (Arab) villages in the middle of the night. They drag people out of their homes, concentrate them in groups and assault them'.

Lieutenant Shuki Cohen said that, to the settlers in the occupied territories, 'Arabs are filth and even the settlers' small children speak in those terms.' Settlers have been 'entering (Palestinian) houses, beating people up, smashing their property and running riot'. Comparisons were made with Nazi treatment of Jews, 'Soon,' said Lieutenant Rami Avni 'we will be lining all those people up against a wall and shooting them'.

Now, in a move which has caused further shock-waves in Israel, reservists who have just been demobbed after fighting in Lebanon have denounced the invasion and the "appalling suffering inflicted on the civilian population'. At a demonstration in Jerusalem on June 27 in which 800 people took part, Professor Yehoshua Porath said the war had been unnecessary because the PLO had observed the ceasefire for a year. The Government, according to Professor Dan Meron, has been 'disseminating lies and misinformation' in order to justify the invasion.

For the first time in Israel's history, women have inaugurated their own protest movement with a gathering in Jerusalem of 200 women dressed in mourning who sang protest and peace songs. The dissenters are still comparatively few in number, but the fact that they are giving voice as they are, and in the middle of a war, is likely to have as big an impact on the long-term future of the Israeli state as the immediate fate of the PLO in Beirut. ●

French Left and Israeli Aggression

SCHOFIELD CORYELL

THE Israeli invasion of Lebanon — and the daily spectacle on millions of TV screens of smouldering ruins, flaming buildings, streets strewn with corpses, fleeing refugees — has finally punctured the complacency of the French public. The anti-Socialist right-wing opposition and the conservative Jewish establishment have predictably and vociferously sided with the aggressor, while the social-democratic Government, after much hesitation, has denounced the invasion and is using its influence diplomatically to seek a negotiated political solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Given his strong pro-Israeli leanings, President Francois Mitterrand — who imprudently visited Israel several weeks after the annexation of the Golan — was at first reluctant to condemn the massive violation of human rights and international law that Israel committed when it launched its US-equipped Army on a holy war to crush the Palestinian resistance, whatever the cost in Arab and Jewish blood.

At a press conference early in June, Mitterrand tried at first to evade taking a stand, but was almost forced to do so by insistent questioning from a Lebanese journalist who succeeded in eliciting from the embarrassed President a faint disapproval of the Israeli invasion, which he put on the same level as the presence of the Palestinian and Syrian armed forces as so many infringements of Lebanon's sovereignty.

Since then, as the invasion continued and the Palestinians refused to collapse, Mitterrand and the Socialist Party have put teeth into their policy statements, condemning the aggression "unreservedly" and calling for recognition of the Palestinians' right of self-determination, including the right to statehood.

This attitude — strengthened by the fact that Lebanon, once part of the French colonial empire, still seems to have some claims on the French "conscience" — found expression in the first French-sponsored UN resolution, vetoed by the US, that called for an immediate end to hostilities and the withdrawal of foreign troops from the Beirut area.

Then the French and Mexican Governments, that last year took a joint stand in support of the Salvador resistance, got together again to put forward a proposition — a "working paper" — that repeated the terms of the original French UN resolution on Lebanon, but went further with the intention of "striking at the roots" of the Israel-Palestine problem. It affirmed the Palestinians' right of self-determination and called for "mutual and simultaneous recognition" by the parties in conflict — Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO).

This Franco-Mexican working document was the basis of a second French-sponsored UN resolution in mid-June. Meanwhile, a high-ranking French Foreign Office diplomat was dispatched to the Middle East to meet the various Arab and Israeli leaders and push what has become the "French line". This now consists of advocating a "just" settlement involving both the re-establishment of Lebanese sovereignty and the enhancement of the standing of the PLO as a political, rather than a military, force.

The reaction of the Israeli authorities to the French role has been one of unmitigated hostility, while the "moderate" leadership of the PLO, mainly Yasser Arafat himself, has displayed keen interest in the French propositions. The situation is thus a paradoxical one for the Socialist Government, which has been frequently criticised by the Arab Governments and the PLO for its partiality to Israel.

The French position was reinforced, a few days after the publication of the Franco-Mexican document, when a highly-respected member of the French Jewish community—former Prime Minister Mendes-France, who officially ended the lost French war in Indo-China some 28 years ago — joined with two other international diaspora figures, Nahum Goldmann (founder of the World Jewish Congress) and Philip Klutznick (US Commerce Secretary under Carter and honorary president of B'nai B'rith), in an appeal for an end to the Israeli invasion and a negotiated peace between Israel and the PLO. Their appeal also called for "mutual recognition" by the PLO and the Israeli Government.

This initiative, scorned by Israel, was immediately welcomed as a positive move by a leading PLO spokesperson, Issam Sartawi, who said it pointed to a way out of the deadlock.

The proposition of the world diaspora was flatly rejected by the Jewish establishment in Paris. The CRIF (Representative Council of Israelite Institutions) described the diaspora initiative as a set-back to the cause of peace in the Middle East because it gave the stamp of approval to the PLO and thereby allegedly encouraged "terrorism." In an interview over the Luxembourg radio, Alain Rothschild, President of CRIF, claimed that the PLO "by its hatred of Israel, had always been opposed to peace between the countries of the Middle East."

The political clash between the Jewish establishment and progressives or liberals within the 750,000-strong Jewish community in France has been lively in recent weeks. More and more Jews in every walk of life are disturbed by the increasingly horrible acts of aggression committed against the Palestinians and Lebanese by the rulers of Israel. Thus, the CRIF rejection of the diaspora peace initiative was immediately answered by a declaration of a hundred prominent Jewish intellectuals. These denied the right of the CRIF to speak in the name of the entire Jewish community.

A dramatic expression of this growing critical spirit within the Jewish community was a demonstration by hundreds of Jewish progressives in mid-June before the Israeli Embassy in Paris at a moment when the Israeli Foreign Minister was present as the invited guest of the French Government.

The call to the demonstration expressed the anguish of the signatories in the face of the "massacres in Lebanon and the sacrifice of Lebanese, Palestinian and Israeli lives to absurd dreams of grandeur and power." It declared that their "attachment to the future of the state of Israel" made it impossible for them to endorse the Begin Government's policies of "death and conquest that nothing today can justify".

Among the sponsors were an impressive number of Jewish intellectuals — philosophers, scientists, writers, historians — as well as several new organisations of progressive Jews, such as the Association of Left-wing Jews, Combat for the Diaspora, Renaissance of the Progressive Jewish Press. In recent months, all these groups have been doing their best through meetings, demonstrations, petitions, ads and articles in the press — to counteract the impact of the CRIF and the Jewish establishment.

At the June 16 demonstration before the Israeli Embassy, members of these groups carried a banner that summed up their message: "The Rights of the Palestinians Are as Sacred as Those of the Israelis". Such views are far from being universally accepted among French Jews and a noisy, belligerent group of Right-wing Zionist counter-demonstrators — almost as numerous as the demonstrators — were on hand to shout insults at the progressives. Some blows were even exchanged and the police (who seemed quite impartial, for once) dispersed demonstrators and counter demonstrators with equal firmness.

Later the same week, progressive Jews organised a press conference in Paris to give their guests of the day — leading Israeli doves Uri Avneri, President of the Left nationalist Sheli movement, and Matty Peled, retired General and current President of the Council for Israeli-Palestine Peace — a chance to give the French press and public the standpoint of the growing minority inside Israel that rejects the Begin Government's policies of expansion, repression and war.

"Ordinarily", said Avneri, "the opposition in Israel kept quiet, or even supported the Government, while military operations were actually under way. Now, for the first time, they are daring to protest publicly during the war. They are a minority but one that is bound to increase." The massive peace demonstrations in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem a few weeks later showed that he knew what he was talking about.

Avneri and Peled both pointed out that without the full support of the US Government, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon would have been impossible. "The Israeli Army is completely equipped by the US and dependent on that country for spare parts", explained Avneri. "Just before the assault, Foreign Minister Sharon went to the US to get Washington's green light for the operation."

That invasion, he continued, was part of an overall Israeli plan designed to crush once and for all the infrastructure of the PLO and at the same time set up a puppet government, a pro-Israeli military dictatorship, in Beirut itself. It is a plan that Avneri had revealed in detail in his newspaper two months before the invasion took place. The first act of the invasion, he explained, was the murder of the Israeli Ambassador in London. That murder, which provided the pretext for the invasion, was carried out, he said, by "enemies of the PLO and the Palestinian cause."

The press conference of the Israeli peace leaders was given wide coverage in the liberal and progressive newspapers and contributed to the growing French awareness of the issues involved. There have been numerous street demonstrations of protest against the invasion and solidarity with the Palestinian cause, most of them being organised by various far less anti-imperialist groups, immigrant groups, anti-racist and Palestine support groups. Such organisations have also been busy raising funds for the purpose of sending medicine and other necessities to Lebanon.

In contrast with the hesitations and contradictions of the Socialist Party on the Lebanon question, the Communist Party's Political Bureau immediately took an unequivocal stand against the Israeli aggression, but the Party's membership has not been showing much interest in the issue. When the C.P. organised a huge pro-disarmament march on June 20 — bringing some 250,000 members or sympathisers into the Paris streets under such innocuous slogans as "Long Live Peace" — only a relatively few banners and leaflets dealt directly with the Lebanon situation.

A week later, the country's three main trade union federations (the Communist-led CGT, the Socialist-oriented CFDT and the influential Socialist-led Teachers' Association) — plus the Communist and Socialist Parties, with the unsolicited addition of various Trotskyite and Maoist groups — staged a joint protest march against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, but only some ten thousand people took part.

The fact is that there is in the French population a widespread current of anti-Arab prejudice (the legacy of colonialism) as well as a great deal of emotional pro-Israel feeling (the legacy of the war and occupation). These attitudes are present inside the labour movement and the main Left organisations as much as anywhere else. The combination of prejudice against Arabs and guilt feelings toward Jews — and the "Jewish state" — explains the difficulty the organised Left has in sensitising and mobilising the working class and middle class against Israeli aggression. But the vast human tragedy and the countless atrocities of the invasion — vividly reported on the television screens — are forcing more and more people to change their attitudes. ☐

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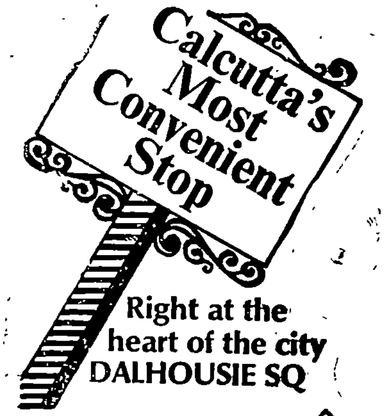

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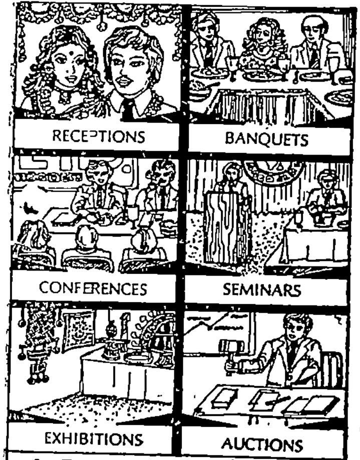

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Haryana Swings into Action

The 20-point programme, placed before the nation by Shrimati Indira Gandhi as a charter of constructive endeavour to create a just and prosperous society, is being vigorously implemented in Haryana. The philosophy of the Slogan "Shrama Eva Jayate" has guided the people for ages since the time of the sacred message of Lord Krishna on the plains of Kurukshetra. Today, it has acquired a new significance.

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Bhajan Lal
Chief Minister, Haryana

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Mainstream

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Indira Gandhi's Achilles' Heel

BETWEEN the careful planning and execution of the Presidential poll campaign and the preparations for the Prime Minister's US visit next week, Indira Gandhi has had to tackle some of the tricky issues facing her party organisation and their consequent impact on the administration particularly at the State level.

The moment the polling ended for the Presidential contest, a horde of Congress-I dissidents descended upon the Capital trying their luck in the factional battle against their respective Chief Ministers. Indira Gandhi's immediate response was one of revulsion and she refused to entertain the implorings of the dissident factions going so far as to assert that none of the present Chief Ministers would be removed.

However, these seasoned factionalists are not cowed down by rebukes: they are too thick-skinned for that. While some of them have become crestfallen, most of them are unruffled and are engaged in the same old game of intrigues to topple the existing Ministries. For instance, the dissidents' brigade from Gujarat refused to budge from New Delhi and left a chargesheet against the Chief Minister with Indira Gandhi's staff. No less active is the whole host of dissidents from Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Andhra.

In Haryana, a new process is discernible. Demoralised by the failure to get in to office, the Opposition Lok Dal leader Devi Lal is reported to have been holding secret talks with the Central leaders of the Congress-I to strike a deal obviously for a berth in the Congress- I. The calculations which seem to be impelling the Congress-I bosses in wooing Devi Lal are belived to be two: first, the exodus of Devi Lal's group into Congress-I would consolidate the Bhajan Lal Ministry apart from thoroughly dispersing the Opposition in Haryana. Secondly, Devi Lal's entry into Haryana Congress-I may ward off any threat to the Bhajan Lal Ministry from Bansi Lal's group which poses no insigni-

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ficant challenge to it from within the Haryana Congress-I itself. Thus, the sordid game of mass defections and counter-defections goes on unabated in Haryana.

(Incidentally, this latest round of developments in Haryana reduces the Opposition heroics of yesterday into a farce: was not Devi Lal made into the symbol of democracy against Bhajan Lal's authoritarianism only a few weeks ago?)

The situation is slightly different in Uttar Pradesh. After Viswanath Pratap Singh's resignation from the post of Chief Minister, the Congress-I was faced with the task of choosing a new leader. As is widely known, Viswanath Pratap Singh's ouster was being forecast long before he himself tendered his resignation on the ground of his failure to put down large-scale bandit violence in the countryside. In fact, the ouster of Viswanath Pratap Singh was not difficult to anticipate when the Pradesh Congress chief was changed practically without any consultation with the Chief Minister. It is significant that the choice of Viswanath Pratap Singh's successor has fallen on a person who is a Brahmin and not Rajput. The Rajput lobby in U.P. which became very conspicuously strong and active in the Pradesh Congress at the time of the 1980 elections — a tactical move by the Congress-I at that time to offset the Lok Dal bagging the so-called backward communities — is now very much in discomfort. Although some of the Rajput stalwarts have been taken into the new Ministry, it is important to note that the Congress High Command is at present bent on reclaiming mainly the Brahmins and Harijans. How far the Rajputs will be reconciled to the status of the dispossessed, is yet to be seen. While the new UP Chief Minister, Sripati Misra has so far been basking in the confidence of the High Command, it is to be noted that the Rajputs cannot be easily dislodged nor is there any guarantee that after a brief spell they would not mount an offensive against the new U.P. Cabinet.

Rumblings are heard from Madhya Pradesh. Obviously, this has became louder with the replacement of Viswanath Pratap Singh by Sripati Misra in UP as it is thought in Bhopal, that Chief Minister Arjun Singh being a Rajput will now find it difficult to hold on and that the chances of his Brahmin opponents, namely the Shukla brothers, have brightened. However, those who are in the know do not expect any precipitate action by the High Command for Madhya Pradesh.

The factional ganging up against Rajasthan Chief Minister appears to be based more on certain political-ideological considerations. This is because Shiv Chandra Mathur's relatively enlightened outlook which he has been trying to project on to the administration has evoked the angry resistance of some of the powerful vested interests in the State.

In Gujarat, Chief Minister Solanki has been facing a difficult time, while in Bihar, Jagannath Misra is admittedly in a precarious condition: the moment there is the slightest sign of his having lost the protection of Indira Gandhi, he will be overpowered by powerful dissidents in his own camp.

Things are no better in other States. Changes are on the agenda in Andhra and Karnataka, while Babasaheb Bhosale's cliff-hanging tenure in Maharashtra cannot possibly last beyond the monsoon.

After the success in the Presidential poll — during which Indira Gandhi's unwritten whip kept the entire flock together — she is thus confronted with renewed squabbles inside her party. Dissidence has degenerated into disorder, bordering on defiance. This brings out once more that although she surpasses all other parties in commanding a phenomenal mass support, there is no instrument of political action at her disposal. Her party has no machinery and it hangs together solely by the demonstration of loyalty to her personally.

This way Indira Gandhi may certainly wield power longer than what the Opposition expects or wishes. But such a state of things certainly affects the image of the regime both at home and abroad. Here indeed is Indira Gandhi's Achilles' heel.

As she flies to Washington next week to meet the President of the United States, she no doubt has to assert as the leader of the most stable and powerful country in the Third World and thereby make her political weight felt. In contrast to the picture of India in disarray and discredit that the Janata projected before the world, Indira Gandhi certainly would fare better. What she however has to ask herself is how far the malady of political disorder that has gripped all the parties including her own, debilitates her strength and undermines her standing when speaking abroad as the voice of India.

A strong India at home can certainly have a near-decisive voice in the turbulent world of today.

N.C.

July 21

COMMENTARY

New President's Initiative

C.N. CHITTA RANJAN

If lofty sentiments frequently expressed could bring about national integration, India should have become a completely integrated nation years ago. Where we stand today in this regard is too obvious to need reiteration. That is why, welcome as they are, President-elect Zail Singh's observations in his pamphlet, *Sikhism in India: A Perspective*, may not straightaway enthuse a large number of people in this country. But it is significant that the first thing Zail Singh has done after his election is to focus attention on dealing with divisive forces — appropriately beginning with his home State, implying also a measure of introspection.

What Zail Singh has said, however, is unexceptionable. Indeed, it can help the process of national integration to which virtually all of us are in theory totally committed, even if not much has been done towards that objective over the years. The Giani has dealt with the mischievous and potentially dangerous activities and propaganda of Sikh extremists, particularly the Khalistanwallahs, and uttered a stern warning against attempts to promote Sikh chauvinism in Punjab. Apart from deprecating moves to mix up religion and politics, recalling the Sikh community's firm rejection of the pernicious two-nation theory, he has cautioned all concerned of attempts at "disturbing the integrity of the country". Politicisation of religious bodies has been rightly denounced — in the case of Sikhs harm has been done to both Sikh religion and Sikh politics. Giani Zail Singh has, with his knowledge of Sikhism, reminded his own community of the identification of the faith of the Sikh gurus with the secular, democratic and socialist structure of the Indian polity which recent history symbolises.

That he belongs to a minority community dispersed over the country and widely respected for the patriotism and capacity for hard work of its members, is among the many factors that weighed with the ruling party in choosing him as its candidate for Presidentship; it also accounts for a good proportion of the votes he secured. A warning against minority chauvinism from such a person needs to be taken seriously by those who seek to disrupt national unity and integrity; and others cannot overlook his declaration about "some connection between these different extremist demands and some powers which are inimically disposed towards India and are keen to destabilise the Indian political and social structure."

Of course the extremists among Sikhs, who form only a fringe but get encouragement from some quarters for the kind of reasons Zail Singh has specified, are not the only ones threatening national integrity. There are other forces too, operating in many parts of our farflung land, communal, regional, casteist, linguistic. Even the one most serious problem on which national integration organisations have concentrated for many years now remains unsolved; communal organisations continue to keep Hindu-Muslim tensions alive in pockets, and occasionally there is a flare-up, leaving a massive scar on the body politic. No less poisonous are other kinds of conflicts being engineered in different parts of the country. The tensions in the North-Eastern Region, for example. Or the riots over implementation of the Gokak Committee report on language in Karnataka. Or the killing of Harijans and rape of their women by gangsters hired by landlords who have the police force, and even the whole administration, behind them. Or engineered riots against the weak who protest, as in Meenakshipuram and Kanyakumari. Or the confrontation over reservation in education and public employment as in Bihar and Gujarat. Or the shameful treatment of women, who the Constitution says shall not be discriminated against. It is a long, agonising list.

What the President-elect has said addressing his own community must be seen in this larger context. Giving some privileged members of the minority communities or so-called low castes certain positions is hardly the answer to a problem that affects millions of our people in their day-to-day lives. In the case of Harijan-baiting, the idea of arming threatened Harijan segments has been mooted and also seriously questioned. It is certainly true that Harijans and the weaker sections generally are in no position to defend their rights when their oppressors are well equipped with lethal weapons, with the authorities doing nothing about it. The proliferation of unlicensed arms — from locally produced firearms to pistols and rifles smuggled from abroad — has not been tackled, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar being outstanding examples. Talk of a village protection force seems equally unrealistic. There are seven lakh villages in the country, and who will organise such protection units in all of them? The very same authorities who have time and again proved their inability even to procure and distribute foodgrains or discipline traders? If villagers are supposed to organise themselves for this purpose, who will be the dominant elements? Who will protect whom? In a situation in which even dacoits are brought in, with blessings from high places, to liquidate weaker elements who have the gumption to demand their minimum statutory rights, what do all these theoretical exercises amount to?

To fight fissiparous tendencies on the one hand and the oppressors and exploiters of the poor on the other is a

PATRIOTIC FRONT

In the Editor's Notebook in last week's *Mainstream* (July 17), the observation made by N.C. urging the Left "to raise the call for a patriotic front in defence and furtherance of national interests" has touched off a lively debate: enquiries, admonitions and appreciations have poured in. Many have welcomed the idea while some unwittingly — and not so unwittingly — have tried to dismiss it as a front in support of Indira Gandhi. Although vulgarisation of serious issues has become a stock-in-trade of a brand of politicians incapable of thinking over new developments, it is necessary that the concept of a Patriotic Front should be explored in the context of the complexities of the present Indian situation.

Mainstream will therefore carry next week a full-length contribution on the concept of a Patriotic Front by N.C. as a starting-point for serious discussion among its readers.

massive task in a country the size of a continent. First of all, the attitude of most of our political parties must change. We have had enough of lip-service to national integration, communal harmony, caste equality, sex equality, respect for all our languages and so on. Many major political parties and the vested interests have more or less common interests, the one using the other to mutual benefit, at the cost of the vast majority of the population. They blatantly use communal and caste affiliations to promote their own interests and intensify conflicts. Indeed this feature has been increasing steadily over the years. All this is leading to erosion of faith among the masses.

The President is bound by the advice of the Council of Ministers. This is as it should be. But the President also has a personality. It is this personality that has to provide the healing touch. There is nothing to prevent the President from looking at the problems of the people — the long-suffering masses — in the light of the provisions of the Constitution and assisting the Prime Minister and her colleagues to draw the right conclusions and take morally correct action which will also be in consonance with the Constitution. Such a course cannot — indeed should not—lead to anything remotely resembling confrontation as some would wish.

The President can lend a helping hand to the Government in solving seemingly intractable problems which threaten national unity and integrity or which take the country farther away from the course indicated in the Preamble and the Directive Principles. To do this requires stature, moral authority and the capacity to command instant respect all round. This is the test Giani Zail Singh will face from the moment he takes his oath on July 25. The Giani with his earthy approach is perhaps best suited to visit all areas and bring about much-needed rapport between the persecuted sections and the authorities. We can only hope that the President and the Prime Minister will not fail the country but will together secure public cooperation to meet the challenges. *July 20*

SCRAPBOOK

The "Spokesman's" Gaffe

SOMETIME ago, there was a public uproar over a press report that some well-known Indian film stars had been invited to South Africa for a friendly tour.

Many of the stars including Shashi Kapoor denied having been invited, while one — Raj Babbar — was quoted by UNI as having said that he would like to "strengthen" ties between India and South Africa, if invited. There was one very clear and forthright statement from Shabana Azmi who said that she had been invited but had declined the invitation because she opposed apartheid.

This move to take Indian film stars to South Africa was first exposed by the Press Trust of South Africa (PTSA) and was circulated by the Press Trust of India (PTI) on June 29.

What was the Government of India's reaction to this controversy? On July 3 the Foreign Office spokesman dismissed the report and questioned its veracity. He then gratuitously characterised PTSA as a kind of "misinformation" agency through which the apartheid regime "attempts to cover up its black deeds."

What are the *facts* of the case?

First, it is absurd to describe PTSA as a pro-apartheid agency. Based in Durban, it is run by an Indian couple, the Subramoneys. Its Editor, Marimuthu Subramoney was arrested and banned from writing by the South African Government in December 1980. He was among the five executive members of the Media Workers Association of South Africa (MWASA) banned from writing in South Africa. But PTSA has been carrying on the struggle against the apartheid regime under virtually underground conditions. In his absence, Marimuthu's wife is running the organisation.

PTSA exposed the news of the projected South African tour by the Indian artistes with the object of alerting the Government and the public of India, to underline the danger inherent in such a tour and help to raise public uproar so that the project could be scotched in the bud. To describe PTSA therefore as a "misinformation agency" helping the apartheid regime — as the apparently innocent spokesman of the Indian Foreign Office did on July 3 — is to say the least, very strange indeed, apart from the monumental ignorance it batrayed on his part.

A little more probe into PTSA's connection with PTI would bring out the enormity of the Foreign Office spokesman's ignorance. First, India's largest news agency PTI which generally commands the trust of the Government of India, has for more than a year been circulating news-items from PTSA. Could PTI be doing so had PTSA been a pro-apartheid agency? Over the past six months, PTSA has filed nearly 50 reports on all aspects of apartheid: Homelands Bills denying freedom, Indian Council elections, sporting links, United Nations' black list, the British cricket tour, South African rugby tour of New Zealand and apartheid, Black miners' conditions, brainwashing children, hijacking in Seychelles, etc. A sample survey of the Indian press in these months would show that most of the exposure stories of apartheid have come from PTSA via PTI. Among the papers which have carried such anti-aparthied items from PTSA-PTI are *Times of India*, *Tribune*, *Hindustan Times*, *Patriot*, *Hindu*, *Statesman* and *Indian Express*.

For the benefit of the Foreign Office spokesman — incidentally this is not his solitary gaffe — it needs to be mentioned that PTI has over the last one year been making payments to PTSA for these news-items, and this has been formally cleared by the Ministries of External Affairs and Finance. Are we to take it that PTI has been patronising a pro-apartheid agency with the knowledge and consent of the Government of India?

One need not have taken this spokesman seriously, but it is possible that his gaffe might lead to misunderstanding and discrimination against forces which are genuinely fighting apartheid. It is time South Block made a thorough probe of the misinformation being doled out by this rather irresponsible spokesman of the Foreign Office.

Analyst

COMMUNICATION

Presidential Poll

I have read with keen interest the Editor's Notebook in *Mainstream* (July 17, 1982) on "Lessons of Presidential Poll" and I want to convey my appreciation of the cogent analysis therein of the stand of both the Congress-I and the Opposition in the Presidential Contest.

There is however one point which appears to have been missed by the Editor. Giani Zail Singh is the first Sikh to be elected President. Not only that: he belongs to what is called a Backward Community, whose occupation is carpentry,

This is a very important point which the critics of Indira Gandhi should bear in mind. If we go by the records, she has always made it a point that in the choice of a President, the right approach should be to strengthen national integration; and this can be furthered by choosing the President of the Republic from the minority or the depressed communities. Indira Gandhi was the first to propose a Muslim as President of India in the august person of Dr Zakir Hussain. On Dr Zakir Hussain's death in 1969, she proposed at the Congress Parliamentary Board that the Congress candidate for Presidentship be the Harijan leader, Babu Jagjivan Ram. It was the Syndicate leaders (who later adorned the Janata leadership) who rejected Jagjivan Babu's candidature and put up Sanjiva Reddy. When this happened, Indira Gandhi wanted Congressmen to vote by their conscience and thereby V.V. Giri, with his active trade union background, won the contest. The next President proposed by Indira Gandhi was another leader of the minority community, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed. After that the next President to be proposed by her is Giani Zail Singh.

In contrast, what is the record of the leaders of the present Opposition? In 1969, as has already been mentioned, some of them were responsible for turning down the chances of a Harijan becoming the President of India. In 1977, when the Janata was in office, it did not propose a leader from the minority community, nor from any of the backward communities (despite the fact that some of the Janata leaders talked a lot about their solicitude for such backward communities) nor a Harijan, though they could have easily found one in Babu Jagjivan Ram himself.

In the same issue of *Mainstream*, in the article on "Communist Approach to BJP" Analyst has suggested that the Communists could have put up a candidate of their own choice for the purpose of putting across their point of view instead of ganging up with the Rightist forces in this nation-wide political battle. It may be worth recalling that in the very first Presidential election in 1952, the Left parties put up Prof. K.T. Shah as their candidate, knowing fully well that he did not have the ghost of a chance against Babu Rajendra Prasad sponsored by the Congress. This gesture created no misunderstanding but was taken as the independent assertion by the Left of its point of view. Why should our present-day Leftists have forgotten such a precedent?

However, it is painful to find our Leflist friends now-a-days forgetting their independent role: if they disapprove the line of the Congress-I, should they automatically line up with the confirmed Right? They accuse Indira Gandhi of making concessions to Rightist pressures. By what strange reasoning this warrants them to gang up with the Rightists? Let the Left friends ponder over this absurdity and take an independent stand of their own.

V.D. Prasad

New Delhi

Stakes in Kashmir

Allow me to congratulate you on the Editor's Notebook, "Stakes in Kashmir" in *Mainstream* (July 3, 1982).

You have rightly argued that Sheikh Abdullah and the National Conference should be enlisted as allies of secularist nationalism instead of being sniped at, especially at a time when there is an alarming rise of caste and communal violence in many parts of the country.

I believe you are the first to point out that the "hue and cry" over the Jammu & Kashmir Bill for resettling Kashmiris from Pakistan is unwarranted, and that it is suggestive of a theory that Hindus alone have a homeland in India and not Muslims. The reaction to the Bill is reminiscent of the near-hysterical response to Meenakshipuram. In both cases the feeling of nervousness and insecurity displayed seems out of proportion to the cause.

The Bill seeks to provide that those Kashmiris who went to Pakistan out of fear after March 1947 and Partition or could not return because of unsettled conditions could come back after fulfilling certain conditions, one of which is a visa from New Delhi. The position of these persons is thus not the same as that of the hundreds of thousands of Hindu refugees who come from Pakistan. Sheikh Abdullah makes a distinction in favour of these persons on the basis of the Delhi Agreement under which he feels committed to taking them back. There is no reason why the point should not be settled through sober and dispassionate discussion, as suggested by you, rather than be allowed to become an emotive issue.

Nirmal Mukarji
From Cabinet Secretary

New Delhi
July 9, 1982.

FOCUS

Indo-US Relations

With Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's visit to USA scheduled for next week, *Mainstream* has been carrying contributions on Indo-US relations. The first article by India's Ambassador in Washington, K.R. Narayanan appeared in *Mainstream*, July 10, 1982, followed by C.P. Bhambhri's contribution (July 17, 1982). In this issue we carry articles by two eminent journalists — S. Viswam, Chief of the New Delhi bureau of *Deccan Herald* and Girish Mathur.

Assertion of Pragmatism

S. VISWAM

In any discussion of Indo-American relations a question that invariably occurs is the level of priority in foreign policy calculations which the USA accords to India.

A common assumption in this part of the world is that the priority is generally low — low enough to be insignificant, as if India didn't exist at all on the world map as far as US was concerned. If such an impression, regardless of whether it is superficial or deep-rooted, were to have gained some momentum of its own, it is surely because of a series of historical developments which, in terms of attitudes and approaches, have served to distance India and US. An entire generation has more or less been brought up in India after Independence on the assumption that US has deliberately chosen to neglect India and views it as an irreconcilable adversary merely because of New Delhi's stand on issues affecting American interests in the South, South-East and East Asian region. This stand has invariably been justified by New Delhi as stemming from some basic principles underpinning the country's independence struggle and commitment to democracy—principles which eventually led to the adoption of and commitment to non-alignment.

It has at the same time been questioned by Washington as emanating not so much from an impartial assessment of the real motivations of American postures and policies but more from "Left-oriented" influences governing Indian foreign policy calculations. Young men in India during the three decades from 1950 to 1980 remained baffled at the preponderant American partiality to "undemocratic" regimes of Pakistan and Syngman Rhee's South Korea, the waging of war against Vietnam, the moral and material support to military dictatorships and so on. Their young minds could not reconcile such postures with the reality of American democracy and commitment to liberty, nor could it fathom why the logic of the imperative of an alliance between the world's foremost democracy and the world's largest democracy was being shunned by Washington and why succeeding Presidents were either unable or unwilling to apply the necessary correctives to what they regarded as an illogical situation. In a sense, the famous 1971 "tilt" didn't surprise them; on the contrary, it was regarded as the logical continuation of a chosen policy which tended to treat India as the main American adversary in the region.

Paradoxically, despite nagging doubts and apprehensions, the Indian mind has refused to write off US altogether in favour of more intimate ties with the Soviet Union; albeit Moscow has generally tended to evoke feelings of warmth and solidarity based on remembrance of occasions when it chose to stand by India. This was perhaps because of the "basic affinities and the common interests that link the two great nations" as K.R. Narayanan describes them. (*Mainstream*, July 10, 1982).

The bafflement over American attitudes is precisely because US does happen to be a functional practising democracy. By and large, the Indian college student knows more of US, is more familiar with great American names, is more susceptible to the impact of what passes for American culture, is more conscious of what US does in the name of democracy. And it is precisely because of this that he sees it as a paradox that US should have allowed the advantage of building up and sustaining Indian democracy pass from its hands to others. The ups and downs in Indo-American relations consequently have tended to be viewed against this conceptual assessment, and from such assessments flow questions relating to the priority India occupies in American calculations.

Yet, assumptions of American disinterestedness in India, or of insensitivity to Indian proclivities need to be strongly discounted. Indeed, the history of Indo-American bilateral cooperation of the last four decades by itself discounts them. India is too large and too important to be wished away by US, just as US is too powerful and influential a factor in global realities for India to ignore it.

The fact however remains that despite the wide-ranging and impressively substantial economic and cultural links between the two countries, despite the shared commitment to lofty ideals, despite the commonality of objectives, these links have had little bearing on political relations. It is a truism of the eighties that economic relations, however substantial they might be, tend to get relegated to the background and hence are regarded as inconsequential, unless the political relations are sound and mutually profitable.

It is indeed a matter for thought that the size and range of bilateral Indo-US economic relations have been unable to contribute in the last three decades to the evolution of a political closeness. Nothing illustrates this better than the fact that the coming visit of Indira Gandhi to Washington is being widely described as a "friendship visit". There surely is a touch of irony here that two countries professing commitment to a long list of common ideals should still be seeking, after four decades of freedom in India's case, an important ingredient called "friendship" to underpin their relations. There is implicit here also the acknowledgement that it is this very ingredient that has been missing in the relations in the past just as equally there is the conscious hope that the Prime Minister's visit would somehow or the other help in injecting it into future relations. Historians may attempt to determine the causes that have led to the absence of friendship; if that indeed has been the vital missing link.

But it may perhaps be more realistic and pertinent to note that more than friendship, what has been missing in Indo-American ties has been mutual understanding of each other's perceptions on a variety of global issues. This could have been partly because of the American tendency to assume *per se* that India is incapable of understanding US motivations, and partly because of Indian assumptions that its views will never be appreciated in Washington. Perhaps both were and are mistaken.

New Delhi, however, had good reason to feel that America's global views tended to reckon without Asian sentiments in general and Indian in particular. It has been noted, with just a touch of surprise, that during his entire presidential campaign, Reagan referred to India only once and that too casually. It has also been noted that in the first year of his office, his Administration acted as though it could afford to take India for granted. It was only after some months' experience in office, and during the efforts to recast US foreign policy, that Reagan appeared to have discovered that India as an independent and major sub-continental and Asian entity had a role to play. American commentators have noted that his encounter with Indira Gandhi at Cancun came to him as a pleasant surprise belying the assessment fed into his psyche by his advisers that she was some kind of a tough nut bent on cutting the Americans to size!

This discovery that it was possible to do business with an Indian leader is said to have induced him to invite Indira Gandhi to Washington, and this is regarded as the basis for the hope that if nothing, her visit might lead to Reagan understanding Indian perceptions better because he is now in a more receptive frame of mind than he was when he assumed the Presidency. Indira Gandhi can therefore be said to be undertaking a mission whose basic thrust can at best be to make her own contribution to Reagan's education.

In a chat with Washington correspondents, Ambassador Narayanan has said that the visit is for the purpose of exchanging views on various issues in order to understand each other's mind and establish a meeting of minds. It is reasonable to presume that each face-to-face meeting between world leaders inevitably promotes mutual understanding and to this limited extent Indo-American relations can be regarded as being poised to receive a fresh input. But whether a meeting of minds, assuming that a better personal rapport is on the cards, by itself can narrow the many differences between the two countries is a different matter. Prudence therefore demands that high expectations are not raised.

Reagan's and Alexander Haig's efforts to recast foreign policy have had some important consequences for relations between India and US and have tended to accentuate these differences in the recent past. Nonetheless, there is greater need now than ever before for India to place in perspective her own reaction to the new US policy orientations and to explain how they affect India's national and security interests. The fact that Reagan took the initiative in arranging Indira Gandhi's visit — she will be in Washington after an interregnum of eleven years — is at least some evidence that the US is willing to listen to India's case.

Secondly, on its own part, pragmatism demands that notwithstanding the obvious conflict between Indian and American geo-strategic perceptions, New Delhi should make a conscious effort to promote better relations with US if only because national interests have their own compulsions. Enough has been said by New Delhi in the last one year to highlight the fact that American supplies of sophisticated lethal arms to Pakistan have brought about a qualitative change in regional realities. Enough has also been said on the militarisation of the Indian Ocean and Gulf regions as a direct consequence of the implementation of the American strategic consensus concept. Similarly, the Indian approach to fuel supplies to Tarapur is not unknown to Washington.

Indira Gandhi may therefore have no reason to go into these specifics in her talks with Reagan, but there are several issues which impinge on Indian economic development as a whole on which the American President would need to be educated. Having been a consistent champion of the New International Economic Order and of North-South global negotiations, a duty can be said to have devolved on India to articulate the sentiments of the developing world. India has attained a level of development which waits for an onward thrust to propel it forward, and in securing such a thrust a confrontationist attitude towards the United States is likely to prove counter-productive. An important ingredient in international stability is constituted by the complex of problems that have been discussed in Cancun, and in a sense, even at the Versailles Summit. The ability of US and India to arrive at a *modus vivendi* on making progress on some of those issues can be a contributing factor to the promotion of the North-South dialogue, and it is here that American perceptions of the Third World's views can be enhanced by their articulation by Indira Gandhi.

Largely because of the lukewarm attitude of the US to multilateral aid, the term of the IDA-VI has been stretched by the US Congress and the US contribution reduced. This has come in the way of concessional assistance to developing countries. It has been argued in US that since India has taken the first steps towards converting itself from a developing into a developed country, the "graduation" principle should be applied to it, but it is imperative to point out to US that India's development should not be held against it. It was on the basis of such persuasion that Indira Gandhi was able to convince Margaret Thatcher earlier this year to meet Britain's IDA commitments fully, although India did not benefit directly from it.

It will be interesting for Reagan to hear from Indira Gandhi the reasons why the developing world seeks liberalisation of US policies in regard to external assistance. The Indian accent is not so much on any special favours to be done to India but on the more important and larger fact that US needs to liberalise in its own interest, for after all, American prosperity depends a great deal on the prosperity of the Third World.

One of the American illusions regarding India which need to be dispelled is that India's pro-Sovietism detracts from development of relations with US. India's friendship with the Soviet Union has not stood in its way of promoting relations with Pakistan and China or with other countries of the world that have no special love for the Soviets. Indeed, it is India's commitment to non-alignment which places her today in the pre-eminent position of being able to act as a bridge of understanding between the two super-powers. And if Reagan is enabled to comprehend the implications of such a status, it is conceivable that he will rid himself of several misconceptions about Indian policies.

If this results from Indira Gandhi's visit, it could emerge as a turning point in Indo-American relations.□ *(January 20)*

"Accommodation-Containment"

GIRISH MATHUR

> A free India, with her vast resources, can be a great service to the world and to humanity. India will always make a difference to the world; fate has made us for big things. When we fall, we fall low; when we rise, we inevitably play our part in the world drama.
>
> —*Jawaharlal Nehru, 1936.*

> Leaving three big countries, the United States of America, the Soviet Union and China, aside for the moment, look at the world. There are many advanced, highly cultured countries, but if you peep into the future and if nothing goes wrong, wars and the like — the obvious fourth country in the world is India.
>
> —*Jawaharlal Nehru, 1954.*

INDIA's aspirations do not represent the subjective desire of a class of commission agents or a collaborationist business elite. They represent the driving force of a class, propertied but nationalist, which had grown in opposition to the restraints imposed by imperial rule and by taking advantage of the internal contradictions of imperialism. It was by far the most advanced among such nationalist forces in the colonial countries at the time of India's independence and had shown the stuff of which it was made even before Independence, at Bretton Woods when the post-war international economic order was being forged, by pressing for greater autonomy for developing, emerging nations in the world capitalist system. Its relations with the United States since then should therefore by studied in the light of the "accommodation-containment" model of relations between a super-power and rising powers; this model also provides the insights for assessing the prospects of the Indo-US relations in the future.

This should also be true of Indo-Soviet relations. But, firstly, despite the parity which it has achieved with the US in arms which make it a super-power, the Soviet Union lacks the global reach of the United States except in its ideological appeal and its willingness to extend support to the world-wide phenomenon of anti-imperialism. And secondly, the natural and justified Soviet anxiety to roll back the area of US influence coincides with India's urge for an autonomous world role and results in the convergence of its and India's interests. Being a country about which Jawaharlal Nehru had said in his very first broadcast after assuming office in 1946 that "they are our neighbours in Asia and inevitably we shall have to undertake many common tasks and have much to do with each other", there is also a convergence of geo-strategic objectives in so far as both are interested in keeping their neighbourhood free of external influence.

As a global power, the United States resents the emerging powers because the assertion of their autonomy restricts its area of influence and its capacity to impose its will on the world. But, apart from other factors, the very laws of the dynamics of the international capitalist system result in the emergence of new powers; that is how West Europe and Japan which lay devastated at the end of the Second World War have now come up as competitors of the United States for influence and have begun to assert their autonomy even if, for the present, within the framework of their alliance with the US. We thus have multi-polarity in a militarily bi-polar world. Nearer home and in a different sense, even the Shah of Iran had become too big for his shoes in American eyes. The policy of containment is directed not only against the rival super-power which poses a straight threat to US global hegemony. In the case of Western Europe it is being applied by banning the supply of West-

European equipment for the gas pipeline from the Soviet Union; if containment fails, the US would go back to accommodation of Western Europe. But in the case of emerging powers, both accommodation and containment are aimed to achieve much more — that is satellisation or their transformation into satellites.

India has not attained independence to become a satellite. It is this which explains what Ambassador Narayanan describes as ups and downs in Indo-US relations (*Mainstream*, July 10, 1982). These ups and downs have nothing to do with either the so-called shared values or the theory that India is low in US priorities. Indira Gandhi herself has blown to pieces the myth of shared values in her latest *Newsweek* interview when she said, "Do you think democracy has anything to do with friendship? Many of America's friends are not democratic at all, are they? I don't think the Reagan Administration is bothered whether or not they are democratic." And if India had been low in US priorities, Pakistan would not have been armed as a "counterforce to Nehru's neutralism in the Indian leader's backyard" from the 1950s; even on this occasion, India's containment was one of the declared objectives of the supply of F-16s to Pakistan (see Francis Fukuyama's *Rand Report*; today Fukuyama is a member of the Reagan Administration).

Nor is it true that the Americans have a particular dislike for Indira Gandhi. In the mid-1950s they went out of their way to ensure that India was kept out of the Korea and Indo-China talks in Geneva and thus deprived of a role in world decision-making — which they however could not do. And the policies which resulted in Carter's visit to India on New Year's day 1978 were initiated by Indira Gandhi even before Emergency. This was emphasised by Ambassador Goheen in an address at the conference on Indo-US economic cooperation in August, 1979. If the earlier attempt to isolate India reflected the containment phase, Carter's visit (significantly, he did not go to Pakistan, and visited only states on the US list of emerging powers — Indonesia and Saudi Arabia in Asia, Kenya and Nigeria in Africa and the like) and Reagan's invitation to Indira Gandhi represent the accommodation phase — the invitation follows a short meeting between the two at Cancun where most invitees from the South belonged to the emerging States group.

Since accommodation, like containment, seeks satellisation, Indira Gandhi will naturally be cautious of the traps that may be laid for her during the visit, and the selection of the aides accompanying her suggests that she is aware of the dangers in the way. An obvious trap can be an offer to sell arms to India to which India can have no objection in view of its policy of diversification of defence purchases. But India cannot forget its experience of a previous phase of accommodation when the United States made a big show of providing arms aid in the wake of the 1962 Chinese aggression but, on the one hand, it gave very little and, on the other, sought to acquire the right to determine India's defence needs and take it under its air umbrella, side by side with arms twisting on Kashmir via Duncan Sandys mission. Nor can India forget the more recent experience of the negotiations for some arms purchases in 1980-81 when US firms refused to transfer technology along with the arms India was trying to buy and insisted on stipulating that even after India makes full payment the contracted supplies could be cut off on political grounds.

Another trap can be an offer to host an India-Pakistan summit to allay India's fears about the use of US-supplied arms against it. In view of India's insistence on bilateralism in its external relations, the US may even be prepared to assure Indira Gandhi that it does not want to play the mediator's role and that India and Pakistan can negotiate by themselves whatever agreement they want to sign, either a no-war pact or a treaty of friendship; but if it is signed under US auspices, the US can pull up Pakistan if it misuses US supplied arms or otherwise violates the agreement. The US may go to the extent of offering to resume fuel and spares supplies to Tarapur or terminate the agreement by mutual consent so that India becomes free to make alternative arrangements for the supplies. But the trap lies in that any agreement signed under US auspices would legitimise US intervention in sub-continental affairs and enable it to mount pressures on India, while the Tarapur offer would expose India to Congressional pressures on safeguards and the NPT.

The only way to avoid these traps is to place these problems in their international context. Indeed, India's need for arms acquisition has been aggravated by the US naval build-up in the Indian Ocean, the development of the Diego Garcia base, the US war plans for West Asia, and the Rapid Deployment Force strategy. India objects to the supply of sophisticated arms to Pakistan because they involve it in formal and informal military alliance with the US, and none other than Francis Fukuyama, now policy planning chief in the State Department, has described Pakistan as a "proxy fighting force" for the US in West Asia. It needs to be pointed out that the West Asian situation calls for not a solution by force or the threat to use the armada in the Indian Ocean and the Rapid Deployment Force and all the arms that are being supplied to the countries of the region. These arms can only result in the repetition of barbarities being perpetrated in Lebanon and occupied West Bank, Gaza and Golan Heights under the military protection provided by three US aircraft-carriers and accompanying warships and political-diplomatic protection provided by Jean Kirkpatrick at the UN and Philip Habib in Beirut.

Indira Gandhi has prepared the ground for her talks by taking a firm stand on the Palestinian question and extending more political support to the PLO than given by any of its Arab or Islamic brothers. She has written to Brezhnev, Mitterrand, Reagan and Castro. The heroic resistance of the besieged Palestinian and Lebanese commandos in Beirut and their continuing harassment of Israeli

(*Continued on page 34*)

DOCUMENT Arafat Clarifies PLO Stand

Text of Interview to Israeli Journalist

The celebrated leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, Yasser Arafat, recently gave a remarkably outspoken interview to the distinguished Israeli journalist, Uri Avnery, who visited him in his headquarters in beleaguered West Beirut. Avnery is the editor and publisher of the Israeli weekly, *Ha-Olam Ha-Zeh* (This World) and also one of the leaders of Sheli, a political party that advocates peace between Israel and the Palestinians. He was a member of the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) until 1973 and again from 1977 to 1981. For this historic interview with Arafat, he is being threatened with treason charge by the hardliners in Israeli Government. The text of the interview is being reproduced here from *The Times*, London (July 8, 1982) to which it is duly acknowledged here. —*Editor*

It was a unique moment, but a sad one. Never before has Yasser Arafat, leader of the PLO, received an Israeli. Now, when it had come about, the situation was desperate. West Beirut seemed to be condemned to annihilation, the options for peace vastly reduced.

I had been asking to interview Mr Arafat since I first met Said Hamami, the PLO representative in London, eight years ago. "The time is not ripe", was the standard answer.

Last Friday I was in East Beirut. From my hotel I rang Mr Arafat's office in the west. The secret number had been given to me — also by phone — by a PLO representative in Paris.

I asked to be allowed to cross the front line and interview him. After an hour, in the middle of the night, Mr Arafat's assistant called back. He asked me in perfect Hebrew to come over at 10 am the following day (July 3) and ask for Ahmed at the PLO roadblock.

It was a spooky experience. Two of the staff of my magazine were with me. We had passed the Phalangist and Lebanese army roadblock, now there was nothing in front of us but an earthen roadblock manned by wildlooking PLO fighters with Kalashnikov rifles. What if there has been a hitch in the arrangements? What if no Ahmed was there? What if I would find myself among a bunch of trigger-happy fanatics?

But somebody was waiting. No Ahmed, but an old friend, Ghazi. He had been sent because I knew him, and because he could identify me and avoid a trap. From there it was easy. The PLO fighters proved to be friendly: their morale seemed to be high, but fatalistic.

We crossed the city in Mr Arafat's car — children playing, men going to work, women shopping, a football match in a schoolyard, a functioning city, a beautiful capital; in the private apartment of one of his assistants I met him: a person very different from his television image, informal, friendly, and soft-spoken. We talked for two and a half hours.

The interview was quite clearly a signal to Israelis. The old slogans were still there, somewhere, but the message was unequivocal: peace now is possible.

The following are extracts from our conversation.

Avnery: I think this war happened because the great majority of Israelis, who I think are basically peace-loving people, have become convinced by our official propaganda that the PLO does not really want peace.

Arafat: The PLO? You know, it is not so. We have declared our approval for the American-Soviet communique in October 1977. (This communique provided a basis for the solution safeguarding the existence of Israel and the rights of the Palestinians. It was revoked by the Carter Administration after a visit by Moshe Dayan to Washington.) We have declared our approval and appreciation for President Brezhnev's initiative (of last year).

Avnery: Which says that the security of all states in the area, including Israel, which it explicitly mentions, will be safeguarded.

Arafat: You see, when we have said OK to this initiative, this means that we accepted all its items. We said that it is a good platform for a peaceful settlement, for a just settlement, for a peaceful solution in the Middle East. And you remember that I myself have declared that the Fahd proposals are a very good platform for a solution in the Middle East. So we gave many signals that we are looking for peace.

Mahmud Labadi (PLO Spokesman): Mr Avnery has proposed in 1970 a federation of semitic peoples, a semitic union.

Arafat : Inshallah (If God wills it).

Avnery : You see, I believe that in the end after everything is finished there should be an Israeli state and a Palestinian state, with its capital in East Jerusalem, and there should be a general regional organisation unifying all the Arab states and Israel together in one economic and political union.

Arafat : Abba Eban proposes a Benelux. (Meaning a union of three states, Israel, Palestine and Jordan). Yes.

Avnery : If there is a chance for an honourable move out of here, where do you think it is possible to go?

Arafat: To Palestine.

Avnery: *I mean tomorrow, not next year.*

Arafat: To Palestine. It is my right. You go there?

Avnery: Today.

Arafat: You think that you have the right to go there and I have no right to come back? Where to go? I am a human being, too: Where to, except my homeland? I want to go to my homeland.

Avnery: When you say Palestine, what do you mean by Palestine?

Arafat: For all of us? All Palestine. For you and for us.

Avnery: Together, you mean?

Arafat: Together, why not?

Avnery: You don't mean a separate state for the Palestinians?

Arafat: You know our famous slogan: a democratic secular state. *If this is not the solution, then two separate states.*

Avnery: About what part of Palestine are you talking for the Palestinian state?

Arafat: We are ready to live in any part of Palestine from which the Israelis withdraw, or which will be liberated. Any part.

Avnery: In practice, this means the West Bank and the Gaza Strip?

Arafat: Any part.

Avnery: Does that mean peace, real peace?

Arafat: Yes, it does. It's not the Palestinians, it's the Israelis who don't want it. And yet, the Jews should know better than anyone else that even if they succeed in annihilating half a million Palestinians in Lebanon, *four million* will remain elsewhere and carry on. Can Israel fight forever? Where will it be in 10, 20, 50 years?

Never before had the readiness of the PLO for peace been stated so clearly; never to an Israeli, never by the chairman. This could have been a great, a unique opportunity; a moment for a De Gaulle, for *la paix des braves*. But Mr Begin is no De Gaulle, and Mr Sharon has quite a different frame of mind.

After five hours we again crossed the roadblocks of four trigger-happy armies. By that time there was a fifth. While we were inside the besieged city, our own army had taken position to cut it off completely. The roads, the water, the food. A few hundred yards from the crossing a battle was in progress, Israeli tanks advancing, perhaps in preparation for the final assault.

Before taking my leave to meet the Lebanese Prime Minister, Mr Arafat asked me if I would go straight back home. When I said yes, he asked sadly: "Why can't we?"

Even before reaching Israel, I heard on the wireless that Israeli cabinet ministers and MPs were demanding my indictment for treason.

PLO: Spirit No One Can Crush

ALYS FAIZ

An eminent intellectual of Pakistan here reviews the creation of Israel and the systematic persecution of millions of uprooted Palestinian Arabs for thirtyfour years. From the West-backed Zionist terrorism of the first half of the century to the massacres perpetrated by the aggressively expanding militarised state of Israel since 1948, Palestinian men, women and children have been butchered in cold blood, with Israeli brutality—under the active patronage of Washington - touching its zenith now in the territory of neighbouring Lebanon. But all the organised terror cannot crush the spirit that inspires the Palestinians and the PLO. The author sums up the situation, bringing out the abiding spiritual and moral strength of the Palestinians struggling for their homeland with worldwide support. This contribution — two articles put together — is reproduced with due acknowledgement from *Viewpoint* weekly of Lahore (July 1 and 8, 1982). —*Editor*

DURING more than fifteen years of its growth, as the sole and acknowledged representative of the Palestinian people, the Palestine Liberation Organisation has become the vanguard of the struggle in the Arab lands against Israeli expanionism, a dangerous, rapidly-growing militarism. In the struggle to return to their homeland they have helped stem the tide of what is now acknowledged to be a deliberate, calculated imperialist onslaught against the Arab countries. The massacres they have been subjected to, the betrayals by Arab leaders, have left them still indomitable, as a democratic force in the Arab arena.

The fight they fight in Lebanon today, along with the Lebanese people, against the formidable Israeli war machine supported by the Phalangist forces within Lebanon, is a fight, not only for a return to a rightful homeland, but a revolutionary struggle against fascist-imperialist domination which threatens each and every Arab country within striking distance of Israel.

1948 — This year the Zionist state of Israel was born, the culmination of a series of events which dispossessed a whole nation, an ancient people who had lived for thirteen successive and uninterrupted centuries as part of the Arab nation, its language, culture and destiny. Theodor Herzl, founder of Zionism, after the First International Zionist Congress in 1897 in Basle, Switzerland, summed it up ... "in a word, I formed a Jewish state". Fifty years later, in 1948, David Ben-Gurion, from the Museum in Tel-Aviv in Palestine, announced the Jewish state. A *prophecy* come true? Fifty years.

This Zionist state, prophesied by Herzl and announced by Ben-Gurion, was not brought about by agreement with the people of Palestine, nor with the understanding of the Arab nations surrounding it; neither was it a sudden act, it was the result of a systematic process of settler-colonialism, accomplished during those fifty years, with the purpose of changing the national, political and human map of Palestine, preparing it for usurpation.

The Zionist Movement presented itself as a 'national movement', but in the literal sense it was not a nationalist movement, since Zionism emerged in its totality outside the land it claimed. It lacked a common history and language. The method by which Zionism might realise its aims was by settler-colonialism, by force, by the usurpation of land, by collective emigration and the dispossession of the rightful people. Land belonging to absentee landowners was relentlessly bought up, settlements continued unabated, as they do today.

In 1897, the Palestine Arabs constituted 90 per cent of the total population, and they owned 99.5 per cent of the land. Zionist expansion needed a sponsor, a power with interests vested in the area, and onwards to India, Africa and as distant as the Far East — imperialist routes to be protected. Britain became the power which matched the need.

> "The Jewish people, if returning, would be a check upon any future evil designs of Mehemet Ali or his successors..." "France cannot but desire to see the road to India and China occupied by peoples that will follow her to the death".
>
> "We shall form a part of the rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilisation as opposed to barbarism ..." *Herzl in* The Jewish State.

Herzl died in 1903 but the Zionist Movement gained momentum under Chaim Weizmann, who took his place as its main protagonist and propagandist ... "We can reasonably say that should Palestine fall within the British sphere of influence and should Britain encourage Jewish settlement there, as a British Dependency, we could have in 20 to 30 years, two million Jews out there, perhaps more. They would form a very effective guard to the Suez Canal ..." Chaim Weizmann.

The Balfour Declaration following in 1917, is one of the most calamitous documents of colonialism in modern history. Lloyd George endeavoured to cloak the colonial and political motives behind the Declaration by presenting it as an award given to the scientist Weizmann, who had invented, during the First World War, a material (acetone) necessary for the making of explosives — but the Declaration was the outcome of the mutual interests of British imperialism and Zionism at a time when the British Government dared to term the Palestinian people "non-Jewish communities in Palestine"!

And from the terrorist-leader Menachem Begin in his book *The Revolt*: "British policy therefore was ready to back a great ideal which would enable Britain to take over control of Palestine without seeming to...Britain would promise the Jews a Home in Palestine...Britain would have Palestine... and the Jews would have a Home in it..."

The result of this heinous conspiracy against an ancient people is seen in the diaspora and the occupied territories, and in the present confrontation between the Zionist forces and the PLO and the Labanese people in Lebanon.

The present leadership of the PLO, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation and the Revolutionary Resistance Movement, matured and was nurtured against a background of growing Arab nationalism in the Middle East and Africa, a struggle against imperialist intrigues.

The Egyptian liberation movement under Gamal Abdel Nasser and the struggle of the Algerian people against French imperialism were the two nationalist crusades which inspired the people of Palestine and its emergent leadership. The PLO continued along the path of the Nasserite movement, and the movement today is a fighting ally. Yasser Arafat, along with Palestinian units, took part in the Egyptian army's struggle. The Fateh of which Arafat is the head is the leading and largest group within the PLO. The anti-imperialist revolution in South Yemen, was also of great significance to the Palestinian struggle, followed by the birth of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

Dispersed in dozens of camps in most of the countries of the Arab World, the largest concentrations in Lebanon, where thousands had fled from Israeli oppression, the exiles lived leaderless fed on United Nations charity, clinging to land papers, memories, and a disintegrating cultural and social life. But they clung in village groupings, because in this they found security and comfort. This fact, no doubt, led later to a collective hope and cultural strength, of both kith and kinship, as the PLO leadership emerged and took hold of the people's patriotism and loyalty.

The first announcement of the PLO came in January 1964, and in the following May, the first Palestinian National Congress took place in the Arab area of Jerusalem where two main documents were presented—the Palestine National Charter and the PLO Charter. For the next three years, the PLO limited its activities to contacts with Arab countries and governments and to publicity and propaganda.

The spirit of nationalism and solidarity, and a militant awareness strengthened and penetrated into the camps, and to the people. From the intellectuals and the academic class, came writers, artists, poets, cultural groups, among the women the languishing crafts were revitalised, and a cohesion set in among the people of the diaspora. It was, however, a heterogeneous organisation, and ideological differences arose, but the Fifth Session of the PLO in 1969 found the organisation clear in its objectives, and it could lay claim to representing the national aspirations of all Palestinian people, and was the vanguard of the liberation struggle.

Its prestige increased internationally, and the Fateh became a well-trained, disciplined army corps. Within the camps schools started, clinics, work centres for women, orphanages for the children of the martyred; factories produced goods easily exported to sympathetic countries of the Middle East and of Europe.

The Arab Summit Conference in Rabat in October 1974 recognised the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and in the same year Chairman Arafat was invited to take part in the 29th UN General Assembly, where the Organisation was granted permanent-observer status. The struggle was maturing, but the enemy, Israel, at home became more brutal in its oppression, prisons were full of dissenting men and women in the occupied territories.

In 1976 and 1979 the Palestine question was considered by the Security Council, and support for the PLO and its struggle grew steadily. It was a question involving three-and-a-half million people, most of them living in exile, and the rest, in their own land, subjected to oppression and racial discrimination.

Support for the PLO grew too in the occupied territories, and the self-government bodies' elections held in 1976 were fought mainly on anti-Israel slogans. Deportations took place and support of the PLO was considered enough justification for imprisonment and other kinds of vicious punishment. The world became aware of the oppression in the occupied territories, and international support at all levels grew. The PLO was invited to all international congresses where the question of apartheid, racial discrimination, colonialism and oppression were subjects for discussion.

By 1979, the PLO had been 'recognised' in one way or another in 115 countries, and was officially represented in at least 82. At this time, Israel could claim but 50 envoys with diplomatic status.

At the time of writing the military wing of the PLO fights a desperate battle for survival against the Israeli war machine, alongside the residential areas where thousands of Palestinians, Lebanese Sunni and Shiite Muslim live, sheltering from the continuing holocaust.

No matter what the final outcome of this battle, the PLO and the people it represents will survive — they alone, with the Syrians, struggle for the dignity and integrity of the Arabs. The PLO has gone too far in the eyes of the world to retreat; too many have been won over to its just cause, and the Israeli war machine has been exposed as an imperialist, anti-people, expansionist power. For the Palestinian people the vision, the Return, remains.

'Where will you go?' asked a media man of Arafat, a few days ago — 'Back to Palestine', came the answer.

●

THE world waits while Israel exacts its already bloodied pound of flesh. But behind the scenes, as one predicted, as soon as the deal for human bodies began, realisation now dawns that six to eight thousand Fateh fighters, are not mere fighters; they are husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, and that the defence of the camps, and the confrontation with

80,000 Israeli forces, now claimed to be in Lebanon, along with 150 tanks at least, gunships, and a massive air strike force, means the defence of thousands of families, old men, women and children. And there are not only Palestinian families, but thousands of men, women and children, both Sunni and Shiite.

The history of the defence of Palestinian families goes back to the first massacres, immediately after the Israeli state was formed in 1948.

The first massacres were minor, compared with what was to follow throughout the years of banishment, and during the Lebanese Civil War. The massacre of Deir Yassine on April 9, 1948, was carried out under the specific orders of the chief of the clandestine terrorist movement, Irgun, of the present Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Two hundred and fifty villagers of the village Deir Yassine were massacred in cold blood.

> "Our village was Sa'asa, we didn't leave because of battle, there was fighting all round, there were air raids and bombardments, but the reasons why we left were because of the news of massacres, Jish, Deir Yassine...and there were stories of attacks on women's honour. Our villagers were especially concerned about protecting our women..."
>
> *Rosemary Saigh,* The Palestinians

Against merciless attack like that of Begin's Irgun, the defence was — arm yourselves, with sticks, with whatever weapon might come to hand, which might afford some defence in an emergency when attacked. Men bartered anything they could to get a gun, no matter how old.

The Fedayeen, as we know them today, are still protecting their women and their families, and when called upon to 'evacuate', as the several go-betweens like Saeb Salam and others have admitted, 'it is also a question of families'. They have discovered that a whole people fight, not only 'guerillas' in trenches and bunkers.

Massacres continued, and the strength and the need of the Fedayeen grew. There are names which linger on the lips of all Palestinians — such a name is Karamah.

> "There is, in the Valley of Jordan, about thirty kilometres west of Amman, a small town, which was the pride of the Palestinian refugees. Through their work, they had created, from a desolate spot of earth, a flowering city. When they first came and installed themselves there, is 1952, in this desert place, they decided that the town they would build should be called Karamah, in Arabic this means 'dignity'. After a passage of time, the crops became good, even beautiful. Tents had been replaced by little houses of beaten earth. One day a mosque, too, was completed. Water pipes had been laid, and electricity had come to the little town. Year after year the refugees slowly regained their sense of renewed life. The young people started a club, where they gathered together after their lessons, in the two schools set up by UNRWA. All seemed to be going well. The products of Karamah were sold in the markets of Jerusalem and Amman, they even reached the Gulf, Lebanon and Syria. Unbelievably, much of the chicken soup consumed in Jordan came from Karamah! In 1967 the tents of 1952 had become a town of 25,000 inhabitants!"
>
> "In June 1967 the artillery put an end to this very special dream, and its tranquillity. The town was submerged by 25,000 new refugees. Situated just four kilometres from the ceasefire line, Karamah became a military objective for Israeli artillery and air bombardment. The town was bombarded in November 1967. From 1968 the town was frequently visited. The Fateh thus decided to make it one of their bases to defend the people and what they had created. The people of Karamah joined the Resistance, dividing their time between work and military training. The Battle of Karamah lasted fifteen days ..."
>
> — *Xavier Baron,* The Palestinians.

1976 — The Civil War in Lebanon ...

> "Kamal Jumblatt came to Damascus, and spent seven hours with President Assad. The latter told the elder Jumblatt that under no circumstances would he abandon the Maronites of Lebanon, who for the first time in their history had turned towards an Arab country, Syria, for aid. He explained to Jumblatt that he would not let this historic occasion go, to integrate the Christians of Lebanon into the Arab World. The Head of the Syrian state called upon Kamal Jumblatt to renounce his alliance with the Palestinian Resistance. Kamal refused. The consequences of this rupture were manifest. An enormous Syrian force intervened in June 1976 and thus saved the Christian forces from a debacle at the hands of the Palestinian-Progressives alliance."
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> "The Syrian regime could no longer allow the alliance to continue its advances on all fronts, and thus constitute a dangerous threat to Damascus... On May 31, 2,000 Syrian soldiers entered Labanon through Akkar. On July 1, 4,000 men and 200 tanks came into the Bekka, en route for Beirut...."
>
> —*Xavier Baron,* The Palestinians

The remainder of the story is known. The long siege of the Palestinian Camp Tel-el-Zatar, where thousands were surrounded, along with many Lebanese, by the Phalangists, supported by the Syrian army. The Syrians thus entered Lebanon and there they stayed. For 52 days the camp was besieged, and the story is one of horror, deprivation and valour. The world stood by. The final onslaught came on August 12 and it has been said, and written, that even the Phalangists themselves could not anticipate, nor stop, the horrifying massacre which took place of Palestinians and Lebanese. Thousands died. Fifteen thousand escaped that day, some were massacred on the way, others bribed their way through the Green Line into West Beirut.

The Palestinians built a stately orphanage for the children of the survivors and set up industrial centres and factories also. They were bombed in the dreadul air-raids on Fakhani in the summer of 1981. Those that survived continued their work, despite being deliberately pinpointed by Israeli air-attacks from time to time. Thousands who escaped made their way to Sidon, Tyre and Damour, now reduced to rubble. Many stayed in Beirut and there they stay surrounded once again by the Zionist forces, protected, again, by their Fateh military wing.

It has been recorded that with the massacre of Tel-el-Zatar, now a desolate strip of waste land, the Palestinians experienced one of their darkest periods, the darkest since the massacre of Jordan.

There are, it is calculated, 5,00,000 Palestinians now in Lebanon, and alongside one must count the thousands of other Sunni and Shiite Muslims, facing the threat of a possible Phalangist right-wing, Israeli-sponsored regime.

Who will guarantee their safety? The Phalangists? The Israeli occupying forces? The UNIFIL? A buffer zone? The Palestinians know full well that the Phalangists and the Israelis 'know not the quality of mercy'. Their people, like the lands of Lebanon, would be laid waste. □

Sell Now, Ban Later

VIMAL BALASUBRAHMANYAN

According to a news item which appeared in a large number of dailies on June 30 this year, the Government has decided to ban all pregnancy testing drugs because they may cause foetal damage. It will be recalled that several pressure groups, which included socially conscious doctors, had launched a campaign in March against the hormone pregnancy test. (*Mainstream* April 10 and May 8). Earlier the Government, in deference to 'expert medical advice', had 'consciously decided' not to ban HPT. Now, without batting an eyelid, it makes an about-turn and claims that the ban has been decided upon after consultation with 'experts'. Of course, there are experts and experts, and some experts can change their stance under pressure.... All of which only proves that a conscious, vocal public is the only weapon against dangerous drugs.

However, whichever experts 'advised' the Government seem to think that the danger can continue for a while — one more year to be precise. The stipulated cut-off date for manufacture has been fixed as December 31, 1982, and the cut-off date for sale as June 30, 1983. Why such a liberal grace period? The Government is apparently more concerned about the losses that will be suffered by the drug companies as a result of an immediate ban. The possible harm to children yet unborn this year is apparently not the concern of the Government or of the medical 'experts' who advise it.

A variation on the sell-now-ban-later theme is the pretend-it-doesn't-exist philosophy. For some years now, public health authorities have tended to avoid mentioning certain dreaded diseases by name and prefer to use euphemisms instead. The toll occurs every year but today people don't die of cholera, they die of gastero-enteritis. In this context, a curious phenomenon last month calls for explanation. The Bengali daily, *Jugantar*, published on June 18 an item the gist of which was that the general secretary of the UP Kisan Congress told newsmen that 200 children had died during the previous week of 'pox' in Basti district of UP. He had urged the Government to take immediate steps to control the epidemic. Strangely, none of the English dailies, as far as I could verify, published the item. Which is surprising, considering that big casualty figures are usually meat to the news desk.

Whatever be the kind of 'pox' that took the toll, whether it was really some kind of 'pox' or not, all these are matters to be investigated and published to create public faith in the health system (*Mainstream*, July 3). This is especially important because everyone knows that chickenpox is seldom fatal and that it is smallpox which is a killer. In any case, after the fanfare over smallpox eradication, investigation even of the wildest rumours is important and public knowledge of its outcome equally so. The WHO itself has stressed this in its report on the eradication programme.

"Experience in many countries indicates that reports of suspected cases of smallpox can be expected to be received from many sources for several years after the certification of global eradication. The importance of thorough investigation of these reports, if necessary by lab testing, is illustrated by the fact that one such report led to the recognition of human monkey pox. *It is also important that public confidence in the fact of eradication should be maintained by thorough and prompt investigation of all reports* and disclosure of the results to health officials throughout the world." (Emphasis added).

A word about human monkey pox is in order. The WHO publication says: "Human monkey pox is a rare zoonosis that was not recognised until smallpox was eliminated from the area where it occurs. Clinically it resembles smallpox. Human cases can be expected to appear when the ecological conditions are appropriate and perhaps to show some increase as smallpox vaccination ceases and immunity wanes." The report, while discussing the difference between smallpox and chickenpox, says: "...Nevertheless even experienced observers were sometimes unable to differentiate mild or modified smallpox *from chickenpox...monkey pox...has a rash and course that are indistinguishable from those of smallpox.*" (Emphasis added).

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DISCUSSION

Indian Development

The perspective of Indian development is fast becoming a matter of crucial concern for the polity of the nation. Taking into account the need for serious discussion of the state of our political economy and the options before the country, *Mainstream* (March 20, 1982) published a contribution from a distinguished observer of the economic scene. This was followed by ten contributions (*Mainstream*, April 10, May 1, May 8, May 29, June 12, June 19 and July 24). Here we publish two contributions — one from V.S. Thyagarajan, a reader in Madras, and the other from Dr Partha S. Ghosh of the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi. *Editor*

Which Way Economic Justice?

V.S. THYAGARAJAN

FOREIGN policy was Jawaharlal Nehru's forte, and even brilliant men like Krishna Menon were there only to assist him. Nehru's sense of history, world outlook and foresight found expression in the concept of non-alignment that became a viable external policy, not only for India but also for other Third World countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

It is generally accepted by political elements of Right, Centre and Left that our external policy of non-alignment, anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism shaped by Nehru in the fifties and followed as such by Indira Gandhi until now is progressive. But none of these forces does or can contend that our internal policies for economic development, the options and choices made to implement those policies have been progressive or radical. Progressive economic policies, if pursued for over three decades in an independent nation, would not leave 50 per cent of the population below the poverty line, another 30 per cent just above that line, and 65 per cent illiterate.

Internal policies have not been regressive either. There has been substantial economic growth at all levels, economic growth with economic injustice to the majority of the population. The poor have remained poor, with millions joining their ranks every year. Policies pursued by Nehru and Indira Gandhi, have left the majority socially and economically oppressed and made the minority bourgeoisie richer and stronger than ever.

This tragic situation brings us to the critical question: How could a progressive external policy co-exist without conflict and contradiction for more than three decades with internal policies that keep forty crores of people without good food, decent clothes, housing and education? There seems to be a missing link here, a historic contradiction that needs thorough scrutiny.

Fall of fascism and the end of the Second World War brought in their wake a world map altered in favour of socialism and a realignment of political and military power structures. The Soviet Union emerged glorious and heroic despite heavy losses in terms of men and material. Eastern Europe severed its ties with imperialism and accepted the ideology of socialism. In the late forties and early fifties the Soviet Union made tremendous efforts to build itself anew. It was of course peace time but the Soviet Union had to be vigilant and Hitler was not its last enemy. In just a decade after the War, the Soviet Union rebuilt its defence machinery to meet any possible challenge by imperialism whose centre of power structure had by then shifted from London to Washington.

This was the objective situation when non-alignment found its place between the two power blocs. Non-alignment was neither exclusive nor subjective. Non-alignment and the forces of socialism found themselves complementary to each other and their interests were harmonious and mutual. Non-aligned nations had to be anti-colonial; they had no choice. They were all former colonies of imperialism. Socialist forces, whose historic objective was to liberate mankind, chose to help the non-aligned nations politically and economically. Even the Soviet Union took some years to realise the historic potential of the non-aligned movement. The Soviet Union realised the need to align itself with the non-aligned for its own sake and for the sake of the non-aligned. At the United Nations, the Soviet Union has used all its powers, including the veto, to help India on many important issues, Kashmir being the most important. The Soviet Union recognised the fact that a non-aligned nation could not keep itself equi-distant from the forces of both socialism and imperialism and remain suspended in a vacuum.

After the Second World War, imperialism decided that socialism was its main enemy and treated forces of national liberation with hostility and contempt. How can one expect a sensitive and intelligent Nehru to have been neutral in relation to the forces of imperialism and socialism? He had to be anti-imperialist at the political level; he had no choice just as he had no choice regarding anti-colonialism. Anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism were historic necessities and compulsions caused by forces of historic development.

Nehru was not anti-imperialist when it came to the question of modernising Indian industry. He wanted to build a sound infrastructure and sought the help of the West, particularly the USA, sincerely. But their terms were unfavourable and their conditions unacceptable. Only the Soviet Union then and since has been helping India on terms of mutual benefit, trust and co-operation.

Thus we find Nehru's non-alignment had its limited success more due to external factors than due to factors on which he had any control. This was proved in tragic terms in 1962 when socialist China invaded India over the Himalayas. Nehru found himself alone and isolated. Nehru realised at the cost of his own and the nation's honour that a simple non-aligned theory of equi-distance between socialism and imperialism was naive and that this theory needed in a greater measure a sense of logic, history and realism. Realising the depth of these factors, Indira Gandhi entered into a treaty of friendship and co-operation with the USSR in 1971, before the liberation of Bangladesh. Imperialist forces lost no time in finding the right kind of rapport with China; in 1972 Nixon was shaking hands with Chou En-lai at Shanghai.

The core of imperialism lies in its economic power and we were never anti-imperialist in that sense. The years since the Second World War witnessed imperialism building itself anew with Japan, the EEC countries and the USA as its main pillars. Between themselves these countries have enough power to shape the world capitalist market with which India is being linked more and more closely each year. These countries shield themselves with protectionism and by shrewd and ruthless import and export policies keep India and other Third World countries at their mercy with a widening trade gap and severe strain on foreign exchange resources. Multinational corporations of the West are like tentacles of the imperialist octopus; India of course has its share of MNCs.

Neither Nehru nor Indira Gandhi ever exhibited any anti-imperialist fervour in the core economic field. It has been merely political. When the USA treats us with hostility and contempt, we are forced to oppose it and criticise it. When the USA extends a three billion dollars arms package to the military junta in neighbouring Pakistan, we are forced to oppose it and criticise it. Is this anti-imperialism? If it is, is it enough to build a country of our size on principles of self-reliance and economic justice?

Why should the Left support a Nehru or an Indira Gandhi? When Vallabhbhai Patel took it upon himself to ruthlessly suppress the Communists in 1948, Nehru looked the other way. After the 1952 general election, the Communists emerged as a force to reckon with, next only to the Congress Party. What support did Nehru give to the Communists then? What respect did he show to the Left? When Nehru himself became the Prime Minister with about 45 per cent of polled votes for his party in a simple majority electoral system — in all the three general elections he faced he got less than 50 per cent of the votes polled — he chose to ignore the real influence of the Communists among the masses. For the first time in India, perhaps in the world, in 1957 Communists were voted to power in a State through ballot. E.M.S. Namboodiripad became the Chief Minister of Kerala and our parliamentary democrats removed their masks showing their ugly face to the reality of Communists being voted to power in one State. The EMS Ministry was dismissed in 1959 — Indira Gandhi was the President of the Congress then — and Nehru thought it was good riddance. For Nehru and his disciples, anti-imperialism and anti-Communism co-existed in harmony.

After the 1962 Chinese invasion, some communists were arrested even when the Communist Party was propagating among the people its resolution condemning the Chinese invasion. Obviously Nehru's Government was acting on intelligence reports and by then perhaps Nehru was disgusted with all Communists — Chinese and Indian.

It is not correct to contend that the Communists would have strengthened themselves by strengthening Nehru's Government. This contention, besides lacking any objective basis, is an insult to the Communists who never did need anybody's sufferance to be a political force.

It is to be inferred from the above arguments that Nehru's and Indira Gandhi's external policy has not been as progressive as it appeared to be. Had it been so, it would have compelled the Government to pursue an equally progressive internal policy to strike an equilibrium between the two. We should not go by Nehru's or Indira Gandhi's image in these affairs. Judging the past from the present state of affairs, we have to infer that the external policy has been only as progressive as the internal policy has there as been no appreciable antagonism between the internal and external policies pursued by successive governments.

It is true that our public sector has become a counter-vailing power to the monopolist-capitalist-big landlord alliance and that Nehru was largely responsible for assigning to this sector the commanding heights of the economy. It is also true that the Left have to do their best to make all public sector units economically viable, highly productive, efficient and profitable. For this reason it is not necessary to support Indira Gandhi or her party or her Government. Indira Gandhi's Government or for that matter any other Government led by a bourgeois party represents essentially the interests of the ruling elite, and the ruling elite would never tolerate a public sector that will consolidate itself against their class interests and against the interests of the private sector. As far as the monopolists and landlords are concerned, the public sector is there to provide infrastructural facilities, to manage industries where the gestation period is long, investment is huge and profit margin is low. The public sector has not so far strayed into the exclusive domains of the private sector to provide basic necessities to our citizens.

In the euphoric days after the 1969 Congress split, when an American commentator was asked to assess Indira Gandhi, he said, "Mrs Gandhi is left of centre in her own self-interest." Both Nehru and Indira Gandhi have had no party machinery to implement their plans and programmes. The Congress Party was ultra-democratic during Nehru's time, and under Indira Gandhi's dispensation it is no party at all. It is her own political outfit. Seventeen years of Nehru's rule and thirteen years of Indira Gandhi's rule reveal in retrospect that both have been failures. They failed the poor millions who trusted and respected them and who voted them to poor.

Only a Left and democratic alternative can make a dent on poverty of this magnitude. Monopoly and textile industries should be nationalised and wholesale trade in foodgrains, edible oils, pulses and other essential commodities should be taken over by the Government. We should have appreciable import substitution instead of the present policy of import liberalisation. The economy should get rid of the present export orientation. Precious resources should not be wasted in consumer industries producing sophisticated and luxury articles.

We have listened for years to pep talk on land reforms but landless agricultural workers continue to suffer. If the Government can strike at the root of benami land holdings, distribute the surplus among the landless, bring more and more uncultivated land under cultivation by irrigation and proper methods of water management, we will be able to produce not less than 200 million tonnes of foodgrains each year. And we will be under no compulsion to export essential commodities as at present due to the poor purchasing capacity of the rural poor.

At present marginal and poor peasants find their small land holdings economically unviable. Therefore there is no point in handing over surplus land to the landless which, besides making them petty property minded, also will fail to break the vicios circle of subsidised inputs to start with and low procurement prices resulting in losses to the producer. The poor peasants, marginal farmers and the landless workers who receive the surpuls lands should be asked to organise farm co-operatives, leasing out their lands to such co-operatives. They should get their share of agricultural produce after harvest and the rest should be procured by Government agencies. These co-operatives should get inputs like seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, etc., at subsidised rates, while subsidised inputs should be denied to non-cooperative farms and rich farmers. Workers in co-operative farms should be entitled to social security benefits like life insurance, provident fund, medical care, etc.

Today the ruling elites perpetrate economic injustice, exploitation and oppression of the poor while earning money and again while spending it. While earning, income gets transferred from the poor to the rich, and when it is spend, it generates a whole lot of economic vices and offences like black market, artificial scarcity, high prices, etc. The rich should be taxed more while sparing the majority poor from oppressive direct and indirect taxes. Only a Left and democratic Government at the Centre can prevent a minority from cornering vast resources and can distribute the national income justly among all sections of the population. □

Problem Primarily Political

PARTHA S. GHOSH

DEVELOPMENT is a complex phenomenon. There is hardly any agreement about its purpose, means or methods. Argument is still on as to what comes first — political development or economic development. Or, whether the two should go side by side. Or, whether something more than political and economic development is at the core, say spiritual development. And so on.

No society can claim that its chosen path of development has satisfied all its members. The United States, for example, should be ashamed of the seamy side of American life which Michael Harrington called the "Other America." John there. But in the post-Mao era, when with the process of liberalisation more information started pouring in about life there, the same people started revising their notions. Now there are reports of poverty, unemployment and crime. These are only a few samples. But if this is the situation in the so-called successful, development-oriented countries, one can imagine what must be the case in the not-so-developed ones or the less developed ones which contain the bulk of humanity.

To my mind any discussion of Indian development has to be preceded by discussion on political under one political umbrella, diversities in term of regional development and in terms of benefits enjoyed by the English-knowing elites and non-English-knowing masses continued. These were in addition to the general socio-economic diversities. One of the most important achievements of the national freedom movement was its success in bringing together within one fold diverse elements and interests to fight for a common cause. The Indian National Congress, which came to represent these various interests, served as a single unifying platform. By its anti-British agitation for more than half a century and by its 35 years of almost uninterrupted rule since Independence the Congress contributed to the formation of a political culture in India the guiding principle of which has been governance through consensus.

Jawaharlal Nehru clearly understood that the consensus strategy evolved under the leadership of Gandhi had not outlived its utility. In the plural society that is India, that was the only strategy which could present a viable government through a policy of accommodation of various facets of opinion. So he shunned both political extremes of Left and Right and opted for a middle course. This got expression in his choice of the development model based on the principle of mixed economy.

Nehru's developmental prescription was planned growth. Much of the inspiration came from the Soviet Union. Though critical of the Stalinist regime for many reasons, on one point Nehru was all praise for it. As early as 1933, in a letter to his daughter, he wrote: "The argument about the success or otherwise of the Five-Year Plan is rather a pointless one. The answer to it is really the present state of the Soviet Union. And a further answer is the fact that this plan has impressed itself on the imagination of the world. Everybody talks of 'planning' now, and of Five-Year and Ten-Year and Three-Year Plans. The Soviets have put magic into the word." During the late thirties, at a meeting of ministers of industry from the Congress provinces, he mooted the idea of setting up a National Planning Committee. When it was established Nehru himself became its chairman, and it comprised not only Congressmen but scientists, economists, businessmen and industrialists as well.

In spite of the fact that Nehru was convinced that the socialist model was the only pragmatic answer for India's economic problems he was aware that in the Indian socio-political milieu the concept would not be easily accepted. Therefore he was always cautious not to overplay the idea of socialism. His biographer, S. Gopal, has aptly said that "what Jawaharlal hoped to do was to lead his party and the Indian middle classes generally to socialism without their knowing it."

After Independence Nehru's choice of the mixed economy model reflected the same cautious approach. All those who argue that had Nehru been able to win the support of the Left or had the latter extended its support to Nehru, Indian development would have successfully taken an altogether different course, miss the vital element of Nehruvian strategy. Nehru was ever aware of the plurality of Indian society and polity and his economic strategy was a product of this judgement. "What makes the Plan complicated", Nehru said, "is that we have to deal with not measureable things like steel and cement but with 360 million human beings, each of whom is different from the others". He realised that politics determined all national choices including economic ones.

At the time of Independence, India had a fairly developed capitalist class and Nehru had neither the capacity nor the will to alienate it totally from his developmental efforts. He rather wanted to integrate it into the national planning that he had conceived.

Those who think Nehru was a great socialist must bear in mind that he was a democrat first and had many misgivings about socialism in its political dimensions. He did not subscribe to the idea of class struggle which he felt was merely disruptive. His politics was one of registering as much support as possible from all the diverse segments of Indian opinion. Against the background of his commitment to democracy and his aversion to class conflict, his talk of socialism might be interpreted as a ploy to out manoeuvre the Indian Left. He successfully brought the Left movement into an electoral process which in course of time created a vested interest for the Left parties in elections, diminishing the chances of armed class conflict.

Many writers are prone to see the fall of Krishna Menon in the aftermath of Sino-Indian border conflict as Nehru's surrender to conservative forces within the party. This interpretation appears to be simplistic. The Indian military debacle had given a severe jolt to Nehru's individual and nationalistic pride. Any student of human psychology would agree that man is by nature prone to look for a scapegoat for his failures in the face of criticism. When Nehru's critics themselves insisted on indicting Menon, Nehru only half-heartedly protested before eventually giving way. Menon was a trusted friend of Nehru no doubt, but one must understand that however great Nehru was, he was not above human weakness.

Consensus strategy having been the basis of Nehru's politics, it must be emphasised, even at the risk of repetition, that the question of registering support of the Left at the cost of alienating the other forces did not arise. A natural corollary of this political choice was 'mixed economy'.

Viewed from this angle, no substantial shift has taken place in India during the last 35 years. To my mind, dividing the period into two — Nehru and post-Nehru phases — as Biman Sen has done (*Mainstream*, June 12, 1982) is utterly arbitrary. Sen himself has written that Indira Gandhi's "commitment to socialism and acceptance of the path of mixed economy carved out by Nehru have been clear."

Biman Sen's analysis of Emergency and the Janata regime also fails to suggest the basis on which he has chosen to distinguish the Nehru era from that following Nehru. Emergency was a complex phenomenon and quite off the Indian political milieu developed over the years. Considering it as an aberration, I am not discussing it here. This does not mean however that it did not have an impact on Indian polity. So far as the Janata experience was concerned it was in continuity with the basic element of Indian politics, that is, the shaping of political consensus. Janata rule was an effort, on a large scale, at the continuance of the consensus strategy, both vertically and horizontaly — vertical in the sense that various political parties joined together, and horizontal in the sense that a large section of the masses found their views represented in some leader or the other of the Janata party.

The argument that the Janata Party was a mixture of heterogeneous elements who had hardly anything in common which ultimately led to its collapse while the Congress is a homogeneous entity, is a myopic formulation. The Congress(I) probably has more factions than the Janata Party ever could think of. In the Congress Party what puts the factions together under one umbrella is the element of power. Once out of power and once that power is not in sight, the Congress will collapse like a house of cards. It is a strange phenomenon in Indian politics that the opposition parties tend to unite only when they are out of power while the Congress shows its unity (however illusory) only when it is in power.

Going back to the debate on socialism, it might be said that Indira Gandhi's commitment to it is as spurious as — or, viewing it more sympathetically, as politically expedient as — Nehru's was. But being a more ruthless politician than her father, she has indulged in a more aggressive assertion of socialism at the public level while doing nothing to harm private capitalist interests. While on one side her drive for socialism, epitomised in her 'Garibi Hatao' slogan, was attracting favourable mass attention, on the other private capital was having its heyday. The assets of the top twenty business houses grew by leaps and bounds and betwen 1969 and 1975 they rose from Rs 24 billion to Rs 44 billion.

There is nothing fundamentally wrong with free enterprise but the existence of the latter in degenerated politics leads to a dangerous situation. This is what has happened in India. Over the years political morality has touched its lowest point, resulting in a vicious alliance between the politicians and the capitalist class. Electoral process has been polluted by induction of big money. Whether money influences the electoral outcome or not is a moot point. The Indian people have lately shown a remarkable capacity for political judgement by ousting parties in power. But what is more important is the fact that political parties tend to believe that big money is necessary to win elections. Herein lies the crux of the problem. The nexus between big industrial houses and political parties augurs ill for the sanctity of the democratic process and creates a vicious circle when each develops a vested interest in the prosperity of the other.

How the democratic process can be salvaged from this rut is the big question. There is, however, no reason to be pessimistic. It is increasingly becoming clear that the people of India are getting politically socialised and conscious. Politicians are bound to realise soon that they cannot fool all the people all the time. □

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National Integration and Strategies of Development

B.K. ROY BURMAN

Levels of national integration may be considered with reference to infra-national, proto-national and sub-national movements and also with reference to formation of plural societies, multi-nationality nation states and multi-nation world systems.

Infra-national and proto-national movements are mainly found among tribal communities, particularly those who live in small village organisations in a dispersed manner, inter-acting with the outside world as distinct entities and at the same time controlling and managing resources in their immediate surrounding. With extension of effective communication and of the paraphernalia of a welfare state in almost all areas and with commercialisation of local products in some of these areas, the tribal communities are today faced with new challenge-response situations. The tribal communities perceive that as dispersed entities they will not be in a position to serve as pressure-groups to protect their interests. Almost as a reflex action, they tend to forge unity among themselves.

In North-East India particularly, one can see attempts to reinterpret, reiterate and elaborate traditional elements of culture and build up unified entities. Thus in Arunachal all tribes who claim to be descendants of the mythical Abo-teni would rally under this common symbol. This process of identity expansion can be termed as infra-nationalism when promoted by traditional elite, through adapting the functioning of the traditional communication network to serve modern needs. But there is also a phase, when the motive force and direction of identity expansion can be provided by the educated elite, through modern type of formal association. Among the Nagas, when the underground government was established, they consciously selected names for the different offices and institutions of their political set-up from the dialects of the different Naga tribes. Such a process can be termed proto-nationalism.

In the bulk of the central belt of India, it is proto-nationalism which prevails. The Jharkhand movement of Chotanagpur or the Adivasisthan movement of Gujarat are proto-national movements. While both infra and proto-national movements are movements for expansion of identity, there is an important difference between the two, apart from differences in the nature of elite and the medium of communication. The constituents of infra-national mobilisation are basically concerned to protect not only their traditional control over the resources associated with them, but also to retain the traditional pattern of use of the same. They are essentially moral entities. They are aware of the functioning of the nation-state power. But their response to it is in moral terms and not in political terms. Proto-national entities not only strive to retain their traditional resources base, but also demand share of services extended by the welfare state. Also, without striving for independent state power, they expect a share of state power. Following the line of analysis provided by Arright, Hopins and Wollerstein, it may also be considered whether the proto-national formation represents a fusion of class and status-groups in a nation-state perspective, where the nation-state is a part of a world system based on profit maximisation and marked by perpetuation and accentuation of disparities. Some of the mixed cultural and economic demands of the Jharkhand movement are pointers in this direction.

Proto-nationalism is to be sharply differentiated from sub-nationalism. Proto-nationalism is a phase of cultural expansion, sub-nationalism is a phase of contraction. There is no Bengali, or Oriya or Gujarati proto-nationalism; but there can be Bengali or Oriya or Gujarati sub-nationalism. The sub-national units accept national symbols, not only as a matter of political exigency, but also as moral imperatives. At the same time, in the competition for the services of the welfare state, the sub-national units entertain parochial loyalities in a clandestine manner. In sub-nationalism, there is a sense of guilt in not wholly identifying with the referrent nation-state; but in proto-nationalism there is no such sense of guilt. Thus proto-nationalism is not automatically disruptive of the national entity; but it can turn to be so, depending on the course that the nation-state takes.

Proto-national formation is not however a static feature. Internally it goes through a process of continuous change. At the same time, its presence in the long run tends to influence the character of the nation-state, of which it constitutes a part.

For examining the nature of the changes, it would be necessary to give a brief account of concepts like ethnic groups, multi-ethnic plural societies, nationalities, nations and so on.

In a general way any hereditary group with shared values, style of life, symbol of identity and consciousness of kind can be considered as an ethnic group. It is however generally agreed that nationalities and nation societies should not be described as ethnic groups.

Linked with the concept of nation is the question of symbols of national identity, control of resources and inherent tendency of organisation of state power which ultimately depends on the organisation of coercive power. Nationality also implies crystallisation of symbols of identity and exercise of prero-

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gatives in respect of resources; at the same time due to historical reasons, there is an inherent moral inhibition against organisation of separate political power.

The essential difference between a nation and nation society on the one hand and an ethnic group on the other is that whereas in the former membership can be acquired by volition, in the latter membership is ordinarily acquired by birth.

A distinction is also to be made between an ethnic group and a tribe. While an ethnic group shares many features with a tribal organisation, all ethnic groups are not tribes. Generally a tribal community has historical association with or prerogative in respect of some productive resources; an ethnic group may or may not have such prerogative. Besides, while tribal societies are relatively closed societies, all ethnic groups may not be closed societies to the same extent. Another clarification at the conceptual level may also be given here. Generally tribal social organisation is associated with simple technology, lack of specialisation except that based on sex and age and has little of internal stratification. Even where departures from these attributes have taken place, these are generally recent phenomena, through the intervention of external agencies including the state, and the cognitive/effective processes of the communities have not been significantly influenced by the same. These are post-primitive tribes. There are many ethnic groups which do not belong to this category.

With these clarifications of concepts we shall turn to the social process in the proto-national formations and in the states where such formations exist.

Depending on two types of historical situations, proto-national formations over a length of time tend to form parts of multi-ethnic plural societies. They may also turn into nationalities sharing state power in multi-nationality nation-states.

There is one type of historical situation where conditions for the formation of multi-nationality nation-states are created through the disruption of colonial feudal alliances, but without complete disruption of feudal or feudalistic structures. There is another historical situation where, through the disruption of nascent-feudal primitive symbiotic relations, proto-national formations tend to give equal importance to commodity value of the endowments of nature within their jurisdiction and to the social value of the same.

In the first type of situation, multi-ethnic plural societies come into existence. For a long time, liberal opinion in different countries has been looking upon such societies as an ideal type. Of late, however, this is being challenged. The critics point out that plural societies are mortgaged to the unseen bondage of a single reference group in at least one sphere of life, which in the long run regulates the processes in other spheres. Non-interference in social and cultural processes in the context of a relentless effort to create a monopoly market, for instance, is a mechanism by which centre-periphery framework or organisation of political and economic power is maintained. In the bulk of the areas of India, multi-ethnic plural societies prevail in internal social arrangement; at the same time, in the context of organisation of state power of the Indian Union, they display many features of nationalities.

In the second type of historical situation, the protonational formations aspire to constitute themselves as nationalities in multi-nationality state structures. The formation of tribal states of Meghalaya, Nagaland or the Union Territories of Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh in North-East India, is a manifestation of this trend.

It is, however, not inevitable that proto-national formations of the tribals will always turn into nationalities. Much depends on the adaptive responses of the nation-state itself to the presence of the proto-national formations aspiring for a share in state power.

As already hinted, the primary organisational principle of proto-national formations is moral binding between man and man, and man and nature. On the other hand, though not the whole, the core of state power is coercive power. Presence of nationality state structures like Nagaland, Mizoram evolved out of proto-national formations, side by side with States within the Indion Union, like Maharashtra, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, which are functionally plural societies and historically nationalities, poses several problems for each type of formation. In the former case, "individual" is an anathema; in the latter case collectivity based on birth is an anachronism. In case of multi-tribal nationalities, functioning of the state without reference to the social entity to which the individual belongs, is a corruption of the system. The individual reacts either by falling in line with state-induced corruption and thus alienating himself from society, or by taking recourse to counter-corruption against the state system and thus saving his soul in respect of society.

There is much talk of corruption in the States formed out of proto-national background; but it is not realised that there is a moral basis of corruption in the context of the functioning of the state apparatus. In States like West Bengal, Assam, Orissa with plural society background, at the ideological level individuals are free citizens; at the same time, at the effective level, historical prerogatives of collectivities continue. The conflict between ideological orientation and effective commitments creates a deadlock.

The situation has been aggravated by serious lacunae in the Constitution of India. While the States have been formed primarily on the basis of language, there is no provision in the statute guaranteeing consistent application of the principle in the functioning of the state. In the wake of economic development or on geopolitical considerations, the demographic composition may change; but the Constitution is silent as to whether the historical prerogatives of the core ethnic group will continue in political offices or in cultural and social matters. Sub-nationalism, which is a negation of the earlier phase of identity expansion comes up in this context. This is what has happened in Assam or in parts of North-East India in an acute form. But in varying degrees of intensity this is an all-India phenomenon.

Faced with the dilemma of corruption of the indigenous social systems on the one hand and erosion of political base on the other, the nation-state in India has two alternatives today. The Constitution may be redrawn to convert India into a consistent multi-nationality nation-state; in the alternative, the principle of federalism may be given up and India may be converted into a full-fledged unitary state. The presence of the States evolved out of protonational formation of the tribes will however make it extremely difficult for a unitary state to function effectively without recourse to massive coercive power, backed by forces of international domination. To those who hold federalism of Indian polity to be a basic precondition for ensuring the continuation of the democratic processes, the proto-national formation based states are the protecting watchman. Carrying the analogy further, it can be stated they are the guardian angels against the nation-state of India being inexorably drawn into a world system depending on massive power of physical force and not on the power of moral persuasion.

With this appraisal of the Indian polity, brief notice will be taken of the strategies of development. In case of the international and proto-national formations one basic fact is not to be lost sight of. They look upon their habitat not only as a repository of resources but as the spatial nexus for the functioning of their social organisation. Overwhelmingly major portion of the resources are owned, controlled or managed by the immediate communities as corporate entities. Any strategy of development which ignores this situational reality, is only a strategy of resource mobilisation for monopoly interests at the national level; but is not a strategy of development of the people or of the area. In case of infra-national formations, the strategy of development will also have to be linked up with the strategy of meeting the immediate needs of health, education and security against natural calamity. In case of the communities where proto-national aspirations have crystallised, emphasis is to be given to skill formation and manpower planning, to devising institutional framework in harmony with the community system of ownership and control of resources. At the same time, production priorities are to be so scheduled that the basic needs of the population are met out of the same, requiring minimum of welfare measures.

In case of the rest of the country, while a second look at the constitutional provisions is needed to ensure consistent functioning of the federal structure of the political apparatus of the nation and consistent crystallisation of multi-nationality state, social and economic planning for removal of vestiges of the feudalistic past and for integrated development of the productive forces so that the needs of the weaker section serve as the central concern of all activities, is urgently called for. The last, however, is a Herculean job. Frequently, programmes ostensibly meant for the weaker sections are really not suitable for them. These are based on experiences of the planners and implementing agencies derived from their urban middle-class background.

Integration in the ultimate analysis means reorientation. And this is the challenge of the day. □

Tribals and Democratic Institutions

S. NARAYAN and BINOD KUMAR

THE tribal has his own style of life. But every community is sooner or later exposed to forces of change and development. These forces generally do not rise within the community but generally come from outside as agents of change. These agents may cause change in the life and conditions of the community, but then all changes are not development (as all development is not change). This is also true of the tribal society of Bihar.

There are thirty tribes in Bihar. The bulk of them are distributed in the Santhal Pargana and Chotanagpur plateau. Santhal, Munda, Oraon and Ho are the dominant ethnic groups, whereas Sauria Paharia, a minor ethnic group, faces extinction.

With the advent of Independence, adoption of the Constitution, breakthrough in modes of production with rapid industrialisation and urbanisation, setting up of the Planning Commission, formulation and implementation of different programmes and policies, spread of education, new agricultural tools, techniques and technology have had a far-reaching impact on the social system and values. These forces have also influenced the tribal world of Bihar in varying degrees and have had a profound effect in shaping the nature and course of their orientation and activity.

Much earlier, the missionaries had their networks in the tribal regions and played a vital role in awakening the tribals. Intervention by non-tribals in their culture, their contact with the outside world, rapid mobility ushered in by new and sophisticated means of communication and transportation brought them close to the non-tribal world. These contacts of the tribal people with the non-tribal world did not merely bring about change; the tribals became tools and suffered all sorts of humiliation and exploitation at the hands of non-tribals. Obviously there is a difference between the way the non-tribal looks at the tribals and the way the tribal looks at the world outside. One cannot expect the two ways to be identical, but an understanding of the different attitudes is the first requisite for establishing meaningful contact and

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popular participation in the various developmental schemes and programmes meant for the tribals.

The earlier development programmes on the whole did not cut much ice. It is not that the programmes were faulty (a few of course were), but the manner of their implementation by the administrators did not show much empathy for the tribal's point of view and their social and cultural life. For carrying out such a huge sub-plan the basic need is to evolve an appropriate administrative machinery.

In planning for the poor — planning from below, with the people as partners — the planners will have to rise above the culture of the bureaucracy, sit with the people, get to understand their views and attitudes. Only then can the fruits of the plan go to the genuinely needy section of society for whom it is meant. The feeling among tribal voluntary agencies and organisations of being kept at arm's length should be taken note of and as many areas of cooperation as possible should be sought.

A plan of action designed to modify the economy, social structure and health standards is doomed to failure if it is not based on prior detailed knowledge of the institutions and patterns of culture involved, of the local traditions and value systems. Too often planners and administrators are ignorant of or undervalue the fact that each culture is an integrated whole which functions like a complex gear in which each component is related to the others. We should help the tribals find a place for themselves in the wider society consistent with their conception of honour and without detriment to the integrity and strength of the nation.

If we wish to serve, we must show we have respect for the tribes and their institutions, their language and their culture. By showing such respect we can secure their trust. For this reason, everyone connected with the implementation of tribal welfare plans should make it his first task to familiarise himself with the local language, to understand the customs and urges of the people and share fully in their life as one of them. The administration is supposed to establish partnership between the Government and the tribal people and beyond, and not confine itself to the culture of the bureaucratic set-up as is usually the case.

It has been observed that we often commit the mistake of identifying area development with tribal development. Area development and tribal development are two distinct concepts requiring distinctive approaches.

What all these suggest are interaction between tribal and non-tribal people, and participation of each segment in plan formulation and implementation. What remains to be explored is their awareness and participation in the different democratic institutions. Participation may involve awareness. We may participate in the deliberations of various institutions for the sake of the prestige and honour this may bring. It may be that we are aware of several things, but still do not participate in many of them. What this reveals is that participation is selective. We select areas that concern us directly or indirectly and leave out those which in our view are irrelevant. It may be true that those that we deem irrelevant may bring nothing of direct benefit to us. Perhaps this is why we do not take interest or participate in tribal plans implementation.

Tribal participation is distinct from non-tribal participation. Their participation is subject to their awareness and is not necessarily selective. Most of the participation by tribals in democratic institutions is recent — late seventies and early eighties. However, their awareness and participation are not so much in relation to social, economic and political institutions as in relation to schemes and programmes for their development which these institutions launch from time to time. This is justified because the fruits of every scheme and programme which reach them partly or fully have a concrete aspect which institutions as such lack. Moreover, the trusted headman of the village who usually holds charge of these works is known to them and they do not make a distinction between his traditional authority and the Government bodies which act through him.

A study conducted in four blocks of Ranchi district by the senior author regarding economic and political participation of tribals brought out certain trends. The total tribal membership of multipurpose cooperative societies rose from 169 during 1974-75 to 209 during 1977-78. This is indicative of increased participation as well as of benefits being desired by the tribal people of the locality. If the total money drawn by Scheduled Tribes from these societies is taken into account, it also indicates gradual increase in their participation in these institutions — it rose from Rs 1,11,656 during 1974-75 to Rs 3,38,395 during 1977-78. The 342 tribals of different panchayats have benefited from the developmental programmes — that is, distribution of seeds, fertiliser, pesticides and insecticides — executed through different Panchayati Raj institutions alone in the Khunti block.

Apart from such societies, the land mortgage bank, regional rural bank, etc., have been functioning to accelerate the pace of economic development of the tribals of Bihar. Panchayati Raj institutions are playing an important role in getting loans sanctioned to the tribals of the region.

It was seen that the tribals were getting benefit from the Food for Work Programme in the areas under the Panchayat Samitis and statutory panchayats. Several roads connecting tribal villages to the main road have been constructed by the voluntary labour (shramdan) of the tribal people of the locality under the supervision of the village panchayat. Schools have been constructed by such voluntary effort. This is clear evidence of increased participation in the various development schemes and programmes.

But what about participation in the structural aspects of these institutions? Participation at the compositional level of the institutions has shown a rising trend. Thus, Tribal Mukhiyas accounted for 49.6 per cent and 52.8 per cent of the total Mukhiyas of Ranchi district in 1972 and 1978 respectively. The total number of tribals holding different offices in the panchayats of Ranchi is 4,169 — as compared to 4,131 in 1972.

This study is confined to Ranchi district and it will be erroneous to assume that the position is similar everywhere in the tribal areas of Bihar. There are tribes in whose case we cannot even speak of their general awareness; participation is clearly out of question. Among these, Sauria Paharia may be mentioned. A study conducted recently revealed that no one under the sample study knew even the name of the Prime Minister of India or of the Chief Minister of Bihar.

An important question is whether increased awareness and participation will mean a threat to their identity. If we examine it closely, we find there have been three streams of thinking regarding the approach to tribal groups. First, the discredited approach of isolating the tribal groups and allowing them to continue to "develop" within the context of isolation. A second approach has been of assimilation. The idea here is that the tribal people would become part of the total society and join the mainstream. The third is a convergence of divergent cultures without loss of identity and individuality. The implications of such an approach are extremely complex.

Indiscriminate urban contacts have been mainly responsible for the decline in tribal traditions of art, social conduct (the youth dormitory) and culture (the traditional panchayat, etc). Many of their arts are fast disappearing. Animated dances and songs which were once the life-breath of the tribal people are slowly receding. There is a shift in their interests and they are losing interest in their own customs and practices and developing an inferiority complex. These are the threats feared by some sociologists and anthropologists about tribal identity.

The problem is how to reconcile reform with preserving the existing cultural pattern. The rich traditions expressed in arts and crafts, in song and dance, are an essential part of the tribal personality. One way in which the continuity of these can be assured is to adopt tribal symbols in our culture. One cannot expect the tribal people to stay where they are. They have to progress, which means change, and change involves selection and final adoption of new values for a new life.

Therefore, there should be positive efforts to make them aware enough to participate in the various democratic institutions. The success of democratic institutions lies in the extent of participation by the people for whom they are meant. What is needed is to accelerate the process further to facilitate their coming into the mainstream of national life and culture without losing their identity and cherished values which remain valid. ☐

TURKEY

Repression Now, 'Democracy' Later

SAM CORBIN

In strategically-located Turkey, where the United States' military presence and economic backing are increasingly felt, repression is on the upswing, striking people of widely-varying views from far-Left organisers and militant trade unionists to Left-liberal politicians, peace partisans and social democrats.

According to the latest report by an investigation team of the International Association of Democratic Jurists, no fewer than 3,559 death sentences are being demanded by Government prosecutors in the hundreds of political trials currently under way. Fifteen executions have already been carried out since the September 1980 military coup and Amnesty International has signalled more than a hundred deaths under torture.

In contrast with the United States' unabashed support for the junta, Western European institutions

[redacted]

Constitution will undoubtedly exclude all "extremist", "subversive" or "communist" tendencies and leave little legal scope for independent reform movements or progressive activity.

At the beginning of July, France, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands filed complaints with the European Commission for Human Rights in Strasbourg, charging the Turkish military junta with political repression and torture. The French External Relations Ministry declared that France was filing its complaint because, according to available information, "basic principles concerning human rights were not being applied in Turkey."

Among the principal targets of the current wave of repression are leaders and militants of the Turkish Communist Party, of the Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions (DISK), of the Turkish

People's Party, (RPP), which is officially affiliated with the Socialist International.

It is the increasingly wide scope of the military regime's web of repression that has caused particular concern in the social democratic and liberal circles of Western Europe. With the axe falling on the necks both of trade unionists and RPP politicians — who are accused of no other crime than that of being associated with the "subversive" labour movement — it is becoming clearer that the junta's announced aim of "stamping out terrorism" was only the political smokescreen for a ruthless attempt to stifle all democratic opposition to its unpopular economic policies of austerity for the poor and ever-expanding profits for the trusts, both local and multinational.

The persecution and repeated prosecution of Bulent Ecevit — president of the now-disbanded Republican People's Party and Prime Minister on two occasions — is a case in point. Ecevit, who was immediately jailed, like the leaders of all other political parties just following the September 1980 military takeover, has been constantly in and out of jail because of his public criticism of the anti-democratic methods of the military junta.

He was jailed last December for violating a junta decree against political statements by former leading politicians. Released two months later in February 1982, he was imprisoned again in April for the "crime" of speaking against the junta and, specifically, of giving interviews to various foreign press organs. After 53 more days behind bars, he was freed again in June, when a Norwegian journalist, to whom Ecevit was accused of having given an interview, denied having met the former Premier and said his information had come from other sources.

The following month, Ecevit was briefly jailed again when he was accused once more of engaging in public criticism of the junta. Sentenced to two months and 27 days in prison, the 56-year-old politician was allowed to go free pending ratification of the sentence by the Ankara Martial Law Command.

The sentence against Ecevit was immediately denounced by the Council of Europe, by the Prime Minister of Denmark, Anker Jorgensen — whose request to visit Ecevit in prison was rejected by the junta — and by Ron Hayward, General Secretary of the British Labour Party.

Along with the prosecution of Ecevit, the entire Republican People's Party has been subjected to governmental harassment, provoked by accusations brought against it by the lawyers of the fascist National Action Party (whose leaders are also on trial, ironically!) The members of the RPP executive council and 260 former RPP Members of Parliament have been called in one after the other for questioning by the military tribunal concerning their suspected "links with the Communists and terrorists."

More serious still, the Government prosecutor is calling for the death penalty against two former RPP deputies, Ertugral Gunal and Temel Ates, held in a military prison for the crime of "collaborating with the Communists."

Meanwhile, the trial of 52 progressive trade unionists of DISK — who are facing the death penalty if pronounced guilty — is edging toward its conclusion. During the trial proceeding, the President of DISK, Abdullah Bastrk, was constantly interrupted and muzzled by the military judge who refused to let him express his views and describe the aims and activities of his union. A French lawyer present at the trial as an observer for the World Federation of Trade Unions declared: "The rights of the defence are repeatedly thwarted. The accused must struggle to make his voice heard despite the arrogant, fascist attitude of the prosecution and the military judge."

For what official reasons do these trade unionists face the prospect of being hanged? The indictment against them states, among other things, that the last DISK convention advocated expanding the legal right to strike so as to facilitate sympathy strikes and general strikes in the future. "Such strikes," declares the indictment, "are an aspect of Marxist-Leninist ideology; they are political."

The same indictment points an accusing finger at the clause in the DISK constitution advocating a policy of "thoroughgoing land reform" in the interest of the small peasants. Since DISK is a Marxist-Leninist organisation, its conception of land reform can only be a Marxist-Leninist conception.

So for advocating strike action and land reform— among other things — these progressive unionists will soon be put to death, unless a sufficiently powerful hue and cry is raised around the world to make it politically unprofitable for the regime to carry out its intention. Already, protests have been voiced by the World Federation of Trade Unions, the European Trade Union Federation, the trade unions of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and the GDR, the French CGT Electrical Workers Union and Renault Auto-Workers Union, the British Trade Union Congress, the trade unions of Portugal, of Italy, of Greece, of Sweden, and elsewhere.

With the Turkish trade unions—except for the conservative, class-collaborationist Turk-Is — under lock and key, the industrial workers of that country are temporarily without means of defence in a situation of continuing high unemployment (over 15 per cent according to official statistics) and constantly-diminishing buying-power (real wages have declined by 50 per cent since 1978, also according to official figures). A Turkish economist recently calculated that average monthly food expenses for a family of four amount to nearly three times the minimum wage.

Yet the International Monetary Fund, which early this spring sent an investigating team to Turkey to lay down the conditions for a new loan, expressed complete satisfaction with Turkey's "economic stabilisation" programme. This involves belt-tightening measures for the bulk of the population, the easing of all previous restrictions on profit-making by the big firms, the elimination of price controls, the opening up of the economy to the unhindered penetration of foreign capital, the drastic reduction of credits for social services and the public sector of the economy.

Both the IMF and the World Bank have thus decided to do their best to support the Turkish economy, which is being managed along approved "free enterprise" lines. The President of the World Bank, Clausen, recently declared that the Turkish economy was "doing fine" and congratulated the Turkish Government's Economics Minister, Turgut Ozal, for his successful efforts. He then announced, that the World Bank would grant the junta a new 200 million dollar loan for "providing a beautiful example of economic development".

The US Government, for its part, has also stepped up both its economic and military aid to the junta, which it looks upon as a key factor in NATO's strategic set-up along Europe's vital southern flank —all the more so after the downfall of a "regional gendarme" like the Shah of Iran and the outbreak of wars in the oil-rich Middle East.

Thus, American economic assistance to Turkey has been increased by 17 per cent for the coming year, while the military aid package is slated to go up from 8 billion dollars in 1982 to 9.4 billion dollars in 1983.

Numerous American bases in Turkey serve to spy on the Soviet Union and some of them are soon expected to harbour the troops and equipment of the Rapid Deployment Force with a view to eventual intervention to defend US interests or investments in the Middle East area. Turkey's unenviable role as an "unsinkable aircraft-carrier"—the favourite expression of Pentagon strategists in the fifties — is being enhanced considerably.

One sign of the close military and economic co-operation between Washington and the junta is the recent statement of the President of the Northrop arms firm that he would be willing, if an agreement is reached, to sell Turkey his most up-to-date planes, the F18s. The American merchant of death was also quoted in Turkish newspapers as being ready to invest in the Turkish economy a sum "equal to the country's entire national budget."

But while the United States is expanding its economic and military aid to the junta, the European Economic Community has been reconsidering its support for the present Ankara regime. As a result, this institution has suspended a 600-million dollar aid package and threatened further sanctions unless the Government alters its repressive policies. Under the circumstances, the junta has been doing its best (as did the preceding Ankara regimes) to cultivate its economic relations with both its Balkan and Middle Eastern neighbours, in the hope of avoiding too exclusive — and too obvious — a state of dependence on the United States.

Thus, Turkey's trade with the various countries, oil-producing or not, of the Middle East region has been on the upswing. Some examples: the sale of Turkish meat to Jordan, Iran and Syria — the kind of deal the Ankara Government encouraged by granting a large tax rebate to the exporters — and Turkey's purchase of two billion tons of oil from Libya, a country where various Turkish contractors have been doing a great deal of engineering and construction work. It has been reported that US officials are privately uneasy about the extensive Turkish commercial relations with a country that Washington has been trying to isolate and boycott.

At the same time, the junta — despite its almost obsessive anti-Communism — has been expanding its already sizeable commercial transactions with the countries of the Soviet bloc and the Balkans area. General Evren recently became the first Turkish head of state to make a state visit to neighbouring Bulgaria, a country that has for quite a few years been supplying Turkey, under its successive regimes, with a large proportion of its electricity. Trade with the Soviet Union and Poland is also flourishing.

But the relative diversification of Turkey's trade relations cannot conceal Washington's preponderant impact on that country's economic and political life and Ankara's role as an important military and strategic pawn of the United States in its attempt to tighten its grip on the Middle East in a period of war and revolution. (*July 13*)□

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Punjab's Industrial Backwardness

Causes and Remedies

SUCHA SINGH GILL and M.S. BEDI

PUNJAB suffered colonial exploitation and was subjected to colonial division of labour under British rule. The State was developed as an agricultural zone to supply food and agricultural raw materials and as a market for British manufactured goods. As a part of colonial economy, handicrafts and traditional industries underwent disintegration. Whereas some other centres witnessed limited development of modern industries, Punjab achieved very little in this sphere. The partition of the country shattered the economy of Punjab.

In the post-Independence period, the State not only recovered from the blow of partition but attained a high rate of growth. The State has come to acquire the highest per capita income in the country, largely due to rapid growth of agriculture. The State's economy has experienced very little diversification and continues to be predominantly agrarian. The share of the industrial sector in the State's total domestic product improved marginally from 7.93 per cent in 1950-51 to 10.19 per cent in 1978-79. The proportion of the labour force employed in this sector declined from 15.59 per cent in 1961 to 11.83 per cent in 1971. The share of the agriculture sector of the total labour force increased from 55.89 per cent to 62.67 per cent during the same period. The primary sector contributed 54.01 per cent to domestic product in 1960-61, which increased to 56.79 per cent in 1976-77. The share of the secondary sector improved marginally from 15.63 per cent to 16.15 per cent during the same period.

In this background a feeling is developing that the State may lose its lead in economic growth. Some experts express the fear that in agriculture little potential is left for further expansion under the given conditions. Therefore, there is urgent need for industrialisation. The purpose of this paper is to study: (a) the stage of industrial activity in the State and pattern of industrial structure; (b) potential for expansion offered by the emerging industrial structure; and (c) measures necessary for industrialisation.

The industrial structure of Punjab, as it has emerged, gives the appearance of primitive stage of development. Most of the industrial units are very small and are based on family labour. The tools used in production are simple and are owned by the family. A majority of these enterprises are not even registered as industrial units. They are called unregistered manufacturing units. Break-up of industrial output of the State shows that unregistered manufacturing contributes an important part of the total product. In 1970-71 such enterprises contributed 48.3 per cent of the total output of the industrial sector. This decreased to 45.2 per cent in 1978-79. The share of registered manufacturing increased from 51.7 per cent to 54.8 per cent during the same period. Though the share of unregistered manufacturing has declined, yet it is quite high. Details of the share of unregistered manufacturing in Punjab is shown in Table 1. A comparison of the share of unregistered manufacturing units in the industrial output of Punjab with that of India shows that this sector has a bigger role in Punjab. As shown in Tables 1 and 2, this share has remained above 45 per cent between 1970-71 and 1978-79 in Punjab but continued around 37 per cent for India as a whole during these years.

TABLE 1

Percentage share of registered and unregistered units in value of output of manufacturing sector of Punjab

Year	*Registered*	*Unregistered*
1970-71	51.7	48.3
1971-72	51.5	48.5
1972-73	52.7	47.3
1973-74	53.9	46.1
1974-75	52.7	47.3
1975-76	55.0	45.0
1976-77	54.4	45.6
1977-78	54.8	45.2
1978-79	54.8	45.2

Calculated from Statistical Abstract of Punjab 1980.

TABLE 2

Share of registered and unregistered factories in industrial sector output of India

(Share in percentage)

Year	*Registered*	*Unregistered*
1970-71	62.7	37.3
1971-72	61.9	38.1
1972-73	61.8	38.2
1973-74	62.7	37.3
1974-75	63.1	36.9
1975-76	62.8	37.2
1976-77	63.5	36.5
1977-78	62.7	37.3

Source: RBI Currency and Finance 1978-79.

Classification of the registered manufacturing sector of Punjab shows that it is largely of small and medium size. In 1969, factories employing workers up to 50 constituted 88.2 per cent of the total. Their proportion fell slightly to 87.0 per cent in 1979. Factories employing workers between 50-500

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formed 11.2 per cent of the total in 1969 and 11.9 per cent in 1979. There was a slight increase in the share of large factories employing workers between 500-5000 from 0.6 per cent in 1969 to 1.1 per cent in 1979. In terms of proportion of workers employed, the share of small factories decreased from 41.6 per cent in 1969 to 33.1 per cent in 1979. The share of factories employing 50-500 workers also fell from 38.8 per cent to 33.0 per cent in the period of 10 years. The fall in proportion of these two categories of factories was gained by large factories. Their share increased from 19.6 per cent in 1969 to 33.7 per cent in 1969. There was no factory employing more than 5000 workers. In spite of the fact that relatively large sized factories are gaining prominence in the industrial sector of the State, Punjab remains the land of small-scale industries both in terms of number of factories and the proportion of workers employed.

TABLE 3

Changes in proportion of workers employed in registered factories of Punjab between 1969 and 1979

Size of factories (Average number of workers)	*1969*		*1979*	
	Number of factories	*Number of workers*	*Number of factories*	*Number of workers*
Up to 50	2356 (88.2)	31948 (41.6)	2094 (87.0)	37220 (33.1)
50-500	299 (11.2)	29684 (38.8)	287 (11.9)	36961 (33.0)
500-5000	16 (0.6)	15110 (19.6)	26 (1.1)	38126 (33.7)
Total	2671 (100)	76742 (100)	2407 (100)	16803 (100)

Figures in bracket represent percentage

A study of Ludhiana (a major industrial centre) industries demonstrates that most of the industrial units are of very small size. These units are home-based, with extremely small capital base, having an investment of say Rs 3000 to Rs 5000 functioning in a corner of the house and having at times no employed wage labourer (H.M. Pathak, *EPW*, July 11, 1970).

In contrast, large industrial units account for a major part of output and employment in the industrial sector of the Indian economy. The share of small-scale industries in total industrial sector was 28 per cent between 1973-74 and 1979-80 (*Economic Survey*, 1980-81, Government of India).

While industrial development is taking place in the urban areas, industrial development of the rural sector is victim of the development process. Rural industries have been the source of living for artisans. But due to competition from modern industries in urban areas, the survival of artisans has become difficult. (C.L. Kohli and Rashpal Malhotra in *Man and Development*, December 1979). A large number of them have either left or are in the process of leaving their traditional occupations. Since many jobs are not available in urban areas, most of them have become agricultural labourers. This is one of the major factors raising the proportion of agricultural labourers in Punjab's economy.

Another feature of the industrial sector of Punjab is that it is a predominantly private sector one. The role of public sector is marginal. In 1978 the private sector accounted for 97.49 per cent of the factories and 89.11 per cent of the workers employed. The share of public sector in the employment of workers in the industrial sector was 10.89 per cent and it accounted for 2.51 per cent of the registered factories. Details are shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4

The share of public and private sector in industrial sector of Punjab in 1978

Sector	*Number of registered factories*	*Number of workers*
Public	151 (2.51)	18316 (10.89)
Private	5857 (97.49)	149656 (89.11)
Total	6008 (100)	168072 (100)

Source: Statistical Abstract of Punjab, 1980. (Figures in brackets are percentage).

This is in contrast to the role of the public sector in the industrial economy of India. In 1978, the public sector accounted for 24.4 per cent of the workers employed in the industrial sector of India. (Calculated from RBI's *Report on Currency Finance* 1978-78). Whatever the development of public sector units in Punjab, they are also of small size. Average number of workers per factory in this sector was 121 in 1978.

Analysis of the pattern of industrial development in Punjab shows that it is dominated by consumer goods industries. Even in these industries agro-based industries account for the major part. In 1977-78, food products, beverages, tobacco and tobacco products employed 8.30 per cent of workers and they produced 26.54 per cent of the total industrial output. The share of textiles was 36.10 per cent of employment and 26 82 per cent of total industrial output. The share of machinery and equipment industries was 16.64 per cent of employment and 13.41 per cent of output. Basic metals and products other than machinery industries employed 27.21 per cent of the workers and accounted for 21.47 per cent of output. The pattern of industrial development of the State as it emerged in 1977-78 is shown in Table 5. The study of industrial pattern shows that most of the industries of Punjab are either engaged in processing of agricultural products, mainly food and textiles, or producing spare parts and simple tools. This indicates that industrial development is at a very early stage. In terms of Hirschman analysis industrial development in Punjab is at "satellite" level. It is yet to attain the level of "master" industries (A.O. Hirschman, *Strategy of Economic Development*, 1958).

There is the emergence of a large number of satellite units around a single large unit. A large unit is generally engaged in the final stages of activity. This is particularly true of the engineering industry. A recent study of the bicycle indus-

TABLE 5

Production and employment in registered manufacturing industries of Punjab 1977-78

Industry group	*Production (Rs. lakhs)*	*Number of workers*
Food products, beverages tobacco and tobacco products	33602.01 (26.54)	29367 (8.30)
Textiles	33960.39 (26.82)	127702 (36.10)
Wood and wood products	(389.33) (0.31)	3179 (0.90)
Paper and paper products, printing publishing and allied industries	341.19 (0.27)	1362 (0.38)
Leather and fur products	143.708 (1.13)	9578 (2.71)
Rubber, plastic, petroleum and coal products	2096.17 (1.65)	6054 (1.71)
Chemicals and chemical products	8745.28 (6.91)	10368 (2.93)
Non-metalic mineral products	923.75 (0.73)	4182 (1.18)
Basic metal and alloy industries and products except machinery	27192.18 (21.47)	96257 (27.21)
Machinery and transport equipment	(16974.74) (13.41)	(68879) (16.64)
Other industries	926.97 (0.73)	6248 (1.77)
Repair and personal services	26.19 (0.02)	513 (0.14)
Total	126608.30 (100)	353698 (100)

Figures in brackets are percentages.
Source: *Statistical Abstract of Punjab, 1980.*

try, largely concentrated at Ludhiana, shows this pattern. In this case there are four units which produce complete bicycles. But there are nearly 1800 small units producing components largely for these four units. The same is the case with the sewing machine industry. This is not only the case with private enterprises. Punjab Tractors at Mohali, a public sector enterprise, has also grown on a similar pattern. Around the assembling plant, there are about 250 small units producing spare parts and accessories for the large plant. These small and private units are dependent on the large units for the disposal of their products. These units have low bargaining power with respect to the large units.

This point is further confirmed by a study of the pattern of unregistered manufacturing units. These units account for more than 45 per cent of the output of the industrial sector of the State. In this sector 17.1 per cent of the workers employed are in the repair services. This is more than the proportion of workers employed in production of machinery and transport equipment. Though on the whole the pattern of unregistered manufacturing is similar to that of registered manufacturing, yet the above point is very important. It is evident that industrial development of Punjab is not only in the primitive phase but has had a satellite status from the beginning.

Towards the close of the struggle for national independence, it was realised by the Indian capitalist class that left to itself it was incapable of initiating and leading industrialisation. For industrialisation of the country, development of the public sector was suggested. (Bombay plan 1944-45). After Independence development of public sector for industrialisation became a striking feature of the industrial policy of India (IPR 1948 and 1956). Need was also stressed for developing an independent self-reliant economy. But when the process of industrialisation was started the Indian capitalist class began to make compromises with foreign capital. Thus, instead of disrupting the past integration of the Indian economy it allowed further integration of the economy with world capitalism.

Industrialisation of Punjab has some specific problems. The absence of mineral base and geographical situation of the State — being a border state — are serious constraints. The two wars with Pakistan had serious implications for industrialisation particularly in border towns.

Yet they do not explain the industrial backwardness of Punjab as compared to many other parts of India. The region experienced a high rate of growth particularly after the mid-1960s. The development of agriculture created a vast market for manufactured goods — both agricultural inputs and consumer goods. This also created a class of capitalist farmers who are able to create large economic surpluses. These surpluses are augmented by transfers payments from abroad. There is a large availability of skilled labour. This is provided by old Ramgarhia families and labour that migrated from West Punjab at the time of partition. A recent study has shown that whatever success the region has achieved in industrial development was largely due to the availability of this skilled labour. (M.L. Pandit, *EPW*, November 25, 1978). Another favourable factor for industrialisation is the existence of a developed infrastructure particularly a big capacity in power generation, a network of roads, communication and banking and financial institutions. These factors show the favourable conditions and the existence of high potential for industrial development. But the potential has not been exploited.

Historically the region had been industrially backward at the time of Independence. Left to market forces, industries are likely to be located in already advanced centres. The industrial structure of the State has limited potential for expansion. Firstly, most of the industrial units are of small size and a large number of them are even unregistered. They can organise production of commodities with simple processes. They have limited capacity to engage in new processes. For industrialisation a country has to be not only a technological borrower and imitator but a technological innovator. Small and petty enterprises offer very little in this direction.

These units cannot but be of an ancilliary type. The fact that a very high proportion of the working force of the unregistered manufacturing sector (17.1 per cent) is engaged in repair services shows that most of the machines used in production in Punjab are produced elsewhere. Similarly, industries engaged in production of machinery and tools do not show a complex nature of production. They are either producing spare parts of the main machines or simple hand tools. The processing stage of industrial activities and satellite status of industries have limited their dynamism. This type of industrial structure has little capacity to expand in new lines in face of competition from complex and highly developed industrial structure elsewhere in India and abroad.

A recent study shows that given the strength of large industry in the 1950s, it was not possible to increase the strength of small-scale industries through Government policy in India. The alterations and changes in small-scale industries policy can be seen to be largely the result of adjustments to economic realities in terms of the strength which different social strata hold in our society. (Nasir Tyabji, *EPW*, October 1980). In the light of prevailing class forces, it is unlikely that the Government can or will help in increasing the competitive strength of small industries and make them auto-centric. It must be mentioned here that most of the small-scale industrial units are engaged in food and consumer goods industries where Indian and foreign monopoly companies are active. The small units cannot withstand such competition.

It will not be out of place to discuss the case of the cotton textiles industry. Already, it is the largest industry of Punjab and four new cotton spinning mills are under construction in the public sector. (P.S. Bajwa, April 1981). At the international level, because of the predominance of multinational corporations, the cotton textile industry is in for a serious crisis. A recently published UNCTAD study has revealed that there is serious competition between chemical fibres and cotton fibres. Chemical fibres are replacing cotton fibres. From a 70 per cent share in 1955 of the end-use markets, the share of cotton has been reduced to 50 per cent. Production of chemical fibres is highly monopolised. Twelve large firms produce three-fifths of the world's production and account for 80-90 per cent of world trade in these fibres. Fibres account for only one-fifth of the total sales of these firms and they can capture markets by lowering prices. The study suggests a sharpening of the crisis of cotton textiles in the 1980s and elimination of small and medium enterprises, (Quoted by C. Raghavan, *Mainstream*, May 16, 1981).

In the post-Independence period the Government of India has consciously developed the public sector to promote industrialisation. But Punjab has been bypassed in location of public sector enterprises. In 1978, out of 3,53,698 workers employed in the industrial sector of the State only 18,316 were in public sector. This is 5.18 per cent of the industrial work force in the State. The policy has been to mainly develop the State's agriculture to meet the food requirements of the country. In fact, allocation of public sector units has been on a political basis. Punjab being politically a light-weight could not exert the necessary pressure.

The development of different sectors of the economy demonstrates disarticulated development. This is why development in one sector does not generate development in others, Punjab having experienced a high level of development in agriculture has failed to unleash forces of rapid industrialisation. Bhalla's study of the structure of the Punjab economy has shown that out of the 36 sectors examined only four, namely sugar and confectionery; cotton ginning, processing and other textiles; glass and mineral products; and motor cycle/ bicycle, showed high forward and backward linkages. (Mimeo, Punjab University, Chandigarh). In fact some of the industries in Punjab are producing mainly for outside demand. In 1978-79 total production of hosiery and woollen textiles was about Rs 139.23 crores in Punjab. Out of this output worth Rs 60 crores was exported and Rs 10 crores worth was sold to the Defence services. Only Rs 15 crores worth of output was sold in the local market. (Amarjeet Chandan, *EPW*, April 10, 1980). Remaining output was sold in other States. Wool used in production is imported from elsewhere. In 1976-77 Punjab imported 39,000 quintals of raw wool. Similarly the sports goods industry also depends on the export market. In 1977-78 total output of this industry was worth Rs 12.88 crores. Of this, output worth Rs 8.31 crores was exported to various countries. (Swinder Bir Singh, 1979).

With the coming of the Green Revolution, demand for modern inputs has increased tremendously. The two most important components on the input side are chemical fertiliser and tractors. A factory producing tractors began production only in 1974. Earlier all tractors in Punjab came from outside and by 1976-77 there were already 82,000 tractors. The annual consumption of fertiliser went up to 6,86,000 tonnes of NPK in 1979-80. But the major part of this is imported from outside. These are a few examples to show that industrial development of Punjab is not forming an organic link of Punjab's economy.

Industrial backwardness of Punjab is related with under-development of the Indian economy and its path of capitalist development. The solution to the problem lies in radical transformation of the economy. But radical solution requires change in balance of political forces within the country.

Left to market forces, Punjab's economy is likely to experience distorted development. Industrial structure has so emerged that it has limited dynamism. Therefore, there is pressing need for state intervention in the economy of Punjab.

To promote industrialisation, small units should be protected from competition through various state measures and adequate financial and technical help should be provided to them by the state, so that these units grow to be master units. Secondly, the state should take the initiative to set up large units in the public sector as master industrial units. But these units should have large backward and forward linkages. These measures can go a long way in taking industrial development of Punjab to a higher stage. Special efforts are required on the part of the State Government. Unregistered factories are a very important part of the industrial sector of Punjab. They contribute more than 45 per cent of the output and nearly one-half of the employment of the industrial sector.

By their very nature of being unregistered, they are likely to be bypassed in respect of measures the state intends to help small-scale industries. Special measures need to be taken to help such units.

Rural, industries not only can supplement agriculture but can be an important constituent of the industrial structure of the State. Due to lack of proper perspective, sufficient attention has not been paid to rural industrialisation. There is need to examine desirable and feasible patterns of rural industrialisation of the State.

There is lack of political will on the part of the administration. Surpluses are available with a section of the peasantry and traders who are unwilling to invest in the industrial sector, and the state is not able to mobilise these surpluses. Similarly, the State Government has failed to get some of the national public sector plants allocated to Punjab. For a decade now the State is suffering from serious power shortage. This crisis is likely to become more serious during the Sixth Plan. It is estimated that the power gap will increase from 1804 MKWH to 2852 MKWH between 1980-81 and 1984-85. The failure of the Government to handle the energy crisis successfully has done a lot of harm to industrialisation of the State.

Lack of managerial skills is a very serious problem. Most of the state enterprises, both departmental and autonomous, are examples of wastage of resources. These enterprises are under the control of the bureaucracy which together with the political leadership has made a mess of development programmes.

Until these problems are solved the State Government cannot successfully lead the process of industrialisation. To surmount the difficulties of being a border State, there is need for normalisation and establishment of cordial Indo-Pakistan relations. Opening up of trade between the two countries through the Punjab border can help a lot and accelerate the process of industrialisation.□

Afghan 'Refugees': A Pakistani View

M.B. NAQVI

The first formal, though indirect, negotiations between Pakistan and Afghanistan concluded in Geneva last week. More contacts are likely later this year, on the occasion of the UN General Assembly session three months hence, although even this would need further ground-work by the UN mediator, Diego Cordovez.

Every Pakistani accords the highest priority to a political settlement of the Afghanistan problem. As such any progress in that direction would be welcome. Cordovez has talked hopefully and of advance. But it is possible to be misled by diplomatic jargon; in hard terms the progress is not all that much. It is true Cordovez has talked of "political adjustments" and "significant concessions" by the parties concerned. But other statements by almost everyone concerned about their fundamental positions do not support the impression of forward movement.

Who are the concerned parties? The theoretical answer mentions the Russian Army, the Karmal Government and the people of Afghanistan directly and Pakistan and Iran indirectly — by virtue of the refugees' presence and these governments' sympathy for the rebel cause. But this offers no solution.

The Russians refuse to go unless asked by the Karmal Government. The rebels say they want victory in their 'war' and nothing less. But victory over a Russian-supported government is easier said than done. The Pakistani and Iranian Governments, bound by the theory, refuse to talk with the Karmal regime. Karmal Government talks only of refugees' unconditional return and makes amnesty offers from time to time.

And so the deadlock goes on: the Russians stay where they are; refugees stay in Pakistan; Kabul stands its ground; rebels make occasional trouble for Kabul and the Kremlin; and Pakistan and Iran stay boxed in their theoretical position.

But, for Pakistan, the 'war' and refugees involve unacceptable pressures both now and later. Therefore Pakistan should somehow go further than the sterile theory permits. More purposeful thinking is needed. ...

From the practical political angle, the Afghanistan imbroglio should be treated as a dispute between Pakistan and Afghanistan that has attracted the support of their respective friends. It is here that the chief difficulty arises. Afghanistan is being resolutely supported by Russia, the superpower. Pakistan is generally supported by a lot of countries: the OIC members, Western powers and a majority of the NAM.

The point to ponder over is the quality of the support that Pakistan enjoys. The UN General Assembly votes are all very well. But do they equate with the kind of strength that can be encountered from the Afghan-Russian combination? To which must be added the other kinds of support they may be able to manage. Here the Indian position becomes a crucially important component of the situation facing Pakistan.

Pakistanis will be ill-advised if they are to delude themselves that the rest of the world, represented by 104 UN votes, is with us and that Afghanistan (and the Soviet Union) is isolated. Or that the perceived moral superiority of our stand will necessarily prevail. Take Lebanon and the Palestinians: 127 votes are with them and their opponents have only two. And yet what is happening on the ground? A sharp distinction has to be made between diplomatic niceties and the harsh realities of *realpolitik* — an ugly word with an uglier reality. We are living in the world where power is still its own justification, beautiful verbiage in the UN notwithstanding.

Potentialities of the 'dispute' between Pakistan and Afghanistan are evil. Pakistan takes a high-minded stand about the refugees, whose numbers must now be approaching three million in the Pakistan-UN books. It maintains the refugees can only go back when the Russian troops leave, and that arrangements have to be made for their return in a way that they go back in honour and security. This means that not only the Russian Army must leave, the Karmal (PDP) Government must also go. This is a precondition for their return. At least that is the purport of public statements. Indeed, Pakistan does not even wish to talk, about this or anything, with the Karmal Government.

This is tantamount to saying we are willing to live with this burden of three million refugees. (There is another implication: Pakistan would, if the other side is too obtuse and intransigent, itself create conditions in which the refugees can go back to their homes in honour and security; it is a language that is redolent of the Indian stand in 1971 vis-a-vis Bengali refugees). It is absurd to think Pakistan can entertain such thoughts. Even the idea of remaining saddled with so many refugees is frightening. Hence the search for a political solution.

Standing by one's principles is good. But avoiding troubles with neighbours that might involve the possibility of international violence is better. We have therefore to think closely about both our objectives and our methods.

— Courtesy: *Pakistan and Gulf Economist*, July 3-9, 1982

WOMEN'S WORLD

A New Menace

ANJALI DESHPANDE

IN the good old days women were tied hand and foot and thrown on to the funeral pyres of their husbands. Nowadays people seem to be in more of a hurry to burn them — they are killed or driven to suicide while the husbands are still alive. Now comes a quicker and less cumbersome method of getting rid of a female child, by a modern technique known as amniocentesis.

Two doctors in Chandigarh, hitting upon this idea of minting money, advertised openly through handbills distributed throughout the city, that women could determine the sex of their foetus and as abortion is perfectly legal they could also get rid of unwanted female foetuses, and relieve themselves of 'social and mental stresses.' The fee is at least Rs 500 per case. As doctors at a recent meeting pointed out, even in the Capital at least 50 doctors are involved in this business. This has taken root in Kanpur and Meerut also.

A well-attended meeting organised jointly by the All-India Coordination Committee of Working Women and All-India Democratic Women's Association (July 15, 1982), discussed the issue at length. It finally passed a resolution demanding a ban on sex determination tests.

The pet argument of advocates of female foeticide is that it helps population control. Since Indian society places a high premium on male children, parents go on having more and more daughters in the hope of finally having a son. There are no doubts about the truth of this experience. Does the answer lie in attempting to eliminate the female foetuses?

The amniotic fluid test has its benefits also. It is used to detect and diagnose abnormalities and diseases antenatally. When the future child is feared to be malformed, mentally retarded or suffering from other incurable diseases, parents are advised to have an MTP (Medical Termination of Pregnancy) done. The decision is left to them. In India six per cent of women have chances of bearing a handicapped child. There are families where over six consecutive children are born handicapped. With all due respect to the fortitude of the handicapped, this is certainly not a happy situation. Therefore, even after the sixteenth week of pregnancy when MTP involves high risk to the health and life of the mother, she is advised to abort the child. At times doctors have been able to correct certain situations like half-developed lungs and help save the life of the child through postponement of the delivery in such cases, thanks to amniocentesis.

It is this consideration that weighs heavily with women. It is because of this that in the demand for a ban, the word amniocentesis was dropped and the term sex determination was used instead. On this count there seems to have been a certain amount of confusion.

Doctors at the meeting made it very clear that amniocentesis cannot be practised without determination of the sex of the foetus. In certain genetically transmitted diseases like haemophaelia, or night blindness, males are known to be affected more than the females, who are the main carriers of the diseases. The sex of the foetus has to be determined to predict the occurrence of these diseases. And anyway, once the amniotic fluid is extracted and the slide is under the microscope there is no way by which the examiner can be prevented from examining the sex genes.

A suggestion was made that only certain specified Government institutions be permitted to carry on the tests, the rest being barred from it. However, such an arrangement raises the probability of a lucrative underhand business flourishing in prestigious institutions. There is also the weightier consideration that a few such urban centres cannot cater to the rural populace who are as much or probably more in need of this. Who can keep a check on the little dispensaries at district and block levels?

Should it be made statutory that amniocentesis be carried out only in such cases as have a history of abnormality in the family? With the vast amount of scientific literature available in the market, added to knowledge that travels by word of mouth, how can couples be prevented from cooking up histories of abnormalities?

Most important of all, can members of the medical profession be trusted, universally, not to abuse the facility available to them, when this controversy itself has started with the unethical practices of some members of this noble profession?

Amniocentesis minus sex determination is just not possible and it seems prevention of its abuse also is nearly impossible given the mercenary attitude many of our doctors are acquiring, the high premium laid on a male child, and the prejudices against women. The girl's wedding is costly. Her dowry is a burden. She has been made to look like a social liability. Unless the whole value system is uprooted and cleansed of its prejudices, there seems to be no end to this problem. There are villages in this country that boast of never having received a *baraat*, because the female baby is openly stifled to death the moment after her birth. If the infant daughter is not drowned in the horse trough and then thrown behind the bush, she dies a 'natural' death owing

(Continued on page 34)

Women—An Endangered Species

MANJULIKA DUBEY

BENUMBED by recent disclosures in the newspapers about the latest uses to which some of our medical practitioners were putting the science of genetics, I groped for my dictionary. It defined 'genocide' as 'the deliberate extermination of a racial, political or cultural group'. No, that wasn't it: for one thing, I wasn't sure if female foetuses could be classified as 'a cultural group'; for another, it boggled the mind to figure out exactly what the term 'deliberate' signified, in the circumstances — 'planned and systematic', noted my lexicon — and who, or what, it was that did the planning.

What about 'selection', then? A little more promising: 'a process that favours or induces the survival and perpetuation of one kind of organism in competition with others'. Amniocentesis, the genetic testing of a sample of amniotic fluid, is strictly more of a procedure than a process, but it was in this case being employed to establish the sex of the foetus for the purpose of determining whether or not the organism should be allowed to survive. The element of competition, too was implicit: XX chromosome against XY chromosome, male foetus against female foetus. Within the species some jester termed *homo sapiens,* nature favours the female, making her more resilient at birth and longer-lived. That is an established fact. But here was a hint of some other intent, bringing with it a fusillade of questions that ricocheted off science and politics into psychology and ethics. Over all of them loomed another stark fact, attested by demographers: something is causing Indian women to die younger, oftener, to become fewer in number in relation to men.

There are people, men as well as women, who are concerned, even alarmed, about this fact and what it implies for the agglomeration of 680 million individuals, one-fifth of the human race, that make up this society. The reasons they have suggested to explain the apparent dying off of females in India — and I will list them as coolly and dispassionately as the all-India and State Census Report has done — are as follows: female infanticide; greater neglect of females, especially between the vulnerable ages of 0 and 9; premature cohabitation and childbearing and unskilled midwifery; strenuous labour, particularly in lower income groups, combined with generally adverse conditions of nutrition, housing, ventilation, climate, etc.

But it is not the Shantis and Lakshmis labouring in field or factory, village hut or rural tenement, who generally appear before the whitecoated racketeers in the sex-determination 'clinics'. The death of their daughters is of a different order, belonging to an unending cycle of poverty and deprivation, lodged in the venerable framework of *dharma* and *karma*. The new devotees of the laboratory are women who can afford the 500 rupees charged for the test, who weigh the physical risks against the assurance of family status and social security contingent upon their ability to reinforce the patriarchy.

Amniocentesis itself cannot be outlawed: it serves a necessary purpose in protecting unborn children and preventing the birth of those with abnormalities. Abortion cannot be outlawed, either: the Government needs it to control the population — would, in fact, prefer forced sterilisation — and women need it — though only as a last resort — to control their lives. Assuming the legitimacy and the availability of both these procedures, and recognising the right of every woman to decide freely for herself whether or not she wishes to procreate, why should anyone be disturbed by those snuffed-out female flickers of life?

What the amniocentesis controversy seems to have done is to bring into sharp and sudden focus a horror that hovers behind the matrimonial advertisements and newspaper reports of rapes and dowry deaths: the unadorned fact that being a female can be treated as a genetic defect, and the unbearable corollary that women themselves have internalised the contempt in which society holds them. Women have become the accomplices as well as the victims of oppression. They have learned to loathe, despise and reject their own kind and to worship and covet power objectified in the male to the point of participating in atrocities against their own daughters.

In this image of the psychically damaged woman rending her own flesh is exemplified the bitterest failure of the women's movement so far. Perhaps we will have to revise our agenda: not 'towards equality' but 'for survival' — before we become an endangered species.☐

Women's World (*from p. 32*)

to the carelessness shown towards her during illness. That is one reason why the male-female ratio is successively proving adverse to females; more female infants have been dying. The male-female ratio which was 1000:972 in 1901 had gone down to 1000:930 by 1971. If amniocentesis is misused on a large scale to weed out female foetuses the ratio is bound to show a further decline.

Some pseudo-scientists have tried to argue that the decrease in the number of women would upgrade their value and help root out evils like dowry. The irrationality of this argument defies common sense, for despite the decline indicated in the male-female ratio, dowry deaths do not exhibit any tendency to go down: rather they are spreading to sectors of society claiming to be modern. Moreover, who knows, these pseudo-scientists might invoke the same argument in defence of rape and prostitution.?

Women are faced with a dilemma. Ban amniocentesis or not, humankind stands to lose. Some way has to be found out of this dilemma. Social changes are painfully slow. They will require aeons of time. Till then do we sacrifice female foetuses or accept the *fait accompli* of handicapped children? (*July 20*).

Focus (*from page 9*)

troops in occupied Lebanon, West Bank and Gaza have once again focussed world attention on the need for a negotiated settlement of the Palestinian question and the seven-year-long Lebanese civil war. Such a settlement is not possible in a cold war atmosphere which has generated a new global arms race, a "new barbarism" as Indira Gandhi calls it. No other world leader is more eminently suited to act as the bridge between the two super-powers and thus bring about a relaxatian of world tensions, particulurly in West Asia.

If she pursues this role in her talks, she would have served India's interests which lie not merely in the security of its geographical boundaries but in stability and security in the entire region; in such stability and security also lies the solution of the issues on which traps may be laid for her in Washington. It needs to be recalled that Arab leaders themselves have declared that the security of the Gulf region and the Indian sub-continent are inter-linked. The answer to the security needs of India, or for that matter any country's need for stability and security, does not lie in financing opposition parties and press in the name of promoting democracy as President Carter had openly claimed he would like to do; or in arming the CIA with new powers, clamping a new kind of secrecy on its activities, and unleashing it. Indira Gandhi has to point out that such US measures would only result in destabilisation everywhere which would run counter to the security of the US itself.

Even for the economic problems which weigh heavily on Indira Gandhi's mind, it is necessary to [illegible] in their international context. India will remain the object of US "accommodation-containment" policy, and if she succeeds in avoiding the traps — as she will because of her commitment to India's national interest — the present efforts at accommodation will be followed by attempts at containment. India has to learn to live with this; there is no option for it since India has till now chosen to stay in the world capitalist system. Although Senator Moynihan asks "what does it (India) export except communicable diseases?", it will be difficult for India to shake off US economic hegemony if it pursues the capitalist path, but so far India has been able to safeguard its political sovereignty and autonomy. There is no doubt that the Indian ruling classes are quite skilful and even Morarji Desai with all his blundering and Vajpayee with the RSS tie-up with anti-national forces, were not able to make any compromises on that score. But the intensification of the Cold War makes it increasingly difficult to uphold the nation's sovereignty. It is therefore necessary that Indira Gandhi should try to act as the voice of the Third World and a channel of communication between the two super-powers; therein alone lies India's security. ☐

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Mainstream

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

It's Highly Inflammable

THE mystery surrounding a deal struck in February 1980 with a Hong Kong based firm for the supply of High Speed Diesel amounting to half a million tonnes at a price which was higher than the ones contracted a few weeks before and after, has now assumed the dimension of a double-dose Mundhra scandal; and with it are bound up the implications of a file, strangely enough held in the custody of the Prime Minister's Special Assistant for nearly two years without having been cleared by the Prime Minister herself.

While the scandal was first exposed by the intrepid executive editor of a widely-read daily — already having earned encomium for having taken the former Maharashtra Chief Minister Antulay's pants down — it is astounding that the present Minister of Petroleum could only be compelled by Parliament to make a statement as many as eighteen days after its publication in the press. The Government, from all records, tried to stall the detailed examination of the deal in the Parliament's Committee on Public Undertakings, where strangely enough a number of members including some from the Opposition did not display sufficient vigilance to track down its unsavoury aspects.

Mystery surrounds the Government decision taken by the then Petroelum Minister Sethi — defying all the advice of the senior officials — to contract the purchase at fixed price instead of a variable price on a deal which was the largest single Indian oil contract with a private party. It is estimated that the loss incurred by our exchequer would be to the tune of ten million US dollars or nine crore rupees. What has so long been carefully witheld and largely missed so far

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by the vocal section of the Opposition is that the Indian private agent smuggled into this operation is a newcomer in the field, his only qualification being his Doon School tie with Sanjay Gandhi and his buddy, Kamal Nath, now an MP.

What this exposure brings out is that such deals might have become a regular feature of government transactions had that coterie, cut short by Sanjay's death, continued to perpetuate its hold on the reins of administration. While a Dhawan or a P C Sethi might still have to face the brunt of this patently shocking deal, the fact of the matter is that this sort of operation threatened from the Emergency days to become almost a regular pattern of Government functioning. In this the Janata interregnum was no exception as any thorough probe into Morarji Desai's son Kanti's exploits or similar spot purchases through other operators of those days were undertaken.

It is indeed astonishing that the present Petroleum Minister should try to defend this murky deal on grounds of "commercial expediency and prudence" and only concede that "it is possible to question commercial judgements of this kind on hindsight." At worst, he seemed to dismiss it as one of the "errors of judgement." He has also not been able to convincingly explain how the Prime Minister's Special Assistant could dare to sit on the sensitive file for months without even caring to place it before the Prime Minister. Would such conduct be also characterised as a mere error of judgement?

It is fashionable for politicians to attack the bureaucrats and for Ministers to take the press to task for irresponsible journalism. Here is a glaring case of total irresponsibility involving corruption, on the part of Ministers themselves, while two of the top-most bureaucrats, the successive Secretaries of the Petroleum Ministry, have been found to be committed to the defence of national interests. As for the press, this case of large-scale irregularity and suspected corruption would not have seen the light of day without the searching investigation of a reputed newsman. It is to be hoped that this lesson is not lost on politicians or petty Ministers when airing their views about either officials or the media. Unfortunately, the state of things in both Houses of Parliament, as they are at present, has not been favourable for those who have been anxious to unearth Ministerial sins of omission and commission. The contrast is inescapable when one recalls how Feroze Gandhi, sitting on the side of the Treasury Benches, could rip open the Mundhra deal and before that, the Dalmia scandal. Nowadays the politican's skin has become as thick as that of the rhinoceros, while the impudence of the corrupt operator dares to establish a hot line with the very seat of power.

The Kuo oil deal and its not-so-concealed link with Kamal Nath has a lesson from which a lot could be learnt. Those who have been generously entrusted by the electorate with the right to rule do not seem to be deterred by the sight of corruption. Rather, there seems to be an insatiable urge to misuse power for amassing ill-gotten wealth at a level unbelievable before. The greed for this sort of illegitimate acquisition is often justified in private as being necessary for one to function in politics. In actual practice, large-scale corruption is being shielded by those installed in power, while it seems to bring no disrepute to those wallowing in it. This way the entire political life is sought to be vitiated. The Haryana purchase of MLAs, for instance, would not have been possible without letting the breed of Kamal Naths flourish. It is no wonder that one of the Sanjay stalwarts, Bansilal, kept mum while chairing the crucial Committee on Public Undertakings.

It is therefore not enough for our politicians, whether attached to the establishment or belonging to the Opposition, only to take up the exposure of a solitary Kuo deal. They must turn the spotlight on to themselves and find out how many such operations of the Kuo type many of them have indulged in whenever the opportunity came their way while in office or in the proximity of those holding key positions.

The battle has to be fought not only beneath the high domes of Parliament House but in the open maidan, in every panchayat, campus, factory and office. Public has to bestir itself to openly denounce the venality of the Sethis and Kamal Naths. Is it not time to brand them as social lepers who need to be excommunicated from the decencies of community life? Did not Congress at one time promise to hang a blackmarketeer from the nearest lamp-past?

This snake pit cannot be smoked out by one flare-up within Parliament. It demands total extermination of the evil itself.

July 28 *N.C.*

COMMENTARY

Reddy's Yesterday and Tomorrow

C.N. CHITTARANJAN

WITHIN hours of his carefully-managed graceful exit from Rashtrapati Bhavan, former President Neelam Sanjiva Reddy cast aside the uncomfortable mask of statesmanship he had been wearing for five years and revealed himself unchanged as the petty politician he has been for almost five decades. During his last week in Rashtrapati Bhavan as President he invited a large number of editors to dinner to give out to them his version of what happened during his tenure as President, particularly the controversial episode following the collapse of the Janata Government in 1979. By this exercise at playing his own PR at the expense of Rashtrapati Bhavan, Reddy arranged for the story, embargoed until he ceased to be President, to get the widest possible publicity. Inevitably Reddy's version of events has been challenged by other actors in that sordid drama, and so he is back in the limelight while pretending to have retired to his village home.

This would not have surprised anyone who has known Sanjiva Reddy over the years. As President of India by courtesy of the short-lived Janata regime, it must be conceded straightaway, Reddy Garu certainly tried his best to rise above himself, largely successfully, during the five long and eventful years he held the highest office in the land. The controversial episode of Ministry formation after the inglorious exit of the Morarji Government in 1979 was thrust upon Sanjiva Reddy by circumstances created by the composition, character and conduct of the then Janata Party whose disintegration began even as it was being willed into existence. Reddy had no precedent to go by and no one to turn to for authentic advice, so he can hardly be faulted for using his own judgement, howsoever defective it might have seemed to many. Surely Jagjivan Ram and Chandra Shekhar are not the ones entitled to throw stones at Reddy now, considering their plight in 1979 and their rather intemperate behaviour when the decision went against their fond but ill-founded hopes.

But Sanjiva Reddy should have left it to history to judge the events of that period and their implications on the basis of the massive material already available and what he has said he will reveal later in his memoirs. Where was the need to prepare a case for his own defence? Especially after he had declared in his farewell broadcast to the nation that as President he had had to take decisions on several Constitutional issues "which none of my predecessors had been called upon to face" and that "the people, by their verdict, (had) approved of the way I had dealt with the situation"?

If the people have given their verdict, the last word has been said, so why the special interview unless Sanjiva Reddy was anxious to rake up a dead controversy for his own as-yet-unspecified reasons or wanted to get rid of a guilt complex? The remarks duly released to the media after his exit, as well as the comments he made at Hyderabad on his way to Anantapur to resume his much-publicised "humble kisan" role, show up the old political operator itching to be back in active politics, as one of his critics succinctly put it. That an outgoing President should have chosen deliberately to raise political controversies is unfortunate, no doubt, but that surely reflects the new political culture evolving in the country, in contrast to the one that obtained till about two decades after Independence, more or less.

In his farewell broadcast, despite the unmistakable indications of frustration and bitterness, Sanjiva Reddy summed up the state of the nation fairly accurately. Democracy "is not just a political system" and the totality of its content is not "a mere facade of elections and an assembly of elected representatives"; "it is essentially civilised conduct of human relations and affairs." That disparities in income and wealth distribution as also concentration of wealth have dangerous implications for the working of our democratic system is beyond question. The references to price increases and low living standards are fully warranted. Even if one is not sure if Reddy's concern extends beyond Charan Singh's or Sharad Joshi's rural-urban perceptions which have little to do with the vast exploited and impoverished masses, the basic truth has to be accepted, though it is true that truth oft repeated tends to get reduced to platitude.

An interesting part of the broadcast related to the Opposition which "has to be reasonable and constructive" and "can expose the mistakes and misdeeds of the ruling party". Sanjiva Reddy would like the emergence of "a united, responsible and effective Opposition". Theoretically these are fine sentiments. And he also told the nation in his farewell broadcast that he was going as "a contented man" and that he had no intention of associating himself with group politics. But in Hyderabad he called upon the voters to throw out corrupt elements in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections due before very long. Of course corrupt elements should be thrown out, and if they can be, it will be quite an achievement in our present political climate. But what is important here is that Sanjiva Reddy said it in Hyderabad at this time — a gesture liable to be seen as an invitation to politicians and parties to rally round him to perform the operation, notwithstanding his pretence that he would like to spend the rest of his life in peace.

Few will thus be taken in by Sanjiva Reddy's pious words; many will certainly detect in his latest antics an irrepressible urge to throw himself into the vortex of Andhra politics. What next?

One may wonder whether Sanjiva Reddy visualises, with what amounts to political naivete, that 1974-75 will repeat itself, with himself as the active Messiah this time in place of the passive, all-things-to-all-men Jayaprakash Narayan. Is he perhaps thinking in terms of Charan Singh in the North and himself in the South, with assistance from sections of the entrenched classes, especially in rural areas, joining hands to provide the "strong" and "united" Opposition he is talking about?

July 27

COMMUNICATION

Musings on N.C.

AMIYA RAO

Some of us, ordinary mortals, not belonging to any party, enjoy reading *Mainstream* mainly because of NC's editorials; usually they are penetrating spicy, devastatingly sarcastic and full of marvellous expressions and phrases — models for every potential journalist.

But lately and for quite sometime now, one has the feeling that NC is not quite sure of what he should say, sometimes he is here, sometimes there, but mostly he sounds a little absent. A recent editorial of his "Lessons of Presidential Poll" (July 12) brings out this confused state of his mind as never before.

NC being NC could he be rejoicing at the installation of Zail Singh as our Seventh 'Rastrapita'? He has dismissed him in two telling words "extra-ordinarily folksy", but, unfortunately, human memory not being that short as it is made out to be, one remembers (because one had approved of every word of it) what NC had said in his editorial 'Eyeless in Punjab' (May 1, 1982): "Apart from intrigues within the Congress and manipulating the media for this purpose, the Giani has indulged in rather shameless hobnobbing with the Akalis-and this includes his touching the feet of the leader with acknowledgedly extremist leanings, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, whose sympathies for the Khalistanis are not unknown." It would be naive to think that this sudden elevation to the highest position the country could offer would transform him over-night or dampen his ardour towards Bhindranwale, who according to report is already threatening Darbara Singh who was brought down on his knees so spectacularly the other day to second the nomination of the President-elect. Though 'folksy' Gianiji is no less 'foxy' than any rabid communalist.

However 'vigilant' H.R. Khanna might have been in upholding the 'statusquo' sanctioned by the Constitution, does NC really believe that Khanna could ever be communal? Could he have forgotten that this very Khanna had gone against the statusquo prevalent during the Emergency by upholding the Habeas Corpus document and had resigned from his high office? And what exactly are these 'views' which Khanna would have shared with the 'Opposition combine'? Is it not somewhat irrelevant to talk about Opposition combine and their common 'perception' about the future line of developments in India when only a couple of days back the Janata Chief has made it clear, if any such clarification was necessary, that the question of unity does not arise at all? As regards upholding the Constitution — though admittedly it is full of glaring holes — the President has to go by it because "his loyalty must at all times perforce be solely to the Constitution as interpreted by the Supreme Court" and which whoever becomes the President has on oath "to preserve, protect and defend".

If NC has any evidence that Indira Gandhi had been "hamstrung by any advice or reservation from the Rashtrapati Bhavan on the policies to be projected" he has never mentioned it. Yet the President, by his action seemed to approve Indira Gandhi's policies whatever they might have been; he has blindly signed Ordinance after Ordinance: a State of Emergency though there was no sign of chaotic condition in the country either visibly or officially; MISA; extension of the life of Parliament beyond five years; then, NSA, prohibition of strike — the only weapon the industrial worker has; extension of Disturbed Areas Act to cover fresh areas for liquidating the so-called Naxalites; and so many others — most of them getting his stamp of approval just a few days before the Parliament was due to sit.

Thus it can be safely surmised that so far there has been no impediment to the projection of Indira Gandhi's policies. How then have these policies of hers benefited the nation? Have these brought down prices of essential commodities within easy reach of common man: provided shelter to the roofless, land to the landless, drinking water to the villages and worthwhile primary education to the children of the poor? Instead, one finds, the Indira Government's policies have allowed any number of 5-star hotels to come up on land which the rich got for a song; it has forced small and marginal farmers to give up their agricultural land and become landless so that luxurious buildings could come up for the Asiad; and beautiful farm-houses—dachas if you like — complete with rose gardens, fountain and swimming pools could be owned by Delhi's businessmen, jurists, professors, bureaucrats, politicians and even civil liberties champions. Has the Bank Nationalisation policy helped the small man who wants a loan to become self-employed? Those graduates from Bilaspur, Malda and Salem who are working today as construction labour have the answer: 'The security the Bank wants we cannot give;' 'the rate of interest is too high for us': 'corruption at every step reduces the loan asked for to a quarter.' Where is the policy to fight on warfooting drought and flood — the two awesome annual visitors? And what is the Industrial Policy of Indira Gandhi?

I shall merely quote Economist in *Mainstream* (May 1): "In a major policy decision which might prove detrimental to the country's security, the Government allowed the involvement of private sector firms in the field of defence electronics. Thus monopoly houses were allowed to reap increasing profit..." and he has concluded his article with a quotation from a jubilant FICCI.

NC himself has commented in *Mainstream* (July 10) in his editorial, 'How Deep is the Rot': "Today the only politics that dominate Congress is the politics of how to hold on to power"; mentioning "the enormity of the Bihar Ministry's criminal apathy to what has been happening in the State" he states, "but Indira Gandhi would not easily wield her broomstick to clean up the Augean stables because of the lurking fear that any drastic treatment might cost the Congress-I Ministry itself." Thus the only tangible policy is to keep the *kursi* safe and pass it on to the son and heir when time comes, and NC is worried that any other President but a rubber stamp would have become a hurdle.

Indira Gandhi's remark in Calcutta airport "that the CPI-M was trying to knock together all the Opposition parties 'to get a President elected who can oust me" was obviously a calculated one to get votes by touching the hearts of the Calcatians towards a damsel in distress whose ouster was being hatched by wicked CPI-M — mind you not Lok Dal or BJP or Janata, for these do not count there. The remark has stirred a Delhi-based Calcatian to his depth and he has discovered that there is a serious loophole in our Constitution which could be used by a President to oust a Prime Minister: because of this loophole, states NC: "The President is under no obligation when appointing a Prime Minister ... there is no way Parliament can bind the President's hand in dismissing a Prime Minister ... a near precedent was set by President Sanjiva Reddy in 1979 when after the resignation of the Janata Government he appointed Charan Singh." (*Mainstream*, May 22).

May one humbly ask NC, is there no distinction between 'resignation' and 'dismissal'? Did Sanjiva Reddy 'dismiss' Morarji Desai or did he himself resign because he had lost his majority? If the Janata Party had not resigned on its own the President could not have appointed Charan Singh. The loophole does allow the President to appoint a person of his choice as Prime Minister *only after* there has been a vaccum through the resignation of a government. If Indira Gandhi's fears had been genuine she would have amended these sections of the Constitution long ago, when she had introduced so many poisonous amendments some of which had to be re-amended during the Janata regime. Apart from this, if the Opposition had managed to get Hiren Mukherjee as President since he was their first choice, one does not quite see him behaving like a dictator — nor for that matter Khanna. But one has to grant that NC's fears are genuine whether Indira Gandhi's are or are not; he could rid himself of these only if he would ask himself why is it with so much power Sanjiva Reddy did not 'oust' Indira Gandhi all these years since he had the reputation of being with the Opposition? Is it not strange that the Opposition should have waited for her ouster till they could get another President of their own?

Having wandered through the meandering corridors of the Rastrapati Bhavan and never getting a clue to NC's mind regarding our new President one atlast stumbles into the classroom where 'lessons' are being imparted to the erring comrades of NC. The lesson is in three parts:

(I) Introduction of the Problem, and it goes like this: "the hard reality, inexorable and inescapable, is that the Communists are gripped by the mentality of a state of siege withdrawing to their own strongholds ... On the other hand ... the forces of the Right are trying hard to come out of their own strongholds to conquer the vast pastures beyond their own battlenouts." (*Mainstream*, July 17).

(II) Illustrations of the wily methods used by these forces of the Right to reach their double goals: "ready acceptance of CPI leader Hiren Mukherji as the Opposition's choice for the Presidential contest ... a brilliant tactical move" ... inorder to (i) widen "the gulf between Communists and Congress-I — let the two adversaries of the Right fall apart"; (ii) come out as a "reliable custodian of national interests". (*ibid*)

(III) Advice, Warning and Call to Action: "The well-thought-out tactical move of the Right should lead to rethinking ... about the validity of the slogan of Left-and-Democratic Unity," because it "may lead to the grotesque situation in which the flock of Charan Singh and the ramshackle battalions of Janata if not the serried ranks of BJP are preferred as democratic allies rather than the millions under the spell of Indira Gandhi". This is followed by a call for a "patriotic front".

But was it not just a few years ago that these comrades of NC were allies of the democratic Congress of Indira Gandhi? And did even a few thousands of the 'millions under the spell of Indira Gandhi' vote for them also because they were her allies? These are questions which bother us ordinary people.

There is an old fashioned but wise saying in Bengali which NC must be knowing — which says "O you with your head shining bald, how often will you stand under the Bilwa tree laden with fruits like stones?"

Such folksy couplets sometimes do help in clearing up one's mind.

NC's REPLY

AMIYA RAO is a respected person and it is rewarding as well as heartening to find that she reads *Mainstream* with meticulous care. I shall therefore try in all humility to answer her points of criticism about my writings in the paper.

First, she says that, for quite sometime now, she "has the feeling that NC is not quite sure of what he should say, sometimes he is here, sometimes there, but mostly he sounds a little absent." Can anybody in the present state of things in our country be quite sure of the direction of developments? A period of unprecedented uncertainty has set in for sometime and I would not be rash to be cocksure. Naturally, one has to grope for a way-out of the present mess.

Next, Amiya Rao has referred to my observations on the outcome of the recent presidential poll: I certainly do not withdraw a single comment I had made earlier about Giani Zail Singh's involvement in Punjab politics, in course of which he could be found to be hobnobbing with even the intemperate section of the Akalis. The comments I made in my piece "Eyeless in Punjab" (from which Amiya Rao has quoted) wanted to show how deep had been the factional politics inside Punjab Congress-I that Zail Singh and his group did not hesitate to exploit the difficulties Chief Minister Darbara Singh had to face in putting down Akali extremistm: it did not mean that the Giani was himself an advocate of Khalistan movement. He was exploiting for factional purposes the crisis enacted by its sympathisers.

It may also be noted that I was making an assessment of the situation *after* the poll campaign, and with my absence from the country during the poll campaign I had no occasion to comment on the merits of the respective candidates as such. But *Mainstream* (June 26) in its lead article did not gloss over the Giani's failings: "His performance in the Home Ministry is far from glorious, and his involvement in Punjab's faction politics is a matter of public knowledge." I think my references to Giani's "distinction of being extraordinarily folksy" and his loyalty to Indira Gandhi being "legendary" are by no means very complimentary: rather these bring out what Giani Zail Singh really is: a rubber-stamp who is proud of being one.

Amiya Rao has been unfair to me if she had understood me to say that Indira Gandhi had been hamstrung by the advice of any President in the past. Let me repeat what I said: the next five years are going to be critical, and Indira Gandhi wanted a yes-man President: "Preoccupied with a sense of concern about the shape of things to come unknown and inscrutable — despite all the assurances of the astrologers — it is understandable why Indira Gandhi's choice fell, of all

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people, on Giani Zail Singh whose loyalty to her is legendary." It is quite possible that Indira Gandhi would like to have a more pliable President than even Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, and the Giani fits the role.

Regarding H R Khanna's candidacy, I find no scope for misunderstanding in what I wanted to convey. Justice Khanna is an honourable man, but his socio-economic philosophy is more in tune with the Right Opposition than the Left. My assessment of the present Opposition — and I have been holding this view since the ill-fated Janata Raj — is that its decisive core belongs to the Right and not Centrist or Left. If Khanna had won, it was not Namboodiripad or Rajeswar Rao or Madhu Limaye who would have guided him but the most effective of the Right, that is BJP. I would urge Amiya Rao to understand that in the article in question I was trying to make an appraisal of the political fall-out of the Presidential poll and in that context to point out the affinity between Khanna's outlook and that of the Right Opposition. Personally, I have the highest respect for Khanna's probity and that is precisely why I feel he would not have compromised with his outlook to please the Left, and the balance of forces did not demand such a compromise from him.

Amiya Rao does not seem to agree with my view that the Constitution *has* the loophole by which a President can dismiss a Prime Minister. This is a matter of interpretation and since I am not a jurist, I cannot go beyond my very humble understanding of the Constitution. I shall be happy if any authoritative interpretation can dispell my misgiving on this point. As for the reason why Sanjiva Reddy did not dismiss Indira all this time, I think the answer lies in the fact that the old Janata has been in shambles and Sanjiva Reddy (as his own version of 1979 events show) was not in the best of terms with all its conflicting components.

I am impressed by the excellent summary Amiya Rao has made of my point of view towards the end of her long indictment in the form of lessons for what she fondly calls "the erring comrades of NC". Far from it, I am a sort of a Communist nomad, trying to keep awake and aware of the world around me, with no pretensions whatsoever of trying to educate the imposing, well-entrenched Communist establishments in this country.

Let me go over what I have to say and what Amiya Rao has referred to, shorn of all the trappings: First, the Communists are gripped by a state of siege: hence, a sectarian outlook, while in my view, the Rightist forces are trying to broaden their base.

Secondly, as an example of the above, I have referred to BJP's acceptance of a CPI man for Presidentship and what dividends it expected to earn out of it. It may further be added that while CPI had no hesitation in agreeing to one of their party men being put up, BJP at no stage had suggested the name of any of their own partymen for the contest. What CPI did not seem to take into account is that if Hiren Mukerji by any accident of history, had won the poll, the whip-hand would have been wielded not by it but by the Right in deciding the course of political developments in the country.

Thirdly, I have felt that the current Communist slogan of Left-and-Democratic Unity is inadequate and perhaps disruptive in the present situation. When one talks of getting the democratic masses to join with the Left — as this slogan is supposed to do — how does one leave out the vast masses still under the influence of Congress-I? Could one honestly say that all those millions who are still under the influence of Indira Gandhi are non-democratic or anti-democratic? If so, are we not doing injustice to a very large section of democratic elements in Indian politics? If not, that is if it is conceded that there is a very large section of democratic elements under Indira Gandhi's spell today who should be won over, then it is legitimate to ask if the slogan of Left-and-Democratic Unity as *is being practised* today by Communists is the answer to it. It is in this context that I feel that if all the democratic forces are to be united and the reactionary forces isolated (and these can be found in the Rightist parties as also in the Congress-I), then the need of the hour is to build up a new Patriotic Front.

This certainly does not mean a return to the days when the Communists unquestiongly sided with Indira Gandhi (much in the same way as quite a few of them today seem to be anxious to support the Rightists to fight Congress-I). Instead, it implies a crusade which transcends the boundaries of the murky election politics of today.

Amiya Rao has very correctly put the question: Has Indira Gandhi's policies benefited the nation? And by nation she implies — as the passage following it eloquently testifies — the dismal condition of the underprivileged in our country today: the landless, the marginal farmer, the impoverished jobless youth in contrast to the affluent in urban and rural setting, the profiteer and the smuggler. I would only submit that the Indira Government and the Janata Government have both been found wanting in dealing with the basic socio-economic problems facing the country. It is precisely in this situation that what is needed is the re-difinition of the concept of patriotism: not merely freedom from colonial bondage but freedom from hunger and deprivation for the majority of the nation. The machinery for the enforcement of such a concept of patriotism can be found only in a Patriotic Front. I am convinced Amiya Rao and thousands of our countrymen thinking along her lines will have to come forward in no distant future to build such a Patriotic Front.

July 28 *N.C.*

Next Week

The article on the concept of a Patriotic Front by NC announced last week for this issue will appear in next week's Mainstream.

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SOVIET VIEWPOINT

American Policy in the World of Dreams

GEORGI ARBATOV

Academician Arbatov who is the foremost Soviet specialist on American affairs, heads the prestigious Institute of US and Canadian Studies in Moscow. This assessment of the foreign policy of the Reagan Administration made by Arbatov appeared in *Pravda* (July 16, 1982) from which it is reproduced here.—*Editor*.

AT the beginning of his presidency, Ronald Reagan called on the Americans not to be afraid of "heroic dreams". It is difficult to say whether his counsel was taken by millions of ordinary Americans worried by economic problems and the growing nuclear threat. As for US foreign policy, for the past year and a half, it has really been in the world of dreams, having lost contact with the real situation, with the genuine interests of the Americans, and with economic, political and spiritual possibilities of the United States.

Of course, a departure from reality was rooted in the political platform of the Republicans, and in the intentions, views and ideology of many people who took up senior posts in Washington in 1981. At that time that platform was aptly called "Forward Backward!". It is surprising how difficult, painful and slow has been sobriety which still intermits with periods of uncontrolled political violence. Periods when they call, time and again, for a "crusade" against the USSR and other socialist countries, issue incredible directives to their armed forces for preparations for the victorious conduct of any type of war, and put forward new adventurist plans. All this against the background of the growing arms race, a policy leading to the further aggravation of international tension.

A year ago arguments as to whether the United States had a coherent foreign policy could be regarded as something quite natural since many people who moved to Washington lacked exprience and revealed some other peculiarities. However, there must be longer-term reasons behind the fact that the talk to the effect that the Administration has a surplus of wishes and passions and lacks a real policy, continues even today, almost half the distance it is yet to cover. Primarily, the complete disregard of the realities of the contemporary world, for which one has always to pay with setbacks.

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DIFFERENT ways exist to gauge the success and effectiveness of a policy. In particular, it will be legitimate to see whether the consequences of a policy correspond to its goals or not.

What goals did the Reagan Administration set itself in the world arena? Judging by everything, the main thing was to ensure the United States an opportunity to enforce its will on other countries, blackmail them with impunity, and, if Washingtonfinds it necessary, to resort to measures of coercion, including the extreme ones. Hence, the emphasis on the build-up of armed force, its greater "usability" in foreign policy, on the course towards achieving military supremacy, the formation and use of the interventionist "rapid deployment force".

Washington frantically got down to carrying out these plans — every new successive military budget of the United States set an all-time record in this field, and America demanded that its allies increase their military appropriations faster. Military blackmail, sabre-rattling and the promotion of war hysteria became the alpha and omega of US official documents and speeches by American leaders. The world community heard them say that there were things "more important than peace"; that a nuclear war was not altogether horrible — it could be waged and won; that the Soviet Union should choose between changing its system or being doomed to a destructive war; that the United States might put up a "demonstration" nuclear explosion to deter its opponents, and so on and so forth. It is impossible to enumerate in one article all the bellicose statements official Washington has made since the beginning of last year!

What are the real results of this activity? Alas, international tension has grown. The arms race has become more intense and dangerous. The threat of a nuclear war has increased.

Has it brought Washington the results desired or increased the strength and international influence of the United States to any extent, however small? No, this has not been the case.

Of course, a year and a half is too short a time to sum up the final results of the implementation of plans for a big military build-up. However, many things have long been obvious in this field. In particular, the fact that the parity of the forces of the Soviet Union and the United States, the Warsaw Treaty and the NATO is very stable. It is an extremely difficult task to change the balance of force in one's favour to a more or less significant extent with today's numbers and qualitative characteristics of weapons. And this task would become absolutely unattainable, if, in case of the emergence of such a threat, the other side would take the necessary counter-measures.

Such is the reality and all the fuss and hue and cry the Administration started around military questions have failed to produce the least proof that it has succeeded in inventing something new capable of shaking this reality. Equally, this refers to other indisputable truths of the day — that is, that to begin a nuclear war would be tantamount to suicide, that to count on victory in such a war is madness, and that the very idea of a "limited" nuclear war is a dangerous illusion.

In an attempt to refute these truths, one can spend thousands of billions of dollars more on a military build-up, but this will be of no avail. And the dream of the Right-wing extremists about the safe and unpunished expansion of America's opportunities as regards the "usability" of armed force, including nuclear weapons, will remain a pipe dream.

In this respect the past eighteen months have revealed most clearly that the concrete results of US actions have proved the very opposite of the aims set. For, it was these actions that brought about profound changes in public sentiment over a very short period of time. The public sensed with unprecedented acuteness the existence and growth of the nuclear threat. It was this that provided the basis for the large-scale anti-nuclear movement first in Western Europe and then in the USA itself. The changing public and psychological climate led to increased opposition to the Reagan Administration's course on either side of the Atlantic.

The attempts to attribute it all to "Moscow's designs" and to Communists convinced no one. It became more and more obvious that the "great enlightener" of the public this time was the Reagan Administration itself — it was its policies, rhetorics, its words and deeds that terrified millions upon millions of people. And did so not with the mythical "Soviet threat". People had their eyes opened to the real prospects of a nuclear catastrophe stemming from the arms race and exacerbation of international tension, both being whipped up by the US Government.

This Government came to office being fully confident that the American voter had given it a mandate for an unrestrained arms race, for the revival of the Cold War, for military adventures abroad. Whether Washington admits it today or not, the course of events has demonstrated that that was a deep delusion, that most of the Americans gave the Government no such mandate. It can be confidently said that the plans for continued militarisation of the economy, of policy, and other aspects of life in the USA will come up against increased resistance.

It was also wrong to calculate that the course towards destruction of detente and a return to the Cold War, towards a "crusade" against the USSR and the other socialist countries would enable Washington to rally its allies together and make them follow blindly in the wake of American policy.

It turned out that the question of detente, of disarmament, of relations with the USSR (including trade) contrary to such expectations, provided an additional source of friction.

Attempts to improve relations with the allies and to strengthen the military NATO bloc in general give no visible results. Rather we can perceive here yet another major setback for Washington. The contradictions have escalated in all major areas. This applies, in particular, to economics. The problems here had already existed when Reagan came to office. But now they have become seriously aggravated. They have become so also for objective reasons — because of the overall deterioration of the economic conditions, and of the crisis. They have become so, too, because the US policy, deliberate and unceremonious, was purposely designed to weaken the allies. (You may recall, for example, the usurer's bank rates in the USA, the dollar's inflated rate of exchange, and customs protectionism bordering on a "trade war".)

More naked now than ever before are the contradictions in the main sphere — the province of the NATO alliance — the sphere of security. The West Europeans are beginning if not to realise, then at least to sense by some instinct that the USA and Western Europe are increasingly diverging in their approaches to security problems. What is said and sometimes done by the present Administration has strengthened the West European suspicion that for the USA, Western Europe is merely a sort of advance theatre of operations where some fighting could be done with the Warsaw Treaty countries. And if anything, even with the use of nuclear weapons, the USA has been remaining on the sidelines.

Very many see, of course, that this is an illusion, that, once involved in such a war, the USA will not stay away from it but will be affected by it as much as others. The Europeans, however, have naturally no liking to such an attitude towards Western Europe; they feel indignant and frightened. Western Europe is not an advance theatre of war for them, but the sole place in the world to live in, one which they do not wish at all to sacrifice to the reckless designs of chair-borne strategists from Washington.

On top of all that there has of late appeared yet another line of friction. The present US Administration is a very ideologised group of people, professing extreme, perhaps the most extreme, Right-wing views of those current in the West at present.

Sure enough, the most hated enemy of the proponents of such views are the Communists and the socialist countries. But the Right-wing elements also dislike the Liberals and especially Social Democrats and Socialists whose numbers in Western Europe are so considerable. In its own country, the grouping which is in power in the USA, is locked in a fierce struggle with these opponents of theirs, with little if any regard for the means it uses. The impression is growing that many Europeans are afraid that the present US Administration might spread this struggle to their countries too. Indeed, it is already interfering in their internal affairs in some places, trying to destabilise the position of the Liberals and Social Democrats and to bolster up the Right-wing opposition.

In short, the relations between the United States and many of its allies have become a great deal more complicated and even strained.

The past eighteen months have not brought about any improvement in relations between the United

States and the developing countries. In the 1970s the United States reaped in the Third World the "harvest" of the policy of dictatorship, exploitation and aggression it pursued during the 1950s and the 1960s, whereas now Washington is "sowing" again. This time, however, the "harvest" may grow much faster in Latin America, the Arab world and other regions.

WASHINGTON cannot be unaware of its setbacks in foreign policy. This is the reason why the Administration began to talk about its readiness to conduct negotiations with the USSR and even negotiate arms reductions. Some authoritative American specialists have not failed to note that there is a trend, typical for the United States, from extremist positions to the centre and that things were gradually taking a regular course.

In practice, however, the situation is more complicated. Political failures force Washington to resort to political manoeuvres. Yet, it does not go farther than political manoeuvres designed to calm and mislead the public. Moreover, each peaceful move is followed by a series of militarist actions which appear to be designed to confirm the invariability of the policy pursued by the Reagan Administration and the latter's unwillingness to abandon its militarist and aggressively anti-Soviet policy.

After his speech at Eureka where President Reagan agreed to resume negotiations on limitation and reduction of strategic armaments, he addressed the British Parliament and the UN General Assembly in the spirit of the "Cold War". The contents of the National Security Council's memorandum signed by the President and the Pentagon's directive in the field of defence for 1984-1988 were deliberately made public.

The latter document deserves special mention. *The New York Times* carried a comment on it under the heading "War to Death". It is an extremely bellicose document indeed. It declares to the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries a "struggle for destruction" by all means, from an economic and technological "war" and unlimited subversive activities to a war fought by conventional, even nuclear weapons.

This document is typical for many members of the new Administration: it is both impudent and rude and at the same time lightminded and thoughtless. It contains a lot of obvious "humbug" which even forced General Jones, the retiring Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to warn that an attempt to carry out some of the plans outlined in the "directives" would be tantamount to throwing money into a bottomless pit.

At the same time, these "directives" are a typical example of bluff and the attempts to scare other countries and "cheer up" oneself and one's allies. The authors of the document obviously have become victims of their own propaganda, misjudging the potentialities of their own country and the problems that face other countries.

I think, however, that the document is "useful" in its way: it convincingly exposes the political manoeuvres conducted of late by the Administration to mislead public opinion and the governments of other countries. The "directives" confirm the Administration's determination to continue pursuing its agressive and rabid anti-Soviet policy.

In this sense, the document proved to be really enlightening. The reader may judge for himself. In his Eureka speech on May 9, President Reagan included a moving passage to the effect that during a

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Disarmament : New Threshold

P.K.S. NAMBOODIRI

Disarmament is Dead! Long Live Disarmament?

SO, it seemed, was the mood at the end of the UN General Assembly when it wound up its five-week long Special Session on Disarmament in New York on July 10. The SSOD-II, as the Session was fondly called, did not even conceive, let alone deliver the baby. Yet, ironically, the burden of pregnancy and the pains of labour were not at all lacking as was evident from the exhausted and sleepy faces of the delegates.

The struggle for disarmament, it is hoped, will now be carried on in Geneva at the Disarmament Commission. It is certainly going to be continued in the streets of Western democracies. The spirit of disarmament is, thus, very much alive though it might be a long wait before it is embodied in concrete actions.

As a participant in some of the proceedings at the UN one can say that the failure to formulate even a much watered-down version of the original Comprehensive Programme for Disarmament was mainly due to two reasons. First, the Western bloc which, by the eve of the Session was clearly on the defensive, did not want to create an impression that they had conceded anything at the UN which could be interpreted as a gain for the opposite bloc or the nonaligned.. Secondly, both power blocs were vehemently opposed to the popular idea of focussing the Session's efforts on nuclear disarmament as opposed to general and complete disarmament.

Those who were familiar with the goings on in the UN were not surprised at the outcome though contempt and outrage were freely expressed by the representatives of the non-governmental organisations, who were enthused by the overwhelming public response to disarmament and who turned up in large numbers at the Session. But in big-power

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calculations UN is not the right place for diplomatic bargains; and disarmament being a highly complex game of power between adversaries they would rather play it bilaterally. Significant arms control agreements such as the US-USSR ABM Treaty and SALT-I were arrived at outside the UN system. The UN becomes a useful forum for the big powers only when they want to impose what they consider arms control measures on other countries such as the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which, in reality, means disarming the unarmed.

Secondly, the moves to focus attention on nuclear disarmament were regarded by the nuclear-weapons countries as world condemnation directed against them. They refused to be isolated and anything which diluted their nuclear supremacy was unacceptable to them. Despite the obligations under Article IV of the NPT and some positive signals from the socialist bloc in the form of the Soviet no-first use declaration, the Western nuclear powers refused to be pressured by the nonaligned group or world public opinion. Paradoxically, the US side went against even its own legislative mandate given by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee calling for immediate halt of nuclear arms race.

Though there was all-round disappointment, there is no cause for undue pessimism. What could have been hailed as a victorious outcome of the Special Session was probably the consensus adoption of a document on Comprehensive Programme for Disarmament. But, let us not forget that these documents do not really amount to anything by way of concrete policies. Same is the fate of most UN resolutions.

The SSOD-I in 1978 did deliver an important document and a programme of action. Yet, in the intervening four years super-power arms race proceeded relentlessly, nuclear tests continued unabated, new technologies were brought in to make the nuclear arsenals more deadly, the SALT-II was abandoned and above all the spirit of detente was throttled leading to a worsening of East-West relations. All these were in violation of what was agreed in the Final Document and the Programme of Action outlined in the 1978 Declaration. Therefore, that a document was not produced by itself should not detract from the minor gains of the Second Session.

In the current mood of international relations, when the United States has reportedly gone one more step and called off negotiations with the Soviet Union on Comprehensive Test Ban, no breakthrough was expected at the UN Special Session. It, however, served to highlight two important aspects of today's disarmament struggle. First, it helped to forcefully demonstrate the full extent of public opinion against the arms race. Secondly, it served notice once again, as in the Sea Law negotiations, of the determination of the Group of 77 to pursue the disarmament goal undeterred by the obstinacy of the big powers.

Expressing public feelings on issues of disarmament, over seventy people representing various non-governmental organisations from all over the world spoke at the General Assembly demanding immediate concrete measures to halt the arms race. They came from organisations representing a wide spectrum of public life — from popular movements like the 'Freeze' in the United States to influential intellectual bodies like the Pugwash to the Mayor of Nagasaki. Though there were a few discordant notes echoing the rhetoric of one bloc or the other, generally they all stuck to one basic theme — that of immediate measures to halt nuclear arms race.

On June 12, New York witnessed what was described as an unprecedented demonstration of public will. Seven lakh Americans came to the streets to demand immediate halt to further testing, stock-piling and deployment of nuclear weapons. The super-powers could not lightly dismiss such a groundswell of public opinion in North America and West Europe. The last minute arms control posturings resorted to by the super-powers just before the Session began and the announcement of the resumption of the Geneva talks showed that they were under increasing pressure to respond to public feelings.

As for the voice of the nonaligned, it was clear that they were not going to simply sit and watch while the world is being led to the nuclear abyss by the global powers. Though they had limited leverage, it was made clear that they were not convinced by the Western nuclear doctrines which sustain the arms race. The refusal of the nuclear powers to discuss the viability of nuclear doctrines itself was an evidence of the hollowness of such doctrines. No explicit threats were held out by the nonaligned such as quitting the NPT by the 80 odd signatories; yet the positions of many non-nuclear countries were hard enough to further erode the credibility of the NPT regime.

The performance of the Indian side came up for special acclaim by many nonaligned delegations and particularly by the non-governmental organisations, who joined India in expressing their disagreement with the conclusions of the Plenary Session's report, which India refused to sign. The parallellism between the positions of many non-government organisations and nonaligned delegates showed the possibilities of a new alliance of peoples across many traditional barriers. Herein lie the future prospects of disarmament.

The myth that arms, particularly nuclear arms, add to the security of states is being gradually exposed. Yet, the more formidable challenge is the fact that nuclear weapons are seen as instruments of power, prestige and influence. They are means for blackmail and intimidation. They are also the determinants of international power hierarchy. It is the nuclear element which gives the United Kingdom, France and China big-power status and it is because of the absence of this that India, West Germany and Japan are not regarded as nations of consequence in power calculations. So, nuclear weapons are going to stay as long as power is respected and feared. Military power has to be derided and the role of power in international relations has to undergo major changes before disarmament efforts can make any headway. □

Black Economy : Its Consequences

KAMAL NAYAN KABRA

ECONOMICS as a formal discipline generated a model of private enterprise market economy free of the role of force and fraud. Given the fact that replacement of non-economic force by free contract was the *differentia specifica* of capitalism as an emergent economic system, it is difficult to visualise how it could incorporate force as an essential instrument operating largely as a systemic characteristic. However, it would be unrealistic to say that in the course of capitalist development institutionalised use of force or violence to ensure certain economic relationship did not come to play a growing role.

Many laws, with strong penalties, were enforced to curb the rights of labour as well as weaker industrial rivals. Colonisation was also based on the use of force for the unilateral economic interest of the metropolitan centres. As Fawzy Mansour, puts it, "To that mode of surplus extraction (slavery) corresponds the first stage of the development of the world capitalist system: that of *primitive accumulation* Direct plunder, the imposition of tributes and fines, the use of slave labour in plantations and mines, the eviction from their lands of native population in the Old as well as the New World — these as well as other forms of the use of arbitrary violence for surplus extraction belong to that period": ("Third World Revolt and Self-reliant, Auto-centred Strategy of Development" in *Towards a New Strategy of Development*. Rothko Chapel Colloquium, 1979 p. 212). He characterises the colonial stage in the development of world capitalism as based on institutionalisation of violence into political power.

Similarly, the abstract assumption of perfect knowledge and free, universal and equal access to information was basic to competitive capitalism of small entrepreneurs. In such a goldfish-bowl capitalism, apparently, fraud could have no place. However, as information and knowledge became private property and an increasingly important source of economic power, the distinction between secret, well-guarded knowledge and fraud started wearing thin.

This is no place to go into the role of force and fraud in the working of capitalist economies. What is suggested is that the phenomenon of black economy is living evidence of the conjoint operation of force and fraud in economic life, especially because of the existence of what we may call political black "incomes" and compound black incomes which are an amalgam of both fraud and force. In other words, the phenomenon of black incomes is evidence of lumpenisation of capitalism as it moves from monopoly capitalism to state monopoly capitalism. In any case, colonialism, an important form in which capitalism reproduced itself on a global scale, was from the very beginning rooted in both force and fraud.

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It is difficult to follow through the implications of the sustained operation of the black economy because, force and fraud being its kingpins, it is difficult to prepare and verify a reasonably accurate model of the economy with an important underworld black sector with innumerable links with on-surface sectors. The difficulties are not restricted to the preparation of a model of an economy with a black sector. Since the formal, legal economy is only one component of the system, and, in effect, operates in close contact with the black sector, the formal model of the legal economy is incomplete and fails to represent the reality. Many transactions become complete and explicable only when the closely intertwined black and legal (white) transactions are taken together as a unit. Hence it is difficult to generate a picture of the economy without a black sector which is verifiable.

Since we have neither a realistic and verifiable picture of the economy with a black sector nor a picture without it, it is difficult to present a comprehensive analysis of the consequences of the black sector. Thus what we attempt here is to show, one by one, in isolation, some of the selective consequences of the operation of the black economy.

It may also be pointed out that the consequences resulting from the operations of the black economy are very closely related to various channels and devices through which (i) black incomes are generated; (ii) black incomes are utilised; and (iii) at various points in the course of its extended life-cycle, a part of the black incomes is converted into legal incomes.

Thus, our discussion of the consequences of black economy would have a bearing on the analysis of various mechanisms for the genesis and extended reproductian of black incomes.

One of the most significant consequences of the large and growing black economy is the fact that it qualifies in a very serious manner one's claim to know enough and correctly about the Indian economy. There is no dearth of studies and statistics about the course of development the Indian economy has traversed over the last three decades or so. However, in every sphere, there are sizeable black incomes and a large number of transactions are consummated every day leading to a proliferation of black incomes and related monetary and real flows. Hence the capacity of the system to throw up sufficient evidence about the actual mechanism of the operations and the magnitude of the key variables and their inter-relationships is significantly compromised. An important manifestation of this qualification of our knowledge about the Indian economy is reflected in the difficulties experienced in estimating the volume of black incomes and related cash and real flows and stocks of various kinds of wealth. But even to draw a comprehensive picture of the channels and devices used in the black sector of the economy becomes a difficult task. However, even a preliminary and somewhat tentative analysis of this kind is essential for many cognitive and policy reasons.

Therefore, it does not really matter that a brief analysis of some of the consequences of the operation of the black economy which we are attempting is itself subject to lack of trustworthy knowledge about the actual *modus operandi* of the Indian economy and involves elements of judgement. However, a brief analysis of this kind is essential not only in order to underline the gravity of the problem, but to understand the areas in which interventions are essential.

It can be said that the operations of the black economy cause serious repercussions in the real and circulation (exchange) spheres and lead to distortion of their mutual relationships. The first serious and easily visible effect produced by the black economy is related to the basic source of what we have called simple black incomes, that is, non-payment of taxes according to law. This leads to a sizeable loss of revenue to the state exchequer which creates an entire range of repercussions on the fiscal and other policies of the state, bringing in their turn a series of effects on the real and circulation spheres of the economy.

Since our tax system is supposed to lead to reduction in disparities of post-taxation incomes, evasion leads to blunting of the effects in this direction. In fact, it can be reasonably postulated that the bulk of tax evasion takes place in property incomes as different from work incomes, which are either too low to come into the tax net or if they are sizeable enough to be taxable, have few escape routes. Thus, one would concur with Dr. D.K. Rangnekar when he maintains that as a result of tax evasion, "while the tax-paying public finds its own incomes falling, the non-tax-paying public is having a free run of swelling concealed incomes, thereby adding a new dimension to the problem of inequality of incomes and wealth." (Direct Taxes Enquiry Committee, Note of Dissent. p. 249).

There are some other ways in which operations of the black sector contribute to strengthening of the economic and power basis of the relatively better-off sections of society as against the underprivileged ones. It is well known that black incomes contribute to lavish consumption, purchase of precious metals and stones and other high-priced superfluities. Such conspicuous consumption is a net deduction from potential investible resources and is effected at the cost of loss of production of mass consumption goods and employment avenues. Thus the wherewithal for fuller employment is curtailed while production which attracts further utilisation of black incomes is encouraged. The phenomenon of large-scale smuggling and distortion of the product-mix in favour of non-essential items is encouraged.

The implications of these activities in respect of loss of precious foreign exchange are many. It has been argued that "since foreign exchange violations are possible only through clandestine dealings, these necessarily result in evasion of income-tax and other allied taxes." (*Ibid*, p. 61). Since about ten years ago such foreign exchange leakages were estimated to be of the order of Rs. 240 crores annually (*Ibid*, p. 61), one may well imagine their present staggering dimensions. One does not have to think too hard to visualise the consequences of the availability of foreign exchange of this magnitude in terms of either lower external borrowing and stronger external relations or in terms of the spread effects of investments of this size. Since such evaded sums are used, after all, by some unscrupulous segments of society, it worsens the lot of the rest of society. The consequences of the expansion of such production and the loss of essential production in terms of the phenomenon of inflation are also fairly obvious. Thus by fuelling the fires of inflation, black economy transactions have also contributed to sizeable offsetting of the increments in nominal incomes which have taken place during this period.

Since the real and circulation spheres of the economy have very significant linkages with the control spheres of the economy, we can trace the effects of the forays made into the system by black incomes by following through the consequences of these transactions in the control sphere.

The most eloquent feature of the economic interventions made in the Indian economy through an extensive set of economic policies, loosely intergrated in the framework of a National Economic Plan, can be said to consist of the wide gap separating policy intentions from policy outcomes. This shows a very high degree of ineffectiveness of policy design and implementation. Experience over a certain length of time of going ahead with this kind of ineffective policies leads to further distortions of policy choices. What Gunnar Myrdal has described as the "Soft State" is basically a state which in the first round fails to achieve its policy objectives and, based on the demoralisation caused by such failures, successively adopts policies which are relatively easier and inadequate options, and are bound to boomerang.

Thus, for instance, one finds that failure to realise anticipated taxation leads to hiking of the tax rates and widening of the tax base: However, this exercise turns out to be self-defeating because, with successful experience of tax evasion at lower rates, the activities of evasion are undertaken with greater vigour and on a still more expanded scale at the higher tax rates. The new economic and political power which emerges out of such black incomes renders the expansion of the tax base difficult, leading to greater resort to deficit financing, external and internal borrowing, and that euphemism for conversion of black income into 'white' called small savings. A similar fate awaits monetary policy, direct and indirect controls, etc.

Though we view the phenomenon of tax evasion and its consequent petrifaction as a black sector problem, there is no gainsaying the fact that black money remains one of its major manifestations. These hoards of black money are highly mobile, ever out to secure an attractive return. As the Direct Taxes Enquiry Committee put it, "In this parallel economy, there is apparently no lack of anything, no lack of facilities, and certainly no lack of 'money', provided the price is suitably 'black'" (p. 5). With such large sums waiting in the wings, ready to move out on their prowl, no policy of control over the supply of money and credit can succeed except when it is expansionist in keeping with the inherent drive of black money. With the relatively high rates of interest obtaining in the black sector, any preferential credits given for high priority uses tends to deflect these intended resources into non-priority, 'black' uses. So long as the expected rate of return from any trading or other activity is acceptable as adequate, no dear-money policy can curb such uses until the latter is so high as to exceed expected black sector returns. A similar fate awaits selective credit controls.

Price controls, movement restrictions, industrial licensing, foreign exchange regulation, import restrictions, and all the other controls and restrictions are made less effective and distorted through black incomes. The larger the volume of black incomes, the greater is the utilisation of these sums for frustrating the purposes and design of controls and regulation. The actual operation of the system approximates the uninhibited market model on the basis of the use of black incomes to frustrate governmental controls and regulation.

Indian planning is an attempt to give a thrust and direction to the market-led processes of expansion mainly on the basis of increasing volume of public investment and consequent withdrawal of resources in a relative sense from private channels. The growing size of the black sector limits the possibilities of increasing public investment. Even the scheme of financing such investments is seriously influenced by the size and operation of the black sector. Since all the economic policies are supposed to be integrated under the overall logic of the Plan, the weakening of the drive to raise public investment, and lower effectiveness of each of the individual policies through the impact of the black economy, combine to render the scheme of social determination of the rate, pattern and path of development ineffective. Most of the formal analytical attempts at explaining the divorce between the stated objectives of the Plans and the observed course of development turn out to be inadequate, if not misleading, owing to their inability to gauge the implications of the black economy.

In the real, production sphere the effects of black incomes are not confined to qualitative aspects alone in the sense of distortion of production structure in favour of luxury consumption goods. Luxury consumption goods (except for those produced in the handicrafts and artisan sectors) have, generally, relatively higher capital, imports and skill intensities. It means that relatively larger quantities of inputs are locked up in their production, except for semi and unskilled labour whose employment opportunities are, in fact, limited on account of relatively lower labour-intensity of most of the items of conspicuous consumption. Since black incomes are prone to have relatively higher attraction for those items of consumption which may go unrecorded, they have a tendency to be used for the production, sale and use of a number of services. The services sector, supported by black incomes, expands to an abnormal level because here production and consumption are instantaneous, which makes detection relatively difficult. Moreover, a number of services like those of agents, touts, brokers, musclemen, lumpen political operators, etc., are required in order to operate the black economy. Liaison men, income-tax advisers and 'social workers' are for the most part only glossy cover names for a number of new occupations facilitating the ever-expanding operations of the black sector. The experience of India with the increasing share of the tertiary sector in the economy (in terms of contribution to GNP and in employment) is related, inter alia, to the operations of the black economy.

It amounts to tilting the balance against material production in comparison to non-material production. At a relatively lower stage of economic development, India tends to display some of the features of relatively more developed economies, like the position of the tertiary sector, owing to distortions caused by the black economy.

The bias against mass consumption goods and for luxury goods and inessential services fostered by black incomes is specifically reflected in the building and construction sector in a particularly sharp manner. Black incomes can easily be held in the form of real estate, where it is not difficult to understate the values. Moreover, this understatement does not adversely affect either current returns or future appreciation. The considerations that current returns may also be concealed and that appreciation of values is untaxed so long as the property is not disposed of, add to the attraction of real estate as a receptacle of black incomes.

Moreover, one may acquire real estate at many different places, under fictitious names, or in the names of trusts, etc. If the buildings are used for personal use, the attraction is not reduced because in this way one "consumes" the services of a building of a much higher value than is declared for tax purposes. When one is to gift such buildings, or when such buildings are to be bequeathed, or for wealth tax purposes, the lower stated values help the evaders all along. Grand mansions are highly conspicuous and add to social prestige and status. For a variety of such reasons, the lure exercised by real estate for black incomes remains undiminished.

These tendencies have led to unprecedented increases in the actually obtaining prices of land, buildings and construction material. This has made housing for the non-black earners a nightmarish problem, increasing the gap between housing needs and supply. Resources have flowed into high-cost, high-rise luxury buildings and apartments, while housing for the salaried white and blue-collar workers and the peripheral unorganised sector workers has languished. The consequences of such house-building, neglect of popular construction activities and frequent sale, purchase and speculation in real estate not only boost the black economy, misdirect resources, raise rents, lead to loss of tax revenue, add to slums, congestion and traffic problems, but also adversely affect locational decisions about various economic activities and foster inefficiencies and waste in the industrial sector.

Another distortion in the real sphere is purchase of land and other assets for non-taxed or lightly taxed activities like agricultural lands, orchards, etc., and their non-utilisation and/or inefficient utilisation. The main purpose of "investing' in these assets (and not so much, activities) is to show through cooked-up accounts "profits" in these activities. Thus regular conduits are prepared for legalising black incomes.

As a result of black operations, costs of production are overstated and, to a certain extent, are actually jacked up. This adds to the inflationary tendencies of the black economy. Since physical production, prices and turnover tend to be understated on account of their unauthorised character, neither actual production nor inter-sectoral linkages become truly known. However, since black market operations tend to aggravate shortages, they tend to push up reported prices as well. Similarly, the extra, unauthorised output in certain preferred lines of production is obtained by reluctance to go in for and consequent loss of production of certain different kinds of goods. Hence it would be without much basis to expect that black operations lead to really higher rates of growth of production than reported. The major impact is in terms of changing the product-mix, relative prices and absolute price level.

In so far as black incomes are used for buying precious stones, bullion, jewellery, etc., it is unproductive use of resources with all its well-known consequences for the rate and pattern of growth. The demonstration effects produced by such spending further strengthen similar trends of distorting and slowing down of the growth process.

The high premium generated by black deals in scarce and/or imported raw materials and components go against fast, balanced and equitable growth. In this way, not only smuggling and wastage of foreign exchange are encouraged, but a general tendency to go in for more imports becomes stronger. High premium on foreign exchange resulting from these forces, including the need to finance smuggling, leads to sizeable leakages of foreign exchange earnings through under-invoicing of exports and over-invoicing of imports. Among these leakages are also included "secret cuts and commissions on joint ventures and collaboration agreements involving Indian and foreign parties." (DTEC, Final Report, p. 5). These processes accentuate foreign exchange scarcity and reinforce the premium placed on it. Its impact in terms of loss of investment opportunities, greater recourse to external borrowing and liberal concessions to attract foreign private capital is related to both slowing down of the tempo of import-substituting industrialisation and higher priority to competitive export-promotion. In general, it contributes to weakening the drive towards self-reliant development.

The DTEC has brought out another aspect of the impact on foreign economic relations. The processes discussed above lead to building up of illegal and clandestine foreign exchange reserves held abroad in various forms. As a result, there arises "the oddity that a country, where capital and more particularly foreign exchange resources are scarce, becomes a *de facto* lender of aid and capital to economically advanced wealtheir nations, with the concealed outflow of funds." (DTEC, *Final Report*, p. 6).

In the field of circulation and finance. the phenomenon of the black sector creates many-sided effects. While a certain portion of black incomes is kept immobilised in the form of cash balances, and a certain part is locked up in real estate, bullion and other forms of hoarded wealth, there is a certain portion which is used in trade, speculation, stock-piling and for financing productive activities. While the legally permissible asset-forms available for black savings are definitionally limited, in reality there are ample clandestine forms of assets or illegal methods of holding assets available to black savings To presume that financing of industrial productive assets by black savings generally is possible only in the unorganised sector is only partially true, and a naive view. Except for the public sector, it is possible to obtain under-invoiced capital equipment as the producers, large or small, also reduce their declared incomes by under-invoicing and accepting the difference in under-the-table cash. Similar manipulations through over-invoicing are possible in the case of imported equipment and plants leading to leakages of foreign exchange. While the hoarded cash reduces the effective supply of money, a good part of the prices of real estate and other personal wealth which comes from the black circuit also get immobilised.

However, the part of black incomes which is used as commodity capital, finance capital or industrial capital usually circulates with a relatively greater degree of rapidity. This is for two reasons. The greater the rapidity, that is, the shorter the turnover period, the higher the return. The risks associated with these transactions tend to push up the expected rate of return. Then, the quicker the turnover, the lower is the risk of detection. Thus, in general, to the extent to which monetary resources are immobilised through the retention of black incomes in the farm of black money and its conversion into unproductive assets, the effective money in circulation is reduced. But this may be more than offset by very high rate of turnover sought by income-yielding uses of black incomes. Thus, we disagree with the view that black income saved in the form

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Dimensions of Press Freedom

H.K. PARANJAPE

Earlier this year (April-June) *Mainstream* carried a series of articles by experts on the Report of the Second Press Commission, which however is yet to be released by the Government. Freedom of the press, and related questions of governmental interference, ownership patterns, etc, remain a subject of wide interest. Dr. Paranjape, well-known economist and formerly a member of the Monopolies Commission, was also a member of the Second Press Commission. More, he is one of the four members who appended a note of dissent. His views on press freedom expressed in this article will be of special interest to many in and outside the press.

FREEDOM of expression has always been emphasised as an essential basis for the democratic functioning of a society. Especially because we are compelled to operate our democracy indirectly, it is of great importance that citizens should be enabled to know what is happening in different regions and different sectors of the functioning of society, and to listen to different and alternative approaches and comments, so that they can effectively participate in the process of self-government. If facts cannot be freely presented and comments cannot be freely exchanged, there is no way in which the citizens can even attempt to hold the rulers to account.

A further dimension to the freedom of expression is added by the existence of a mass society in which communication among citizens can take place only through the use of media like the press and broadcasting, and not directly, except in a limited way. With the State monopoly over broadcasting which prevails in India, and also the limitations of that medium, both technical and, in the Indian context, financial, the importance of the press gets to be even more crucial.

Our actual experience since Independence, and especially in the last decade or so, also suggests that a free and vigilant press is vital to restrain corruption and injustice at least to the extent that public opinion can be roused as a result of press investigations and comments. Especially in recent times, it has been observed that a number of injustices and wrong-doings have been uncovered as a result of the initiative taken by newspapers. Whether it is the question of various types of bonded labour in different parts of the country, the misuse of power by A.R. Antulay, or the existence of smuggling rackets on the west coast, newspapers have served a very useful purpose by exposing these. The fear that the press will expose such wrong-doing is a major restraint on potential wrong-doers.

IT has been frequently alleged, especially in India, that freedom of the press is in danger because of the ownership of the newspaper industry and the predominance of some newspaper groups and chains. It is also suggested that the editors and journalists cannot have adequate freedom in collecting and disseminating facts and offering comments as a result of their being under the pressure of the capitalist owners. It is further pointed out that free collection and dissemination of facts is not possible in the case of newspapers which depend to a large extent on revenue from advertisements. The advertising interests cannot but influence the presentation of news as well as comments in the columns of newspapers which depend upon advertisement revenue, it is said. Unless this whole structure of ownership and control in the newspaper industry, and also the manner of the economic management of the press, is changed, it is therefore suggested, the press cannot be really free.

How far are these arguments valid?

It should be conceded at the outset that, like any large private sector industry, the newspaper industry also cannot but be influenced by the understanding and approach of those who control it. With modern technology, large newspaper organisations enjoy various economies of scale. Groups and chains of newspapers are therefore in a better position to provide richer fare in their newspapers, and also sustain new papers as well as specialised papers especially in their pioneering stages. Therefore, those who own and control newspapers are bound to be businessmen/capitalists, and their overall approach cannot but be conditioned by this.

That is why we inevitably find that the press which is commercially organised — that is, not run by political parties, special groups or individuals — largely takes a pro-business, pro-capitalist as well as usually a pro-Establishment viewpoint. Few of such newspapers will endorse a philosophy which goes against the established system. They may point to chinks in the working of the government and public enterprises; they would hardly raise their voice, or even offer investigative material, about the working of private trade and industry. When the persons who own or control newspapers are also involved in other lines of business, their stake in the stability of the system is so large that they would not encourage anything which is likely to create problems in the smooth functioning of society. With maximum emphasis on stability, they would rather connive at oppression and injustice. Unorthodox and anti-Establishment views may not find much place in the columns of such newspapers, while national chauvinism — even jingoism — may come easily.

But what is the possible remedy? Public ownership of newspapers, in effect meaning state ownership? Is that what will ensure freedom of the press? The idea has merely to be put forward to see how suicidal such a solution can be. Cooperative ownership could be a possible alternative; but there are few examples anywhere in the world of successful cooperative management of large newspaper organisations, or of any large business establishments. The newspaper industry is an increasingly large, technically complex and managerially challenging industry. It requires good business and managerial acumen to make a success of such ventures. Unless we want the newspapers to be poorly produced as a result of continuous inefficiency in their management, we cannot but permit good and vigorous managers to control major units in this industry. The choice is between having good newspapers even with the shortcomings inevitably arising out of the inadequacies mentioned earlier, or having poor quality newspapers. What our choice will be is obvious.

ONE should also point out that our experience in India is not that all those who own and manage the newspaper industry take a uniform approach on all important issues relating to vital policy-making in the country. There are differences among them, and some do take a significantly anti-Establishment line. Though they may not necessarily support socialist or communist policies, they may permit a great deal of criticism of the existing system and encourage information as well as comment along critical lines. The degree of such criticism will vary. But our experience does not indicate that all capitalist owners of newspapers will collaborate and operate in some kind of collusion. In fact, to the extent that there is competition for increasing circulation, a newspaper is bound to attempt to ensure that it is not found wanting in investigating events and giving information which competing newspapers may provide. The newspaper owner will want to make a success of his newspaper venture. He cannot therefore take an approach which will reduce the circulation of his paper by insisting that it reflect his personal viewpoint rather than attempt to present facts and other materials which the readers would be interested in. A capitalist owner may not necessarily be actuated by any very lofty motives; but he cannot ignore the possibility that competing newspapers would forge ahead if he allows his paper to be too sectional or partial. Experience in India and abroad also suggests that only large newspaper organisations can resist powerful institutions and persons. A small newspaper would have found it difficult to face the wrath of a Nixon.

What is therefore of real importance is to ensure that a certain minimum degree of competition exists in the newspaper world. It is true that, as in many other industries, technology and other aspects give a significant advantage to large-scale organisations in the press industry. It is no longer possible for the number of successful newspaper ventures to be very large. We can only have a limited degree of competition and not anything approaching perfect competition. But this is the difficulty in all modern industries. All that can and should be emphasised is that a reasonable degree of competition should be attempted to be maintained.

This can be done in two ways: Firstly, in any effective circulation area which forms a single market for newspapers, careful watch should be kept regarding the existence of dominant newspapers who control a large proportion of the circulation. In the case of such newspapers the normal provisions of the MRTP Act such as special permission being required for their major expansion or setting up of newspapers by them, etc, should apply. Careful watch should also be kept on the possibility of their indulging in monopolistic and unfair trade practices. It has been already held that the MRTP Act applies to the newspaper industry. What is necessary is to make sure that the provisions of the Act are streamlined and its instruments given adequate teeth so that the anti-monopoly provisions can effectively operate. This is necessary not only in the newspaper industry but in all industries. The difficulty is that throughout these last ten years since the MRTP Act was put on the statute book, the Government has not really bothered to see that anti-monopoly provisions become effective. In fact, the tendency of Government has been in the opposite direction, namely, to favour the monopoly organisations.

As for large business houses controlling a number of industries and also newspapers, to the extent that such houses represent a significant degree of concentration of economic power, they would come within the purview of the break-up provisions under Section 27 of the MRTP Act. The Government would therefore be in a position to have the possibility of such break-up examined by the MRTP Commission and, if such a break-up is advised in public interest, it can take steps in that direction. The difficulty is that the Government has made no use of this section. The Government appears to be merely wanting to have many powers so that it can threaten and intimidate those enterprises, including newspaper ones, which are not ready to toe its line.

It is significant that the only instance where the Government attempted to make use of Section 27 of the MRTP Act was that of the *Indian Express* which was proving to be a thorn in the Government's flesh in spite of Emergency. It was not the ownership by large business groups of newspapers that Government thought worth looking at: it was only the *Indian Express*, because it was proving to be a paper not easily amenable to the wishes of those in power at that time. This inference is supported by the fact that, at Government's instance, R.N. Goenka was replaced as Chairman of the *Express* group by K.K. Birla, and the Government preferred this arrangement in spite of the latter's connections with both a large business empire, and with the *Hindustan Times*. In thinking of any special powers relating to the press being given to Government, the very real possibility of the powers being mainly used for arm-twisting for partisan interests should not be overlooked.

AT the same time, it is important that steps are taken positively to make it possible for independent papers to survive and develop. Assistance to them should be provided through general institutions meant to help the growth of independent entrepreneurs, including small ones. The financial institutions as well as promoting organisations — such as the National Small Industries Corporation — can be used for this purpose. Facilities such as subsidised teleprinter services, and facilitating the setting up of small electronic presses, could be the other steps in this direction. The assistance should be granted in a manner where no discrimination among individual papers can be easily made, and where the subsidised facility cannot be misused and encashed. For this reason, making available a marketable commodity like newsprint at a specially cheaper price should not be supported.

The dependence of newspapers on advertisement revenue may go against the perspective of some puritan minds about an ideal society. But in a world where mass persuasion is becoming respectable even in communist countries like Hungary and Yugoslavia, we cannot think of advertisement as a tainted source of revenue. At a time when the cost of producing newspapers is rapidly rising, advertisement revenue is the only mechanism which can keep the newspaper prices within reasonable limits. Any attempt by Government to put a restriction on advertisement revenue has to be looked upon as an indirect method of upsetting the economy of newspapers and thus an act which would affect press freedom adversely. To the extent that a newspaper has a large number of sources from which advertisement revenue flows in, it is less likely to be influenced in its coverage by the wishes of any one of them. A smaller newspaper is more likely to be subject to the wishes of an important advertiser, including the Government. It is therefore necessary to realise that large papers are less likely to be influenced by advertisers. Further, to the extent that the MRTP Act is effectively used, the power of any one advertiser would be limited. Of course, if the Government chooses to continue to keep the MRTP Act as a museum piece, a kind of toothless tiger, this will not happen. What is most important is to emphasise that only general instruments like the MRTP Act should be available to Government to curb undue concentration and misuse of monopoly powers in the press industry. It should also be obligatory for Government to consult the MRTP Commission before any action under that Act is taken.

THIS insistence is necessary because experience all over the world, as well as our own experience since Independence, suggests that the state remains the source of the most potent threat to press freedom. It cannot be overlooked that, within a short time after passing the Constitution, those in power — who used to swear by press freedom before Independence — put in provisos to Article 19(1) of the Constitution so as to clothe Government with powers to curb press freedom. This was defended on the ground that these powers were likely to be necessary on occasions when the security of the state was threatened; it was emphasised that the powers would not be normally used. But a special legislation called the Press (Objectionable Matter) Act was put on the statute book soon thereafter in 1951. No steps were taken to remove the lacunae which gave Government powers to intercept material going to the press through the Posts and Telegraphs. Some Chief Ministers thought it proper to take steps against newspapers whose policy they did not like, whether it was a Morarji Desai in Bombay or a Charan Singh in U.P.

A persistent attempt to curb press freedom however really began only after 1969. Indira Gandhi felt that the press was too critical of her ways and she sought to make it change its approach. Various threats were held out by Government and steps proposed to curb that section of the press which was thought to be the most independent. With the aid of some naive Leftist organisations, a propaganda barrage was mounted against the press as well as the judiciary both of which appeared to be not easily amenable to the wishes of Government. Apparently the only reason why the idea of spreading the equity ownership of newspaper companies especially among the workers and the journalists employed therein was not pursued was the feeling that such a measure would put more power in the hands of trade unions opposed to the ruling party. On the other hand, arm-twisting of capitalist owners, especially of those who had many other industrial interests and were not very much concerned with freedom of the press, was not so difficult. The antipathy to the press however continued and got further intensified, especially as most of the important papers expressed their dislike of the acts of the ruling establishment, and many of them advised the Prime Minister to resign after the Allahabad High Court judgement in 1975. The antipathy finally culminated in the pre-censorship which was imposed in the country for the first time during internal Emergency. That pre-censorship was used for partisan ends is sufficiently exemplified by the data published as a result of the various enquiries made in 1977-78. The misuse of powers like pre-censorship was adequately evidenced by the fact that these powers were even used to black out some unpleasant news about the criminal conviction of an actress and of some businessmen.

The experience of Emergency also provided enough evidence to show how weak-kneed a very large part of the Indian press was when it felt really threatened. One would not have believed that, during the Independence movement, a much larger proportion of newspapers had shown courage and faced various difficulties. The poor morale of many editors and others concerned was aptly characterised by the Janata Government's Minister for Information and Broadcasting who told the press that, when they were only asked to bend, they crawled! Nevertheless, there were brave exceptions; and it is important to note who they were. Two of the so-called monopoly papers resisted encroachment on their freedom and faced considerable risks. These were the *Statesman* and the *Indian Express*. Of course even a more valiant attitude was shown by some independent but small journals like *Sadhana* (Marathi), *Bhoomiputra* (Gujarati), *Seminar* (English monthly) and *Opinion* (a weekly sheet); but these were run by individuals or groups who had a commitment to certain values and where the overall financial stake, the number of employees etc., was not very large. A very large proportion of the regular press offered little resistance and gradually accepted a kind of self-censorship. That the ruling group was thinking of controls over the press as a permanent measure was indicated by the putting on the statute book of the Prevention of Publication of Objectionable Matters Act in 1976. It was also known that the spokesmen of Government were threatening newspapers about "consequences" after the censorship was lifted and general elections announced. Such threats indicated what might have been in store for the press if the Congress Party had won the elections in March 1977.

The press began to act with great vigour almost as a rebound after Emergency was lifted in 1977, and especially after the change brought in as a result of the elections in March 1977. The Janata Government, and the short-lived Lok Dal Government, felt the thrust of this vigorous assertion of independence by the press. This was also the time when the press specially developed new traditions of investigative journalism, and this has now become a major feature of an increasing number of important newspapers.

Since January 1980, with the change of Government, the attitude of the Government of India towards the press has reverted to one of antipathy Many of the new State Governments which came to power in the middle of 1980 have shown active hostility. Instances of threats to the free functioning of the press are not uncommon. There was the instance in Bangalore when, as a result of the publication of a press report which was disliked by the Chief Minister, there was a kind of *gherao* of important papers so as to prevent their publication one day, and the police practically pleaded helplessness in the matter. There was the instance of a former Chief Minister who compared the press to snakes and scorpions. The Tamilnadu Government, belonging to a different political party, has put special curbs on contacts between Government officials and the press, and has stiffened the CPC in a manner which would make "scurrilous" writing a non-bailable offence and also one where imprisonment on conviction is made obligatory as a punishment. The Prime Minister herself has indicated more than once her dislike of the manner in which what is called the National Press operates.

THE basic attitude of those who are in power has been one of wanting the press to conform. This is especially clear from the attitude that those in power have taken to the manner in which the broadcasting media which are under direct Government control are to operate. The demand for broadcasting media to be separated from the direct tutelage of Government, and entrusting the work to an autonomous corporation, has been put forward for a long time. But this has been resisted by all those who have been in political power at the Centre. The Government of India had appointed in the sixties a committee (the Chanda Committee) to go into this question, and it recommended an autonomous set-up for All India Radio. But the Government continued to ignore this recommendation. In fact, during Emergency, Government spokesmen made it quite clear that they thought it quite right that the broadcasting media should propagate only the official viewpoint. The Prime Minister herself had clearly stated in 1975 that All India Radio is "a Government organ, it is going to remain a Government organ. We are proud that it is a Government organ ... It is there to project Government policies and Government views. It does not mean we do not give the views of other people, but primarily its function is to give the views of the Government of India". The Prime Minister justified this by stating that "in no country in the world, in no developing country, do they even allow anybody else to appear or any other viewpoint to be projected".

Though the Janata Government appointed a committee (B.G. Verghese Committee) to examine this question, and the Committee recommended the setting up of an autonomous body for taking charge of broadcasting, the Janata Government, and also the short-lived Lok Dal Government, took no steps to pursue this recommendation and to make All India Radio autonomous and largely free of Government control. This is an adequate indication of the battles that may always have to be fought, whichever party is in power, to ensure that media of mass communication are permitted to operate freely.

A more recent indication of the Government's indifference to the economic functioning of the press is provided by the Government's imposing an import duty on newsprint at a time when various costs of the newspaper industry, including newsprint prices in the major supplying countries, have been rapidly escalating. To impose a duty on newsprint which would further enhance the costs of producing newspapers, in a country where the incomes of the common people are very low and where the circulation of newspapers is still very small, is hardly calculated to ensure wider circulation of newspapers. The proceeds of the import duty form such a minor part of the Central Government's revenue that if the duty was not imposed it would have meant no real difficulty for Government. In spite of widespread demand in the press, the Government has continued the import duty for a second year, only made it specific instead of *ad valorem*.

A further point of importance in this context is that, because of the necessity to ensure planned development of our economy, considerable powers regarding various aspects of the economy have been conferred on Government. With the attitude of the Government of intolerance of criticism as indicated earlier, the possibility of the Government misusing these powers against the newspapers which it considers hostile is very real. Not only that Government has considerable powers which can be used at its discretion under statutes like the IDRA and the MRTP Act, but there are also other powers such as under import control, the grant of credit through banks the bulk of which are in the public sector, and even services provided by public utilities like Posts and Telegraphs (including telephones), and power supply. Normal credit facilities may be denied, power supply may be cut off or made irregular (ostensibly on technical grounds), or postal and telegraphic facilities may be discriminatingly used, to harass newspapers whose policies are disliked by those in positions of political power. Government advertisements and advertisements by the large and expanding public sector business organisations may be denied or they may be used in such a discriminatory manner as to favour or disfavour particular newspapers. The overall powers of the state may be used to create difficulties for independent newspapers and newspapermen. Even police protection may mysteriously disappear when well organised mobs *gherao* newspaper offices and threaten violence. Enough data are available to show that these are not merely theoretical possibilities but realities which face the Indian press. It is therefore clear that the main threat to press freedom in India arises from the executive power of the state, both at the Centre and in the States. What is likely is not so much a direct and overt act of nationalisation as what may be called *salami* tactics of putting curbs in an increasing and steady manner through various obstructions and threats.

It is also necessary not to ignore the fact that the traditions of democratic polity and essential freedoms have not had a very long innings in India. Intolerance of inconvenient speech or writing therefore comes easily to many people in the country. Enough data are available even about happenings in recent years to illustrate this, the Chhabirani episode in Orissa being one of the most notorious ones. Investigative journalism, when it touches some vested interest or the other — whether it is in politics, castes, property rights, trade unions, or any other — is in special danger as a result of persistent threats of violence. It would not be wrong to say that the greater the distance of the journal or the journalist from a metropolis the greater the risk, though it is not as if such danger is quite absent even in metropolitan areas.

THE intolerance of critical references is further exemplified in the attitude shown by many legislators to the question of legislative privileges. Even though it is now more than 30 years since the Constitution came into force and the idea then was that the privileges of legislatures would be codified within a few years, no legislature in India has yet taken any steps in that direction, and there appears to be almost a concensus among legislators to avoid such codification. The result is that the possibility that a legislature may treat a particular reference as an infringement of legislative privilege is a kind of Damocles' sword on the heads of newspapers. It does not infrequently happen that legislators utter obscenities, trade abuses and generally behave in an undignified manner. If the presiding officer expunges such words, or decides that nothing will go on record, the idea is that publication of such part of the proceedings, even if it has taken place, is not to be reported; and if it is, it may be treated as contempt of the legislature. This is strange logic indeed. What actually happens, is actually said, is treated as if it is wiped out by the decision of the presiding officer and is not to be reported. Unlike in some foreign legislatures such as in the UK, it is not an odd word here or there which is expunged but, frequently, whole passages. A citizen who is present in the visitors' gallery is obviously a witness to what happens; but those who are not present are not expected to be informed through the press of what actually happens. One does not understand by what logic such an approach is taken. On the other hand, it is only proper that the citizen should have the maximum access to information about what his representatives do, the manner in which they behave, or misbehave.

ALL these difficulties in the way of ensuring that the press can have the maximum freedom to carry out its function of collecting facts about different facets of national life, analysing them and commenting upon them so as to keep the general body of citizens in our young democracy well informed, show that the press requires some special protection. Many authorities have held that the Right to Freedom of Speech conferred by Article 19(1) of the Constitution is adequate to protect freedom of the press. Judicial decisions have however made it clear that the Fundamental Rights are conferred only on citizens and not on associations of citizens. In the present times, no newspaper or periodical can normally be brought out by individuals, it can only be brought out by corporate bodies. Moreover, it has also been held by Courts that, in view of the limitations put under Article 19(2) etc., pre-censorship can be imposed on newspapers even when the country does not face an Emergency due to external aggression or internal rebellion or similar circumstances. That governmental authorities can be tempted to use such powers purely for partisan purposes was adequately proved in 1975-76 and, more recently, in Assam. There is also some uncertainty about whether some provisions in the Indian Penal Code cannot be used as a coercive instrument against the press. It appears therefore necessary that a specific Constitutional amendment to confer the right of freedom on the press in particular and on media of communication in general needs to be taken up in right earnest. If the general body of citizens in a vast county like ours is to be kept adequately informed both about the actual events and about alternative approaches to meeting the country's problems, it is essential that freedom of the communication media is protected by a specific Constitutional provision to that effect.

Such a specific provision will enable newspapers and journalists to obtain judicial protection from direct as well as indirect threats. It would not then be impossible for a newspaper which may receive unfair treatment from those in charge of functions like import control, power supply, bank credit or communication facilities to obtain judicial redress if it can be shown that the discrimination is due to its being a newspaper which is critical of those in power.

A complementary measure will be to insist upon the codification of legislative privileges, with the proviso that where a breach of privilege is alleged, the legislature should only be permitted to file a complaint, the decision regarding whether contempt is proved and, if so, the punishment to be awarded being left to a court of law. The idea that the legislature should itself be both the accuser and the judge might have had a historical reason in England; but there is no reason for such a fundamentally unjust approach to be accepted in our context.

IT may be asked: Would this be enough to ensure that the press is left genuinely free to carry out the functions that it must perform?. Would it not be necessary to think of some other, more positive, steps to ensure that the press does not remain a hand-maid of only the powerful in the country?

The inadequacies of the Indian press need not be glossed over. There is no doubt that private business—and those who control it—are treated by most newspapers with kidgloves. This is partly because of the ownership of many newspapers and therefore the philosophy of those who are appointed to senior journalistic positions. The trade union side of industrial disputes, the approach of the political parties on the Left side of the political spectrum, and the difficulties of the unprivileged and the dispossessed have received far less attention than those of other, smaller, sections and vested interests in the vast bulk of our newspapers. It should however be said that this situation is changing for the better. Competition, and also the increasing influence of professional journalists, are making it difficult for newspapers to ignore these various aspects. It is well known that the blindings at Bhagalpur, the exploitation of workers treated as bonded servants by many landed interests, the exploitation of child labour in slate factories, or of female labour in *bidi* factories or even of adult workers in asbestos factories have been brought to light not by small newspapers but by large ones which are often dubbed by critics as belonging to the Monopoly or the Jute Press category. This tendency shows that, to the extent that at least some degree of competition can be ensured in every circulation area, chances are that there would be a fair degree of investigation of different types of events.

A part of the answer to the difficulties lies in making it possible for independent newspapers and especially periodicals to operate without too much handicap. But, even then, such newspapers may not be as successful as the large ones operated as capitalist undertakings. Their workers, including journalists, may have to work at a sacrifice. But unless there are elements in the country who are ready to work with self-sacrifice and zeal for causes in which they believe, new and unorthodox ideas cannot develop and new political groups cannot emerge. There have been examples of such efforts such as the Daily *Shramik Vichar* run by some trade union groups in Pune. There was even an attempt at running a paper devoted to the requirements of the district of Pune which however did not continue for long. Real entrepreneurship in this field would consist of such efforts and, except for direct and discretionary subvention, various other steps can be taken to help the whole category of such newspapers and periodicals. This would make it possible for the larger newspapers also to be kept on their toes.

Even though investigative journalism is fast developing in India, the quality of the Indian press in many respects leaves much to be desired. Though, as a result of various awards, the emoluments of journalists have improved considerably in the last few years, adequate talent is still not attracted to this field. There is also a great deal of lethargy which leads to large-scale reproduction of speeches as well as gossip from the corridors of power instead of well organised news. The tendency even of some of our top newspapers to rely on articles from the foreign press when dealing with world affairs shows a lack of initiative in developing Indian talent for analysing world problems from the Indian point of view.

With some exceptions, there has also not been enough effort to develop interest in news, other information and comments on aspects of life other than politics, crime and sports. Investigative news collection can be of great use in matters like the operation of Plan programmes and projects. In some newspapers, useful reports of investigations in sectors like power and irrigation have recently appeared. But this is still experimental and confined only to a few papers. Such inadequacies can be overcome only with better training, more competition and greater professionalisation. There are no short-cut remedies.

The most serious inadequacy relating to the Indian Press is to be found in newspapers published in Indian languages. Most of them are poorer in quality as compared to newspapers in English. This is so even in respect of Indian language papers belonging to same groups. This obviously happens because the managements of such groups continue to think that the prestige of the group depends more on the English language newspapers than on the Indian language ones. It is quite obvious that the number of those proficient in English will not expand as rapidly as that of the literates in various Indian languages. The demand for Indian language newspapers is already expanding faster and this trend will be further accelerated in future. As the number of legislators who understand English declines, it is essential in public interest and for the proper functioning of our democracy that the quality of the more important Indian language newspapers improves rapidly. Special steps such as the development of teleprinter services in Indian languages and support to the adaption of the best techniques for printing Indian language newspapers should be taken by Government.

WE have had a wrong set of priorities regarding the press. Even the first Press Commission appeared to have been more worried about what are called chain newspapers than about the very inadequate circulation of *all* newspapers — chain and non-chain — in the country. Even the so-called chain papers still hardly boast of a circulation which would have any relevance to the numbers of people in our metropolitan and urban areas, leave alone in the countryside. It needs to be emphasised that the topmost priority in India should be to help all newspapers to develop in terms of both circulation and quality. It will take all types — chain and non-chain, multi-edition and single edition, group and non-group, large and small — to ensure that our country develops the kind of press that the largest democracy in the world requires and deserves. What should never be overlooked when thinking of the press in the Indian context is that it is only a free press which can help develop a body of citizens who are well informed both regarding current events and also about the problems facing the country, and the alternatives available for tackling them. It is only such a press that can enable a young democracy like India to survive, and also help its development in a manner where social justice is ensured and the interests of the common people served.

— Courtesy: *PUCL Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 7, July 1982 (Special Number).

Baby Food, WHO Code and Doordarshan

VIMAL BALASUBRAHMANYAN

AT the World Health Assembly in 1981, Indira Gandhi cited the use of baby foods as an example of "how publicity has made us victims of habits which are economically wasteful and wholly contrary to good health". In May 1981, India not only voted in favour of the WHO Code on baby food marketing but also appointed a committee to recommend how the Code should be implemented.

Today, just one year later, the Government-controlled Doordarshan has begun to telecast advertisement films for baby food marketed by Amul and Glaxo. Are the television bureaucrats really unaware of the norms of the Code which the Government of India has accepted? Article 5 of the WHO Code explicitly prohibits the advertising of breast-milk substitutes to the public in the mass media.

Last year the newspapers were full of articles and editorials overflowing with righteous indignation against the blatantly unethical marketing practices of baby food firms. They published yards of statistics on infant mortality and ill-health directly resulting from baby food consumption. For a while the climate of opinion against baby food was so adverse that the manufacturers obviously saw the need to lie low. Then Amul printed a pious ad about mother's milk being the best but subsequently one noticed that the big firms concentrated only on advertising weaning foods and not on breast-milk substitutes. Now they are back at their old game.

The same papers that cried themselves hoarse against baby food are quite brazenly printing baby food ads — freedom of the press at work! We all know the philosophy of the newspaper owners, but why should Doordarshan allow the big firms to use this medium to sell baby food? Surely the authorities are not so naive as to be taken in by a perfunctory initial announcement that breast is best, BUT .... The selling point of the ad films comes after this big 'but'.

And that brings the focus on this new selling point which has emerged after last year's storm in the media.

A reputed paediatrician I happened to speak to a few months ago was indignant about the failure of nursing home staff to encourage breastfeeding during the crucial early days after delivery. He was referring mainly to middle class and affluent mothers, and this is relevant to the present question because TV ads are obviously aimed at the well-to-do section which owns TV sets. This doctor, who was vehemently supporting breastfeeding, then made the astonishing remark that the media had been irresponsible in the way they had decried baby food. He narrated how, after reading a 'sensational' article against baby food in a Bengali weekly, a mother came and asked him if baby food was really so dangerous, and what could she, a working mother, possibly feed her baby when the time came for her to resume duty. The doctor's response was a typical medical solution to a social problem. He assured her that as long as she observed the rules of hygiene and ensured scrupulous cleanliness in preparing the feed, her baby would be safe. Doctor knows best? Well, this is exactly the message that baby food manufacturers are bending over backwards to sell through television to the affluent section of mothers on whom the earlier adverse publicity has had a marked impact.

There is a definite segment of educated, well-to-do women who, but for last year's 'scare', have come to accept the baby food culture — out of necessity if they work, for 'convenience' if they don't. These women can be wooed back from the influence of the brief bogey if the baby food firms push their product cleverly enough. And the Government is aiding these firms in their latest efforts at subliminal persuasion by enabling them to reach a captive audience. Today's message from the baby food firms is: boil the water, sterilise the bottle, and your baby is absolutely protected. The message is further reinforced in various doctors' clinics to which these mothers go to have their fears allayed.

Can one expect the medical Establishment to launch a campaign demanding that all working mothers should be enabled to breastfeed their babies uninterruptedly for six months? (They would much rather do research on gastro-enteritis in bottle-fed babies and publish scholarly studies on the subject in reputed foreign journals.) Again, can one expect the predominantly male trade union leaders to put liberal maternity leave and creche benefits on their priority list of demands? That would only be possible if women activists took up the issue, and there are too few of them. Finally, can one expect that the Government (which has a fixation about population control and thinks more in terms of introducing maternity disincentives) will come forward with legislation and schemes to enable all working women, including those in the unorganised sector, to stay at home and nurse their babies? No, doctors, trade unions and governments find the most congenial solution in baby food because it will leave the status quo untouched. Which suits Amul and Glaxo fine. If it manages to live down its blackened image, perhaps Nestle too will join the growing band of baby food advertisers on television.

Let it be remembered that when a Government-owned medium doesn't think twice about telecasting the baby food message, many viewers may be pursuaded to believe that everything is OK now: 'After all, the Government itself is allowing baby food ads, so there's really nothing to worry about.'

Promotion of breastfeeding is basically a woman's rights issue — in all countries, rich or poor. A study published by the *New York Times Magazine* last year quoted the vice-president of Bristol-Meyers as saying: "The biggest market is cow's milk and that's what we are competing against." The argument is that the working woman cannot afford to stay at home and nurse her baby, there's either no creche at the place of work or it exists only on paper, and so she simply has to find a breastmilk substitute. Without transforming this basic situation, curbs on baby food advertising will not automatically result in promotion of breastfeeding. However, apart from this vital and wider context, even in the present instance, is the equation between hygienic baby food and breast-milk in any way justified? Here are some facts which someone ought to reach to all those mothers who watch television.

- In Western countries. where there is universal knowledge of hygiene, the loss of antibodies by babies not given human milk is significant. Even infants in developed societies, when denied the immune agents in mother's milk, are seen to have higher rates of serious illness.
- The high incidence of allergic diseases with bottlefeeding was recognised in the USA decades ago when it was found that infantile eczema and other conditions were seven times more common in bottlefed infants than in breastfed babies. (This is quite apart from gastro-enteric disorders resulting from unsanitary bottlefeeding.)
- In the rich countries, more and more mothers are reverting to breast-feeding and in Sweden women are now required by law to feed their infants for the first five or six days.
- A survey in the US showed that though incidence of breast-feeding fell from 34 per cent in 1951 to 23 per cent in 1971, it resurged to 54 per cent in 1980, "probably because of increased awareness of the advantages of mother's milk and activism by groups which insist that Nature's way is best".
- According to a *Worldwatch* paper (1981), doctors at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for children in London found that only two of the 608 children treated for gastro-enteritis were breastfed. Allan Cunningham, a paediatrician in New York, has reported that during their first year bottlefed infants were hospitalised three times more frequently than breastfed ones. (This is the situation even in countries where hygiene is no problem.)

One aspect underlined in the paper is specially relevant in the context of current TV advertising aimed at the affluent. Many mothers, especially those who want to resume their social activities as early as possible, believe that a month or two of breastfeeding is enough to lay the foundations of a baby's nutrition and well-being, after which bottlefeeding is healthy enough. Even Benjamin Spock, while encouraging breastfeeding, is at pains to assure the mother that she need not feel inadequate or guilty if she does not want to breastfeed for long. All this is reinforced by the ad focus on hygiene which the affluent mother can easily ensure. However, the *Worldwatch* paper draws a distinct link between serious effects on infant health and the *duration* of breastfeeding and not merely on its initiation. The paper quotes the example of infant ill-health in Latin America where 25 per cent to 50 per cent of the babies are completely weaned by three months. The paper adds that in the US alone, about 5,000 infant deaths could be avoided annually if breastfeeding were universal.

What is obviously needed today, apart from an end to TV advertising of baby food, is a re-education campaign aimed at educated mothers. The impact of 'modernisation' is well described by Ivan Illich in *Medical Nemesis* (1975): "In 1960, 96 per cent of Chilean mothers breastfed their babies beyond the first year. By 1970 only 6 per cent did so and only 20 per cent nursed their babies as long as two full months. Chilean women went through a period of intense political indoctrination given by both Right-wing Christian Socialists and Left-wing parties. As a result of this modernisation 84 per cent of potential breastmilk remains unproduced."

And in 1976, two Cornell University nutritionists published a study on how advocacy of bottlefeeding had become "tantamount to signing the death certificate of a child". The study particularly indicted the role of health professionals and *governments* in pushing the bottle.

There is a whole body of facts emerging from painstaking research that unequivocally states the case for breastfeeding. Logically it is the Government of India (which voted for the WHO Code) that ought to be publicising this knowledge...teaching women how to care for their babies. But then DAVP, whose job this ought to be, seems to exist only to tell women how not to have babies.☐

ADIVASIS

Gujarat Cooperatives of Little Help

BHARAT DOGRA

GUJARAT is next only to Madhya Pradesh and Bihar in respect of the number of tribals who live there, and several districts of this State have a heavy concentration of tribal population. In the context of the poor and deteriorating conditions of Adivasis in most parts of the country, it is significant that Gujarat has made rapid strides in spreading a network of forestry cooperatives. Due to this, it is officially claimed that the contractor system has been eliminated and the tribals are much better off here than in other parts of the country.

To what extent is this claim justified? Recently a large number of representatives from almost all tribal areas of this State gathered at Bharuch at a seminar, and voiced their grievances and problems. The situation they described, despite some variations, was not very different as between one tribal area and another. The conditions of tribals in Panchmahal district given below is fairly representative of the plight of tribals in other parts of the State as well.

Panchmahal is one of the districts with a substantial Adivasi population. The tribal population is largely concentrated in five taluks — Bharuch, Dahod, Santrampur, Limkheru, and Dergarh Badiya. Most of the tribal families have small holdings of land, generally not more than three acres. The proportion of irrigated land is very low — generally not more than 10 per cent. Most of the land is one-crop land — maize, groundnut, rice, pulses – while on irrigated land an additional crop of wheat or gram is also cultivated.

According to the 1961 census 59 per cent of the tribals were employed in cultivation while 31 per cent were agricultural labourers. However, according to the 1971 census only 48 per cent of the tribals were cultivators while as many as 42 per cent were farm labourers.

In many villages several acres of Adivasi land has been taken over by outsiders who operated in these villages only as money-lenders and traders. Adivasi farm labourers work on their farms at a wage of Rs 2 to 3 per day, and this work too is available for only a short period in the year. There are also the Halis — permanent labourers who work for the land-owner throughout the year. The interest rates charged by the money-lenders are extremely high and alienation of debtors' land is frequent. At the time of sowing their crops the tribals have often — specially in years of crop failure — to borrow seed from the money-lender/trader at a very high interest rate thereby forfeiting their claims to a substantial share of the crop at the very outset.

Regarding forests, it is true that a network of forestry cooperatives has been created in Gujarat and the cooperative movement has spread more widely in this State than in any other. However, in most cases the benefits of the cooperatives have been usurped by outsiders or a handful of well-to-do tribals. As far as the relationship of the majority of tribals with the forests is concerned, it is not very different from what obtains in other parts of the country: the tribals are employed at low wages as forest labourers and work under extremely difficult conditions.

This situation may deteriorate even further if the new forestry legislation under consideration now is introduced. Several tribal representatives expressed the apprehension that a large number of tribals will be uprooted from their homes, and their existing rights over minor produce will also be adversely affected.

Subsistence is extremely difficult during the lean season when there is no work available (August to October). There is hardly any work on the farms and due to rains other works such as road construction also come to a standstill. The precarious life that the Adivasis lead forces them to migrate every year in large numbers, more so during years of drought. They go to work on farms in more developed districts like Kheda, or road building, or at construction sites — in fact wherever they can find any work to enable them to survive the lean season.

The situation is worse in areas like Dharampur taluk of Bulsar district. In this taluk several villages also face acute shortage of drinking water. The tribals have to climb steep slopes to obtain water from rivers flowing in the valleys below. Hardly any efforts have been made to harness the springs and rivers to provide drinking water nearer their homes. Dharampur also has a high incidence of diseases like leprosy and night blindness.

Some tribal areas as in Panchmahal district have also become infested with criminal gangs. The root cause of this lies in the extreme poverty and exploitation of tribals. When they cannot eke out a living despite their best efforts, some of them turn to a life of crime.

Contacts with the outside world have created some social problems too for the tribals. Several girls are being enticed away from the tribal villages of Saharkantha district. It is feared that most of them finally find their way to brothels in towns or are exploited in other ways. Any assertion of their rights is put down with a heavy hand. The most recent case of this kind took place in Valia taluk of Bharuch district, the brutality of which is unmatched in the recent history of tribal Gujarat.

Nearly 20 per cent of the non-tribals own all tribal land in this taluk. In recent months there has been some consciousness among the tribals that they must stake their claim to this land, most of which was cultivated at one time by themselves or their fathers. Consequently, isolated incidents like preventing landlords from entering the fields, offering satyagraha or even burning the crop had been reported from this taluk. The Adivasi farm labourers were also raising the demand for payment of the minimum wage of Rs 5.50 (not revised since 1975).

Local police and SRP jawans moved into these villages and unleashed a reign of terror extending over several months. Several Adivasis including old men and children were brutally beaten up in many villages, and one Adivasi activist was shot dead under the pretext of an 'encounter'. A large number of them, including activists of the Kisan Sabha, were implicated in false cases. As Adivasi men used to flee the villages due to police terror, several unprotected Adivasi women were allegedly raped by policemen, while some other women were detained by the police for several days.

What has happend recently in Valia indicates that the exploiters are determined to crush the initial signs of awakening among the Adivasis. The State Government should not let itself be misguided by the widely propagated benefits of the forestry cooperatives which have made little difference to the life of the overwhelming majority of tribals. It should take steps to utilise the emerging signs of consciousness among tribals for actually giving them more and more of the long-denied rights — whether in the area of minimum wages, land restoration or forestry rights. ☐

Birth of "Island of Freedom"

VIBHA MAURYA

"I stated that the second consideration on which are based our chances for success was one of social order. Why were we sure of people's support? ..In terms of struggle when we talk of people, we are talking about the six hundred thousand Cubans without work,...five hundred thousand farm labourers who live in miserable shacks, who work four months of the year and starve the rest, sharing their misery with their children,...four hundred thousand industrial workers and labourers whose retirement funds have been embezzled, whose benefits are being taken away, whose life is endless work and whose only rest is in the tomb,...one hundred thousand small farmers who live and die working on land that is not theirs....These are the people, the ones who know misfortune and, therefore, are capable of fighting with limitless courage".

The Cuban situation was thus succinctly described by Fidel Castro Ruz in the court that was trying him and his comrades-in-arms for a military assault on July 26, 1953, on Moncada Garrison, a symbol of the tyranny of dictator Batista.

The economy of Cuba was literally mortgaged to US monopolies, which subjected the people of the island to ruthless exploitation. The reckless plunder of Cuban resources had driven the people to extreme poverty and universal illiteracy. Smuggling, gambling and prostitution were officially encouraged by the then military regime in order to attract American "tourists".

On March 10, 1952, Falgencio Batista grabbed power through a successful coup. It was not a *patsch* against the previous regime of Prir. In fact, it was a conspiracy against the people of Cuba on the eve of the election. A few hours after the coup, Fidel Castro published the manifesto wherein he stated: "Seeds not of peace but of hatred are sown like this, not happiness but grief and sadness is what the nation is experiencing in these tragic happenings of today. Nothing is more bitter in the world than this trauma when people went to sleep free beings and woke up as slaves".

University students, teachers, farmers, workers, came together under the banner of the People's Party of Cuba. Also known as 'Orthodox', it was founded by a much-loved leader, Eduardo Chibas. The slogan of this party was "dignity as opposed to money" and its symbol was a broom with which to "sweep out" the thieves, criminals and impostors of all kinds at all levels. They organised demonstrations, protest marches, strikes. But the repressive regime of Batista subjected the struggling people to ruthless suppression. Therefore the leaders of struggle had to decide to launch an armed struggle. The purchase and collection of arms and training of cadre had to be carried out under very difficult conditions, but the process tempered and steeled them into a fighting force.

The year 1953 was important for the Cuban people. They were celebrating the birth centenary of Jose Marti whom Fidel described as the intellectual author of the Moncada assault. This group, called the youth of the "Centenary Generation", started preparing for an attack on Moncada Garrison. The aim was not to capture power as was explained by Raul Castro, another member of the group. "It was not an assault on a fortress to take power by an action of a hundred men; it was a surprise action to disarm and demoralise the enemy and arm the people to begin an armed struggle".

In the early morning of July 26, 1953, a group of 165 young revolutionaries stormed the Moncada Garrison. The plan was to occupy the Garrison, the civil hospital and the palace of justice from where military control was exercised. Later they would have occupied the radio station and destroyed the bridge by which reinforcements could be sent by the Government. The attack, however, could not proceed as planned. When it became clear that the operation was doomed to failure, the rebels began to withdraw to the mountains to continue their struggle. Many, however, were crestfallen. As many as eighteen of the Moncada assaulters went to the Gran Piedra and held the heights for a week. But hunger and thirst broke their resistance. Consequently some of them surrendered and some escaped. One night Fidel and two of his companions were captured by an army officer. They escaped being killed instantly by mere chance. Batista gave orders to slaughter the revolutionaries mercilessly. Not only young men who participated in the assault but innocent women and children of Santiago de Cuba were thus slaughtered. Prisoners were blackmailed into betraying their comrades and women were subjected to utmost humiliation. Fidel told the court: "Frustrated by the valour of our men, they tried to break the spirit of our women. With a bleeding human eye in hand, a sergeant and others went to the cell of our women comrades Melba Hernandoz and Haydee Santamaria. They said, 'This eye belonged to your brother. If you will not tell us what he refused to say we will tear out the other.' "

The most important event in that phase was the speech delivered in court by Fidel, "History will Absolve Me", in which he gave the full account of their attack, mistakes committed by them, the torture to which his comrades were subjected and the massacre of seventy of them. Fidel also spelt out the programme of struggle.

In 1955 Fidel and his comrades were released under tremendous pressure from the people. In December 1956, this group of revolutionaries together with Che Guavara sailed from Mexico in the boat *Granma* and landed in the Oriente province of Cuba. After 25 months of protracted fight carried out from the mountains and subsequently taken to the cities with full support of the people the gurrillas succeeded in defeating Batista and his allies. Thus on January 1, 1959, was born the "Island of freedom." ●

A Significant Joint Statement

SCHOFIELD CORYELL

An unusual and politically significant event took place in Paris on July 20 when a well-known PLO figure — Issam Sartawi, adviser to Arafat— and a leading Israeli peace advocate — retired General Matty Peled, a prominent member of the Left nationalist Sheli movement and president of the Israel-Palestine Peace Council — held a joint press conference and issued a common statement calling for the immediate lifting of the siege of Beirut and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon.

Dr. Issam Sartawi, in a brief statement before a crowded audience of journalists, said this public appearance of an official PLO representative alongside a member of the growing Israeli peace camp was the result of eight years of secret contacts between these two groups. "Most of those secret contacts were in Paris and, while not officially sponsored by the French Governments (under Presidents Giscard d Estaing and Mitterrand), they were unofficially permitted and indirectly assisted by the authorities."

The Palestinian militant — who repeatedly stated that he was speaking in the name of the collective leadership of the PLO and not in his personal name — explained that a joint press conference of this type became possible at the present moment, and not earlier, because of such recent developments as Arafat's endorsement of the Paris declaration of Mendes-France, Nahum Goldman and Philip Klutznick, calling for "mutual recognition by the PLO and Israel", and the dramatic meeting in Beirut last week between PLO leader Arafat and the well-known Israeli peace partisan, Uri Avnery.

Matty Peled — a former General who was in charge of logistics during the Six-Day War — explained that the main weakness of the numerous contacts that have taken place over the years between Palestinian and Israeli personalities lies in the fact that the PLO participants in such talks were always official representatives of their organisation, while the Israeli participants were members of the internal opposition, not Israeli Government officials or designated agents.

"Our aim was to break the ice by establishing contact with the PLO in the hope that the Israeli Government would follow up by continuing the conversation on an official level. But this never happened because of the refusal by successive Israeli Governments to deal with the PLO or even recognise its legitimacy."

The joint press conference in Paris followed on the heels of similar press conferences in London and Brussels. They fit into the context of a new PLO diplomatic campaign with the aim of extracting a significant political victory from the jaws of the Israeli invasion by reiterating the PLO's own willingness to live at peace with an Israel confined to its pre-1967 borders, if only Israel in its turn would finally be reconciled to living alongside an independent Palestinian state. "The trouble is that Israel has no other intention than finally wiping out the PLO and exterminating the Palestinian nation," said Sartawi — and his views were confirmed by Peled.

A week before the joint press conference, Dr. Sartawi had issued an official statement in Paris emphasising the PLO's long-standing position in favour of a "two-state" solution to the Palestinian question.

"Ever since 1974," he explained on that occasion, "we have been amending our original Charter so as to take into account the concept of Israel's right to exist, on a reciprocal basis with our own eventual Palestinian state. True, we have our internal differences, and we are proud of our democratic life, our constant give-and-take. Why do you of the Western world call our democracy 'divisions', while you describe your own divisions as 'democracy'? But the fact is that the views I express here are those of the vast majority of the Palestinian National Council, our Parliament, and of the PLO leadership."

Sartawi went on to point out that the successive Israeli Governments have stubbornly refused to admit that the PLO Charter has been amended and that the recognition of Israel, within its pre-1967 borders and alongside an independent Palestinian state, is the official PLO line. The US, he said, has followed the same pattern of wilful blindness, attributing to the PLO the intention of "destroying Israel" in order to justify in advance every act of aggression against the Palestinians.

The PLO leader declared, at the joint press conference a week later on July 20, that he was "disappointed" by the US State Department's rejection of his June 13 statement reiterating the PLO's stand in favour of "double recognition" (of Israel by the PLO and of the PLO by Israel) as a solution to the Palestinian problem. The US officially said that Sartawi's statement was "unsatisfactory" because it did not "meet American conditions" such as acceptance of UN resolution 242, calling for Israel's withdrawal from the lands occupied after the Six-Day War and guarantees for the safety and security of all the states of the region, including Israel.

"I would like to point out," Sartawi said, "that we reject resolution 242 because it speaks of the Palestinians exclusively as 'refugees' and not as a 'people' with national rights. But we accept all the other provisions of that resolution, including the clauses concerning Israel's right to an existence within secure borders, after withdrawing from the lands occupied since 1967."

Dr. Sartawi declared that the Palestinian National Council in April 1981 fully endorsed the "Brezhnev initiative" which repeats the language and essential provisions of resolution 242, except that it speaks, he said, of the Palestinians as a "people" endowed with national rights and not as mere "refugees". The PLO's endorsement of the Brezhnev position — which advocates an international conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties concerned, the recognition of Palestinian national rights and of the necessity of secure borders for all the states of the region (including Israel) — is one more example of that organisation's recognition of "Israel's right to exist."

In a lively discussion with the journalists, Dr. Sartawi made the serious charge that Abu Nidal — whose group claimed credit for the murder of Israel's Ambassador in London, which the Begin Government used as a pretext for the invasion of Lebanon — is actually an agent of the MOSSAD, the Israeli secret service. "His targets are also Israel's targets," said Sartawi, citing the killing of PLO representatives in London and Paris and Brussels and the recent attacks on Jewish institutions and places of worship. These anti-semitic crimes were calculated, he explained, to create insecurity among Jews of the diaspora with the intention of inciting them to emigrate to Israel.

Asked if he agreed with Dr. Sartawi's charge concerning MOSSAD's responsibility for the murder of the Israeli Ambassador in London, Matty Peled replied: "The charge is plausible and should be examined by the Israeli Government authorities who alone are in a position to know the facts. Let them provide an explanation for the otherwise miraculous occurrence of that murder just when Begin and Sharon needed it to justify the planned attack on Lebanon." (*July 23*)

TEXT OF STATEMENT

Following is the text of the joint statement issued in Paris on July 20, 1982, by Dr Issam Sartawi, adviser to PLO leader Yasser Arafat, and retired Israeli General Matty Peled, President of the Israel-Palestine Peace Council:

The war launched by Israel against the Palestinian people is completely unjustified. The argument that the Palestinian people, through their sole representative the PLO, aimed at destroying the state of Israel is manifestly untrue. The PLO has made its willingness to accept and recognise the state of Israel on the basis of mutual recognition of each nation's legitimate right of self-determination crystal clear in various resolutions since 1977. The July 1981 cease-fire agreement between Israel and the PLO was meticulously observed by the PLO until it was flagrantly violated by Israel attacking PLO installations in Beirut on June 4, 1982.

The siege of Beirut must be lifted and the Israeli forces withdrawn from Lebanon. Negotiations with the PLO leadership on the basis of the above-mentioned principles and not renewed attempts at annihilating them, is the only way to solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to establish a just peace in the Middle East.

We call upon all peace-loving forces in the world, and particularly those inside Israel and within the

examine their positions in the light of the above-mentioned developments.

It is high time that all governments realise that only through the *formal recognition of the PLO* and its full participation in the search for peace can a just, honourable and permanent peace be established.

While the occupation of the southern half of Lebanon by Israel continues, and the PLO forces are besieged in Beirut, we draw the attention of world public opinion to the fate of those Palestinian civilians who populated until recently the refugee camps of Lebanon. By all objective accounts, these camps are now destroyed and practically empty of population. The whereabouts of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians is unknown. Fully aware of the intention of the Israeli Government to drive all the Palestinian population out of Lebanon and of the open demand made by the Phalange leadership to that effect, we find the lack of accurate information regarding the fate and whereabouts of the Palestinians in occupied Lebanon most alarming. We call upon the UN, and all humanitarian relief agencies, as well as the Israeli Government, to clarify the position of these Palestinians and facilitate their rehabilitation.

Nine thousand Palestinian fighters are now being held in a concentration camp set up by Israel near Nabatiyya, in Lebanon. These people are kept in custody in accordance with a new emergency regulation promulgated by Israel on June 9, 1982, bearing the number 1182 by which Israeli army officers of the

DOCUMENT

Intellectuals' Memo on Palestine

Following is the text of a memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister of India on July 26, 1982, on the eve of her visit to the USA :

THE recent Zionist aggression on Lebanon with the avowed objective of wiping out the Palestine Liberation Organisation and installing in Beirut a government which should act as a puppet in the hands of Israel is the contemporary re-enactment of Nazi brutality and Hitlerite aggression. Indiscriminate bombing of civilian population and the use of phosphorus bombs, cluster bombs and toxic gas indicate the despicable depths of cyncism reached by Israel.

What the Israelis have been doing for the last several decades has outraged human conscience and stirred the people who love peace and freedom to express sympathy and solidarity with the Palestinian people, and the PLO has come to be recognised as their sole representative. What they have done in the last month and a half makes the Zionist regime the incarnation of Nazi inhumanity. The racist regime in Tel Aviv has thus served notice on humanity that it can do a Hitler to the world if its fascism is tolerated or pampered as was done in the case of the Nazi dictator when he grabbed Czechoslovakia.

It has also become clear that the Zionists could not have embarked upon this cynical course if they were not helped, militarily as well as politically, by the United States. It is the USA that sustains the economy of Israel and uses it as its arsenal in West Asia. It is the USA that acts as the biggest check against the Arab states coming out in defence and support of the Palestinians. And it is the USA which has prevented the UN from applying sanctions against Israel and from enforcing the numerous resolutions that the world body has passed against the Israeli regime.

We in India cannot fail to notice the US game as we have also been victims of similar imperialist intrigues put into operation through Pakistan. The Israeli occupation of a vast territory of Lebanon, with direct US support, resembles continued Pakistani aggression in Kashmir. By massive pumping of armaments into Pakistan, successive US administrations have, on the one hand, sharpened the aggressive appetite of Pakistan and, on the other, thwarted our development by stepping up the arms race in this part of the world. Exactly the same thing is being done in West Asia.

Madam, the stand taken by your Government on the Lebanese crisis has made every freedom-loving Indian proud of himself. Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, who have provided the value frame to modern India, never looked upon the freedom and dignity of India as different from the freedom and dignity of the rest of mankind. Their voice rose sharp and clear against violation of human freedom and dignity wherever it took place, whether it was British intrigue against the Caliph, the Balfour Declaration, the suppression of the Spanish Republic, the attack on Abyssinia or the rape of Czechoslovakia. As the representative of Indian humanity Nehru refused to accept the invitation to visit Nazi Germany and to meet fascist Mussolini.

Your own speech in Parliament and your Foreign Minister's call at Nicosia to isolate Israel have the ring of that tradition. It is the authentic voice of India which believes in the indivisibility of freedom and peace.

Madam, free India has also the tradition of taking initiative to mobilise world opinion on issues of freedom and peace. We did it on the questions of Indonesia, Korea, Vietnam and disarmament. Lebanon and the Palestinians again call for similar initiative in the interests of safeguarding human rights, people's freedom and man's dignity which are being cynically violated by Israeli perfidy backed by the USA.

As you are going to meet the head of the US Administration. Ronald Reagan, you undoubtedly have all this in mind. Yet we would like to urge that you should impress upon the US:

(i) to desist from supporting the brutal Zionist regime in Tel Aviv;

(ii) to cooperate with the mainstream of world opinion in securing justice and a homeland for the Palestinian people;

(iii) to recognise the fact that the PLO is the sole representative of the Palestinian people and to put pressure on its surrogate Israeli state to desist from the adventurous course of destroying the Palestinians and the PLO;

(iv) to withhold its cynical support from racist and dictatorial regimes like Israel, Pakistan, South Africa and Chile and allow the democratic aspirations of people everywhere to prevail;

(v) to stop its activities which encourage arms race and nuclearisation of armies in various parts of the world, and help in creating a world free from war.

In raising these questions with Reagan you will be voicing the feelings not only of India but of the entire peace-loving humanity.

We also have no doubt that during your visit to the USA you will remind the great American people of the sources of their own inspiration. They would be grateful to you if you could remind Reagan of what Lincoln had said in his historic Gettysburg address when he had declared: "But in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate — we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow — this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here, have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us — that from these honoured dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion, that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

May we request you to kindly ask on behalf of the millions of Indian people if those inspiring words of Lincoln are to be forgotten? Why is a nuclear war-machine being built up? To what purpose was that sublime dedication made by Lincoln and why are grand monuments to be memory of Washington and Lincoln erected in that beautiful Esplanade in Washington where millions of Americans congregate every July 4 to celebrate their Independence Day?

We venture to address you thus in the hope that in your meetings with Reagan and his colleagues your efforts will ensure that sanity is restored and insanity ended so that nuclear destruction of the human race is rendered impossible, and the genocide imposed by Israel on the heroic people of Palestine and all threats to repeat it are ended forever.

India is not a poor country. Our people may be poor but we are inheritors of a rich and long tradition of humanism, human solidarity and respect for life. You are going as the inheritor and custodian of this rich tradition and as ambassador of peace and freedom to what has come to be the land of nuclear terror and unabashed blackmail of friend and foe alike. You will, we are sure, protest against blackmail in every form and not tolerate the language of arrogance of power which is alien to equal relations in the world community. The people of the world in general, and the people of India in particular, will feel proud if you convey the message of peace and freedom to the leaders of the United

States of America who, today, seem to be oblivious of their great responsibilities and are irrevocably confronting the human race with perspectives of wars in every region today and a nuclear catastrophe tomorrow.

P.N. Haksar (former Principle Secretary to Prime Minister); *A.J. Kidwai* (Vice-Chancellor, Jamia Millia); *D.P. Singh* (former Member of Parliament and General Secretary, Indian Association of Lawyers); *Debabrata Mookherjee* (former Member of Parliament and former Judge, Calcutta High Court); *Gian Chand Mathur* (former Judge, Allahabad High Court); *P.O. Rana* (former Judge, Calcutta High Court); *Danial Latifi* (President, Association of Lawyers for Democracy); *Shyamala Pappu* (President, All-India Women Lawyers' Association); *Hardev Singh* and *Janardan Sharma* (former General Secretaries, Supreme Court Bar Association); *G.L. Singh, Shivpujan Singh, M.K. Ramamurthy, Santosh Chatterjee, Suman Kapoor* and *R.K. Garg* (Senior Advocates, Supreme Court of India); *Ghulam Rabbani Taban* (President, Progressive Writers' Association); *Surendra Bhutani* (former Director, Arab Culture Centre).

Prof. S.K. Goyal, Prof. K.N. Kabra, Prof. Kuldeep Mathur, Rohani Bhushan, B.M. Gupta, M.R. Murthy, K.V.K. Ranganathan, D.N. Sharma, Jitender Kaur, Durga Prasad Pal, Jai Singh Caudhary. L.N. Singh, K.A.M. Chenoy, Nagesh Kumar, Anil Rai, Pranab Bhattacharjee, Shekhar Singh, Y. Nageshwar Rao, Shankar Dev, Pradosh Nath, K.S. Chalapati Rao, V. Tripathi, Payaswini Mahohar, Kundan Singh Rawat, U.S. Bhandari, (all from Indian Institute of Public Administration).

Prof. Shamim Hanafi, Prof. Mujeeb Rizvi, Prof. M. Rehmat Ali, Sughra Mehdi, Ajmal Ajmali, Iqbal Mehdi, Hasan Ahmed, and *Hasan Naeem* (from Jamia Millia).

Prof. Yogendra Singh, Prof. M.S. Agwani, Prof. Vishal Singh, Prof. P.K. Das, Prof. Prabhat Patnaik, Prof. T.K. Oomen, Prof K. Seshadri, Prof. L.S. Baral, Prof. K.P. Saxena, Prof. Sheila Bhalla, Prof. Amit K. Bhaduri, Prof. K. Kundu, Prof. G.S. Bhalla, Prof. Moonis Raza, Prof. Suman Gupta, Prof. J. Prasad, Prof. Mridula Mukherjee, Prof. Vijay Gupta, Prof. Aditya Mukherjee, Prof. R.M. Bakaya, Prof. C.P. Bhambri, Prof. Jaweed Ashraf, Urmila Phadnis, Gulshan Dhanani, M.K. Premi, Nirmala Joshi, Puspesh Pant, Avtar Kaur, D. Banerjee, Ila Gupta, Harjit Singh, R.R. Sharma, G.K. Chadha, C.D. Paliwal, Varyam Singh, P.K. Jayaswal, Dalip Singh, Sandwip Kumar Das, M.K. Palat, R. Kumar, R.N. Menon, S.A. Rahman, S. Bash, Rameshwar Singh, S. Chatterjee, Rajendra Prasad, Nirmal Singh, Ehsanul Haq, R.S. Singh, Nandu Ram, Kalim Bahadur, Kiran Saxena, Shamsuddin, Sunanda Sen, Rita Sil, K.V. Kesavan, M. Habibullah, U.L.H. Jambholkar, R.P. Anand, Uma Singh and *R.P. Kaushik* (all from Jawaharlal Nehru University).

M.P. Singh (Delhi University); *Kartar Singh* (former Principal, Ramjas College); *O.N. Mehrotra, M.P. Singh, S.S. Bhattacharya, K.N. Ramachandran, Christopher S. Rao* and *Sreedhar* (Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses); *Subrata Banerjee* (Indian Institute of Mass Communication), *D.R. Goyal* (General Secretary, All-India Sampradayikta Virodhi Committee).

A. Raghavan (President, Indian Federation of Working Journalists); *Kewal Varma* (Chief of Delhi Bureau, *The Telegraph*); *Mahendra Ved* (Chief of Delhi Bureau, *The Daily*); *Girish Mathur* (Senior journalist) and *Nikhil Chakravartty* (Editor, *Mainstream*).

BOOK REVIEW

Glimpses of China

CHINA TODAY: by V. K. Madhavan Kutty; Vishwavidya Publishers, Malayattoor (Kerala); 1982; pp. x + 77; Rs. 20.

As Ambassador K.R. Narayanan has said in his foreword to Madhavan Kutty's China travelogue, it is not easy to write about China after a four-week conducted tour. For foreigners, the country has been and continues to be a vast mystery. The main hurdle in any attempt to demystify China is the problem of communicating with the people, and their language is not the only barrier. China has a highly secretive social system on which has been superimposed an equally secretive political system which leaves few opportunities for argument or debate with anyone. Moreover, in a conducted tour to selected places and institutions, the visitor is entirely at the mercy of the guide-interpreter who invariably is a trusted party man determined to project the official view.

Madhavan Kutty's travelogue however shows that an inquisitive and sensitive observer can get enough glimpses to form an overview of life behind the bamboo curtain.

It is evident that Kutty's cynicism enabled him to see through many a facade put up for the visitors — which suggests that cynicism is not such an unhealthy attitude as men of faith make it out to be. His sense of humour also finds reflection in his interesting account. As the New Delhi Bureau chief of the Malayalam daily *Mathrubhumi* he is aware of the history of India-China relations during the last 30 years, and since he was visiting China with the then Foreign Minister A.B. Vajpayee, he could not ignore politics; this is evident from his perceptive remarks about Chou En-lai. But a travelogue is not a political treatise and anyone who wants to consult it in the context of the present efforts for normalisation of relations between India and China would not find much of value in Kutty's account.

At one place Kutty recalls that Lenin had conceded that the Tsars had forced the Chinese rulers to sign unequal treaties ceding parts of their territories to Russia. Kutty seems to agree with the Chinese that the present-day rulers of the Soviet Union have forgotten Lenin's saying. Is it Kutty's contention or that of the Chinese that the Emperors of China did not force unequal treaties on weaker neighbours in the west and south? How did they acquire many parts of Central Asia? Sinkiang, for instance. And how did they establish suzerainty over Tibet? To put the record straight, it is worthwhile to recall what Khrushchev said when the Sino-Soviet boundary dispute first came in the open.

In a letter to the Chinese Communist Party on November 29, 1963, he wrote, "Naturally we will not defend the Russian Tsars who permitted arbitrariness in laying down the state boundaries with neighbouring countries. We are convinced that you too do not intend to defend the Chinese emperors who by force of arms seized not a few territories belonging to others." Of particular interest to us in India, in view of the boundary dispute with China, is Khrushchev's letter to all heads of state on December 31, 1963, in which he pointed out the unsettling effects of raking up unequal treaties of the past. He wrote, "Who can affirm that a reference to the seventeenth century which one state puts forward in substantiation of its territorial claim is more valid than, for instance, a reference to the eighteenth or nineteenth century by which the other state tries to bolster its counter-claim?" He therefore suggested that all states renounce the use of force to settle boundary disputes.

(Khrushchev's letters have been quoted here from Prof. Ram Rahul's just published study *Struggle for Central Asia*).

— *Girish Mathur*

WOMEN'S WORLD

Work at Home : What It Means

K. SARDAMONI

It is high time that the work women do at home receives serious thought. This has been neglected and forgotten, so much so that the term "working woman" has generally come to mean an employed woman, that is, a woman who works for wages or salary. This is contrary even to the meaning given in the dictionary. There are many reasons why the term work needs a clear look, from women's point of view.

We seldom come across women who do not do any work. Still the majority of them come under the official classification "non-worker". According to the provisional totals of 1981 Census of India, there were 174 lakh male workers and 150 lakh male non-workers. When it comes to women, the corresponding figures are 46 lakhs and 252 lakhs. In other words, for every male non-worker there is 1.1 worker, while for every woman non-worker there is only 0.2 worker. This non-worker status of women has been accepted both by society and by women themselves for so long that it is not easy to change it. Yet we are moving into times when the implications of this for woman's life is becoming more and more pronounced and cannot therefore be ignored any longer.

The immediate and compelling reasons for an understanding and assessment of women's work at home certainly come from the increasing workload they have started to share outside the home. This double and triple burden is becoming more visible, tiring and irksome. It affects their health, morale and efficiency. Twentyfive to thirty years back it was easy for many of us to think that employment would bring economic independence which would lead to emancipation. Today each of these has come up for questioning. Employment to a large number of women is added drudgery. Freedom and emancipation are far from sight. True, when we talk of women's work either inside the home or outside it, we are not talking of a standardised entity; they differ in terms of time and energy spent as well as earnings. Reasons for working outside as well as options before them also differ. For the large number of economically and socially deprived sections like poor tribals, Scheduled Castes and others life means work — work at home and outside. An increasing number of middle class women take up lower and middle rungs of jobs in Government, quasi-Government and private services, and for them also work outside is becoming a need rather than a choice. For the small number of women in the higher rungs, work outside is a necessity even if economic compulsions are less in their case.

The brunt of domestic work is not felt equally by all the above categories, in terms of time or energy. But these are not the only two factors to take into account while talking of women's domestic work. Organising work at home either when we work ourselves or make others do it is not simple. It needs simultaneous attention to several things; balancing of time and budget according to situations, and repetition of the same monotonous and often thankless jobs day after day for years, need particular training of brain and body.

Unfortunately nobody has cared to study the impact of these on women. Neither has anyone seriously studied what women do at home. It is labelled as cooking, cleaning and child-care. The academic reasons for not examining women's domestic work are that it is not marketed and hence not valued; women themselves love it and get a sense of satisfaction which compensates for not being rewarded in monetary terms; and it is not "gainful" or "socially useful" activity.

A description of women's work at home is answer enough to these remarks. Let us begin with the poorer women about whom it may be thought that they do not have much work at home. Yet their work outside is intricately linked to work inside home. All of them, whether they be agricultural labourers, construction workers or domestic help get up earlier than their menfolk to attend to all work at home. But what I saw in a Thanjavur (Tamilnadu) village recently is something I cannot easily forget. We were in a Harijan colony early in the morning. Our idea was to meet some labourers before they went out to work. We found some men still sleeping, some idling around and a few quarrelling as a result of the previous night's alcohol. Small groups of women were sitting here and there, talking or cleaning utensils. Suddenly a mother and daughter rushed into the street. They had gone to work as soon as day broke — all women who got work that day had gone early — after cooking for the men. They had done harvesting earlier. In that region harvesting is done by male-female pairs and the women could continue only if the son carried the harvested paddy to the threshing ground. It was generally male work. The two had come to wake up the man and give him the morning meal. With difficulty he got up and with a tooth-brush in his mouth walked towards the nearby stream.

There can be no better picture of middle class employed women's struggle to cope with work at home and outside than the Kerala commuters. A large number of women travel long distances by bus, train or even boat to be employed. Once I travelled in a train from Trivandrum to Quilon, 45 miles north. Most of the women commuters got off at Quilon and nearby stations, but some went ahead too. It was a lesson for me. Thanks to the housing policy which is supposed to help the middle class, many of them had houses in Trivandrum. Their children were studying there. So they preferred to undertake this daily travel. They comb and tidy their hair (they rush to the station after a bath); take breakfast; read newspapers; exchange pleasantries and relax after the morning hours' hectic routine at home when they arranged and did everything for everybody. Most women of this class exhaust all their casual leave within the first two or three months. Few of them would take leave for personal reasons. Illness of other members of the family, social obligations including entertaining guests, and other domestic demands are the main reasons. And their domestic work is more and varied than what their mothers and grandmothers did.

For women in the top professional echelons life certainly is not a perpetual struggle as in the case of the above categories. Yet, compared to their male counterparts, a woman in this category too has many demands from the home front.

These cannot be dismissed as what happens within the walls of your house being your private affair. The demand to re-examine domestic work is coming in the wake of new urges for equality, fair share in opportunities and a life of dignity. The implications of this unrecognised, unpaid work are many. It is treated as work for which woman is born. To begin with, it limits women's access to education, employment and participation in anything outside the home. Those who break this and come out have not only to share double and triple burdens, but also limit their ambitions and desires. When they look for jobs, many women prefer "something near home", "something which will leave time to look after home and children". Many women would agree to remain in the same position for fear that demands for promotion would mean transfer. Many take over the entire burden of domestic work to help their husbands make some advancement in career.

The notion of male breadwinner arises from the place given to women at home and this has had grave effects. One of the reasons for fixing a higher wage for male jobs or for men doing the same work arises from the idea that women are marginal earners. This was explicitly stated in the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee report. The second ALE Report made the following observations: "A distinct feature of agricultural employment is the preponderance of women and children as wage-earners. While such employment is often resorted to for supplementing family income, it is to an extent a contributing factor to low wage levels of adult male agricultural workers (p. 39). Women were employed mostly in casual agricultural work. Their employment for wages was more often due to necessitous household economy and need for supplementing meagre family income" (p. 88).

Current investigations prove that these kinds of observations are totally unsupported by facts and evidence. In the case of this class in general women's work is crucial to the family's survival itself.

How can these problems be resolved? Different countries have tried different ways. Flexible or shorter working hours, easy re-entry to the labour market, state support for child care, sharing of household chores by husband and other members, are some of the answers. These to some extent — that "extent" differing in different countries — have relieved women from the drudgery of domestic chores. But these measures cannot be introduced easily. There are severe resource constraints in many countries. Cultural, sociological and even economic factors can intervene to stop the women themselves from accepting some of these measures. Food habits are difficult to change and many women and men feel that food cooked at home is better and more palatable. Many women genuinely feel they can manage the home more economically and efficiently. Most of our employed women may not like to opt for part-time work or reduced hours if there is a reduction in earnings. Most of us have not reached a stage at which we can express our discomforts though many would admit it in private conversation.

In addition, we have an important factor to consider in our situation: large numbers of women in all strata are not today employed outside the home. A good number seek and do not get jobs; others are not seeking jobs. If they are left out from measures to relieve women from domestic drudgery, it would generate further inequalities among women themselves. On the other hand, if they are also covered, it can lead to idleness or leisure for at least a section, which again would result in inequalities among women. And one thing we have to be careful about, is not to widen the existing gaps among women. On the contrary, a narrowing of this gap is essential to generate closeness and solidarity among women. Like all other issues, women's work at home also cannot be understood or resolved in isolation.

Take cooking and child care. A poor agricultural woman-worker who is at the mercy of seasonal employment has, in the off season, to climb kilometres of forest slope to collect firewood, or fodder which she sells in the evening market where she buys the day's cereal and provisions. Cooking may take only half an hour and no member of the family may get sufficient food. On the other hand, a middle class women, even when she is employed, spends more time cooking more elaborately. And a relatively well-to-do "unemployed" woman would spend hours experimenting with the recipes she sees in the fashion magazines using all the gadgets she has acquired. Speaking of child care, the poor woman lacks time, money and knowledge to care for the child's health or educational needs. The middle class woman — especially urban — knows what to feed at what age, what medicare is to be given, when to start schooling, where and when to help the child. Women's determination to get out of drudgery and removal of the inequities cited above are linked as both are needs of a world moving towards equality. The two will not be attained without struggle; both need material resources, and attitudinal changes.

Society as it is structured today, with its prejudices and hierarchies and a value system supporting these along with strong socio-economic arrangements, will not start thinking of women as equal partners in every walk of life. It is used to treating women as beasts of burden to do unpaid, unrecognised and unrecorded work, who can be harassed, ill-treated, beaten and burnt. In fact there is fear even among well-meaning people that if women assert their rights "too much" it will threaten many of the existing arrangements; in other words, family and society would be destabilised. True. But the stability we "enjoy" today is based on women's work, suffering, tolerance, patience and acceptance of a subservient position. A shake-up would necessitate a painful process of adjustment in all human relations. But the result would be something beautiful, more humane and of a higher order.

Today this is only a dream. Let us begin the debate. □

Soviet Viewpoint (*from page 9*)

Soviet-American summit meeting he would say that the United States was ready to build with the USSR a new mutual understanding and that the Soviet Government and the Soviet people should have no fear of the United States. Two weeks later we had an opportunity to read as an explanation of this utterance a directive which instructed the US Defence Department to draw up plans for inflicting destruction on the Soviet Union at any level of armed conflict from rebel operations to nuclear war.

This attitude can hardly be ascribed to the Pentagon's "independent-mindedness" — it does reflect some inner instincts of the leaders of the present administration. No wonder at the end of the latest NATO session in Bonn, President Reagan first assured his colleagues that he would negotiate arms limitations with the Soviet Union and immediately urged them to remember that politically the West continued to be in a state of war with the Soviet Union.

And here we witness yet another gaping discrepancy between US policy and the realities. The men in Washington have forgotten and simply do not want to remember that successful talks on arms limitation and the very prevention of nuclear war call for normal relations, relations of peaceful co-existence and detente between countries with different social systems, in the first place, between the largest ones among them — the USSR and the USA. One cannot count on the preservation of peace, while at the same time unleashing a wholesale "political war" against the socialist countries, spurring on the arms race, and fanning hatred of the USSR.

Professor George Kennan, a veteran of American diplomacy, wrote recently that he found that views on the Soviet Union that prevailed today in the US Government and journalism were extremist, subjective and far removed from everything that was prompted by any sensible study of the surrounding realities, adding that as the basis of political action those views were not only ineffective but even dangerous.

It seems to me that such an appraisal has been fully corroborated by recent events — the intensification of the arms race and the more frequent armed conflicts assuming an ever more dangerous character. Of course, the subjunctive mood is inapplicable to history and it is always hard to guess how events could develop in different political conditions, but it is possible to confidently say that had it not been for the US line of whipping up tension and aggravating relations with the USSR, had the dialogue continued deepening, the talks proceeded and cooperation developed successfully, those conflicts could have been prevented, quickly localised and a peaceful settlement of them secured.

This is fully true of the Middle East and, probably, also true of the South Atlantic. In the world of today, the course for confrontation between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty, between the USA and the USSR creates such a political atmosphere, such a situation in international relations that makes for the appearance and deepening of conflicts. This means playing with fire, which is dangerous for those starting it, too. Besides, such a course of confrontation has no prospects before it.

Few people will, of course, be surprised by the Right-wing extremists in the USA hating the Soviet Union and wishing to "make short shrift" of it. But the "directives" for this end look ridiculous. Their authors obviously forget that attempts of that kind had been made in the past both by the Entente and the Axis powers and, in the years of the Cold War by the United States itself, invariably ending in a fiasco. Such attempts have even fewer chances of success today.

This, however, does not belittle the dangers the present policy of the USA is fraught with—dangers for the cause of peace, for all nations and for the United States itself. And those whom the US Administration looks upon as its adversaries, and now even America's allies and the public at large, are by no means blind to these dangers. One has once again been reminded of this by the sharp reaction to the US' complicity in Israeli aggression in Lebanon.

As for as the near future I would venture to say this:

US policy will be as good as it will not be allowed to be bad, as safe (not only for us, but also for America itself and its allies) as it will not be allowed to be dangerous—not allowed by the economic and political realities, by the policies of other countries, by the Americans' common sense, by the peoples' striving for self-preservation. I hope that these factors will be sufficient for the continuing political process to strengthen the realistic principles, to bring American policy back to understanding of not only the existing contradictions, but also of very important and vital common interests — the interests of peace, the interests of survival, which demand not only negotiations, but also accords and, indeed, general improvements in relations between the two countries.

Well, but what if this does not happen? In that case, I would personally soothe myself by the fact that the time will come when it is possible to say: History began not with this Administration and it will not end with it. □

Towards Stability in S.E. Asia

O.P. SABHERWAL

AMIDST the intractable and apparently hardened positions adopted by the South-East Asian Nations involved in the impasse over Kampuchea, a meaningful step forward in the quest for peace and relaxation of tensions in this part of the world has been taken by Vietnam and its allies, Laos and Kampuchea's Heng Samrin Government. The initiative of the three Indo-China states came just when the latest move by Prince Sihanouk, launching a new 'united front' of Kampuchean insurgent forces under his own leadership, seemed to render the impasse even more difficult to tackle.

There was no question that Sihanouk's efforts to get together such disparate groups as the Pol Pot elements — whom he had himself condemned for genocide — and the American-propped Lon Nol remnants — responsible for throwing him out of Kampuchea twelve years ago — could hardly go very far and was foredoomed to failure. It was meant to provide the insurgent groupings a facade of respectability by attempting to stop their mutual fights and killings which discredited them still further. This outfit was hastily set up because world opinion, despite the barrage of Western and Chinese propaganda, has been slowly veering round to the realisation that Kampuchea now has a regime which is by and large stable. But the Sihanouk move could prolong the Kampuchean agony and continue the present state of tensions and confrontation over Kampuchea which is dangerous for all South-East Asian, states, whether of the Indo-China grouping or the ASEAN nations.

In this context, the initiative taken by Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea at the conference of their Foreign Ministers in Ho Chi Minh City early this month is a significant endeavour. The proposals of the three Indo-China states, which seek to break the present deadlock over Kampuchea, and begin a process of reconciliation between the South-East Asian nations, are incorporated in the communique issued at the end of the conference in Ho Chi Minh City. Several features of the offer of the three Indo-China states distinguish it from steps hitherto proposed for solving the Kampuchean issue. First and foremost is the decision of Vietnam, in conjunction with the Heng Samrin Government of Kampuchea, to commence unilateral withdrawal of a part of Vietnamese troops stationed in Kampuchea, paving the way for further consultations between the neighbouring South-East Asian nations to bring about a complete understanding on the situation.

To domonstrate its earnestness, Hanoi has already begun withdrawing a sizeable contingent of its troops out of Kampuchea and this phase of withdrawals is expected to be completed very soon. With the pull-out of the Vietnamese troops would came a reduction of tensions and this would enable the South-East Asian nations to take the next step forward for consultations and negotiations which should finally solve the Kampuchean problem. The Vietnamese action, as has been announced by the Foreign Ministers of the three Indo-China states, is the first step, and further troop withdrawals can follow if there is adequate response from Thailand and other ASEAN nations. The communique of the three Indo-Chinese Foreign Ministers puts it like this: "Depending on the state of security and stability at the Kampuchea-Thailand border and on Thailand's acting in response to their initiative, Kampuchea and Vietnam might consider further withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea in the near future."

This promise of 'further withdrawal of Vietnamese troops is evidently an expression of confidence on the part of the three Indo-China states that the situation inside Kampuchea has greatly improved and that the Heng Samrin Government has consolidated its position. But at the same time, it provides the basis for an honourable and fair solution to the Kampuchean impasse resulting in complete withdrawal of Vietnamese troops, provided the neighbouring ASEAN nations reciprocate the gesture.

The three Indo-China Foreign Ministers also make it clear as to what they expect by way of responsive action on the part of Thailand — to prevent the misuse of its territory by the Pol Pot and other insurgent groups, converting the border zone into a sanctuary for stepping up attacks on Kampuchean territory, and availing of the facility of Thailand's territory to build bases and training camps close to the border areas. Also, the Indo-China states expect Thailand to prevent the use of its territory for pumping arms to insurgent elements inside Kampuchea. No one will say that these demands for responsive action are not fair and justified.

Yet another point in the new initiative is a further improvement on the earlier proposal by Kampuchea to establish a demilitarised zone on the border between Kampuchea and Thailand. The modified offer is to set up what is called a 'safety zone' on both sides of the Thai-Kampuchean border. This safety zone will not have any Vietnamese troops on the Kampuchean side of the border, while on the Thai side it proposes the removal of all Kampuchean insurgent bases or presence of foreign troops; only the troops of Thailand will be stationed in this area. The idea of such a safety zone too could contribute to the final solution of the

Kampuchean issue.

The question of ensuring fair implementation of these proposals, if accepted by both sides, is important. The three Indo-China states have suggested that the UN Secretary-General, in his personal capacity, could administer such supervision for the present. Their offer is conditioned by the fact that at present the UN has taken the position of recognition of the Pol Pot regime which is non-existent in Kampuchea. If the UN modifies its stand, the Indo-China states are prepared to accept the UN Secretary-General's supervision in his official capacity.

Finally, to consummate the solution of the South-East Asian dispute it is proposed to hold an international conference of the Geneva type. The composition of the proposed conference would be the same as that of the 1954 Geneva Conference.

What stands out in all this is that the effort to solve the tangled situation in Kampuchea is being made through a comprehensive and constructive approach in which all states of South-East Asia can join and contribute in creating an environment of relaxation and peace in the region. Will the initiative be good enough to cut the Gordian Knot in South-East Asia? There is some promise that it may. A step towards peace and relaxation of tensions in South-East Asia at the present juncture will be the biggest boon which states of this region can give to the world and to themselves.□

BLACK ECONOMY (*Contd. from page 14*)

of cash is anti-inflationary and "corresponding to the part of black savings held as currency. Government can without inflationary consequences finance additional real investments by supplying additional currency" (Sundaram and Pandit.) Black money cannot provide a cushion against deficit financing owing to the former's higher velocity of circulation and stock-piling of goods financed by it. It is wrong to presume that much of the black money stays idle.

The continued operation of a sizeable black sector tends to push up the expected rate of returns on investments of all kinds. This is so because the risks associated with black transactions are high and socially and economically far more serious and injurious. Then, black transactions owe their origin to a search for higher net returns than may be permissible from normal, legal activities. Since the entire surplus resources obtained in the black sector cannot be ploughed back and a safety margin of liquid and easily encashable resources has to be maintained, the rate of return on the invested sums has to be relatively higher in order to give a reasonable average on the entire surplus (saved) black resources.

The tendency of the black rates of return to be of a high order influences the expected rates of return and disposition of resources in the legal sector as well. Though market imperfections impede the operation of the law of average rate of profits, yet the magnetic pull exercised by high rates of return obtainable in the black sector tend to deflect resources, over a reasonably long period of time, to uses which promise to ensure relatively high rates of return. The tendency for misallocation of resources in favour of luxuries and non-essentials with high capital, imports and materials intensities and away from mass consumption goods, also derives in some ways from the influence exerted via the law of average rate of returns which is distorted by the high rates obtainable in the black sector. Speculative holding of commodity stocks is also encouraged. In general, these tendencies contribute to shortages of essential goods and strengthening of inflationary pressures. This is a process which affects both the real and the circulation spheres and brings about some changes in the basic mode of operation of the economic system. Without a reasonably clear perception of these processes, the control sphere would not be able to base its areas, modes and extent of interventions on a realistic set of assumptions.

What is the relationship between the growth of black incomes and savings behaviour in the Indian economy? The question may be split up into two parts: magnitude of savings and the sources, forms and mode of utilisation of savings.

Before one comes to these questions, it may be stated that insofar as tax evasion adversely affects budgetary surplus, and hence savings on government account and, in so far as there is sizeable conspicuous consumption out of black incomes, the overall impact of the black economy on the rate of savings in the economy is likely to be adverse. However, the concentration of income and wealth facilitated by black economy operations tends to push up the propensity to save.

Though savings out of black incomes may well take the form of financial assets of various kinds or of physical assets including stocks-in-trade, there will generally be a preference for the former. This is because of the ease with which financial assets may held, sold and moved from one place to another. Thus one sees that household savings in financial assets have increased from over 38 per cent in 1970-71 to about 52 per cent in 1978-79 (*National Accounts Statistics*, 1970-71 — 1976-79, CSO, New Delhi, January 1981, p. 39). To an extent the rising share of household savings vis-a-vis private corporate and public sector savings may also be attributed to rising magnitude of black incomes.

It may be appropriate to sum up the entire range of effects produced by the continued, increasing and varied operations of the black economy in terms of the rate, pattern and path of development experienced in the country over the last three decades. The issues covered in our discussion so far have not taken into account more directly social and political factors as well as the interaction between socio-political and economic factors.

Without going into the complex mechanics of socio-political processes operating under the impact of the black economy, some general propositions may be made on these questions. In so far as dominant economic interests intervene in the political processes, sizeable black incomes provide both an effective means and a strong motivation for bending the political processes to serve the general interests of the rich and the propertied. However, the crux of these operations is specially to help those persons in these groups prosper who could establish a *modus vivendi* with the political strata at various levels. Re-direction of policies or distortion of stated policies in order to defeat their stated purposes or their lax and perverted implementation, has operated over a very wide area. Many laws and policies like land ceilings, resumption of lands for personal cultivation, cooperative societies, assessment and collection of taxes, industrial licensing, enforcement of labour laws, granting of import licences and quotas, allocation of scarce raw materials, etc. have been implemented in such a distorted and perverse manner as to make them counter-productive.

It is true that the overall balance of forces and distribution of control over levers of power in society are enough to ensure that the policies and programmes designed to restructure the social set-up and benefit the relatively worse-off sections are defeated in a number of ways. Thus black economy does in the main provide the foundations for the actual socio-economic content of public policies. Its role is basically that of a mediating mechanism with the help of which the dominant interests further entrench themselves. It is not suggested that but for the black economy the declared policies and programmes springing from the overt and formal political processes would have been faithfully implemented. But it may well be suggested that the growing volume and operations of black incomes gave to the dominant economic groups an assurance that even if radical policies and programmes are accepted, there will be many opportunities to ensure that their interests, instead of being eroded, are in fact protected and promoted. With the power of black incomes at their behest, the pace of implementation can be slowed down; legislations may be so drafted as to blunt the edge of their purported intent, and many deliberately implanted loopholes and exemptions may qualitatively change the thrust of the proposed measures. On top of it all, when it comes to individual cases, black incomes will enable them to escape consequences detrimental to their specific interests.

Thus the black economy becomes a means to reconcile some apparent oddities and contradictions inherent in a highly differentiated and oligopolistic economic structure with a parliamentary adult-franchise based political democracy. The latter ensures a periodic legitimation of the rule of the dominant classes, not only through elections and political processes but also by acceptance of some kind of socialistic rhetoric based policies and programmes. The black-economy is among the important means used to ensure that none of the aforementioned policies and programmes really go very far either in their general conception or their specific application. The phenomenon of widespread political corruption and politics of money power is deeply ingrained in the system with a very specific role. As a result, social values and ethos have degenerated.

Therefore, the Indian 'development' experience significantly relates to the phenomenon of black economy, both contributing to it and deriving from it. Its very conception is basically that of a state-catalysed expansion of the domestic market reflected in the rate of growth of national income. Its frills and correctives in terms of fuller employment, greater equality in social and economic spheres and greater self-reliance, come into conflict, beyond a point, with the uninhibited pursuit of expansion of GNP. However, it may be risky politically to make a sharp and openly acknowledged adjustment in favour of GNP growth beyond what is permissible by the false consciousness bred by pseude-scientific growth and modernisation theories. It is here that the black economy steps in for completing the job of maintaining a power structure, administrative machinery and dominant ideological framework which permits the game to be played as the surface and subterranean powers would like it to be. It manifests not only anti-development growth but is a sharp and pointed lumpenisation of the system as well. ☐

ALYS FAIZ

Last week's *Mainstream* (July 24, 1982) carried an article on the PLO, by Alys Faiz. She is the wife of Faiz Ahmed Faiz, the well-known poet and writer.

— Editor

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As everyone knows, the choice today in this nuclear age is one of utter annihilation and destruction of civilisation or of some way to have peaceful coexistence between nations. There is no middle way.

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—Jawaharlal Nehru at UN, 1960

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Mainstream

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POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

Good Riddance

CHARAN SINGH'S Lok Dal was never a viable political party, despite all the laboured pretence to the contrary. Given its motley composition, especially after the Janata split, what is surprising is not the current open warfare or the impending split, but the fact that the Lok Dal had managed a tenuous existence for so long. What place Socialists and other forward-looking elements could have in a feudal set-up bossed over by one aptly if belatedly described by Madhu Limaye as a "megalomaniac", has been a puzzle to many unaware of the fierce fight that had been going on within the Lok Dal for democratic functioning.

To Charan Singh, any party of which he is the leader is an appendage to serve the purpose of his own glorification. No one except those who have clung to the Lok Dal in the hope of making it a genuine party of the rural people has been taken in by his grandiose claims about having been the creator of Prime Ministers, party presidents, and other leaders. At least starting with his defection with seventeen followers in 1967 from the Congress in order to become UP's Chief Minister with the support of a bizarre Opposition combine, his tactics and his unscrupulous ways have been familiar to all observers of political developments. When with the help of Sanjiva Reddy and thanks to the shrewd manoeuvre of Indira Gandhi he became Prime Minister in 1979 he reminded everyone of his sole ambition by claiming it had been fulfilled. Evidently the dream is still on.

Recent developments in the Lok Dal have been characteristic of an organisation run by one man on the strength of his unlimited vanity. Devi Lal and Charan Singh have been rivals, the former with a strong Jat base in Haryana and the latter with a stronger Jat base in UP. They have only been pretending to be together, and the Haryana Assembly elections earlier this year brought out the latent mutual animosity, with charges of betrayal being flung freely from both sides. Charan Singh's single-minded efforts to remove Devi Lal have been repeatedly resisted by a number of party stalwarts, including Madhu Limaye, Biju Patnaik, Rabi Ray,

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Karpoori Thakur, Kumbharam Arya and others. When Devi Lal participated in the Chandigarh convention organised by Janata President Chandra Shekhar along with the Congress(S) leadership, Charan Singh suspended him and Biju Patnaik, who was also involved, from the Lok Dal; but he was persuaded to retreat at that time as the two leaders decided to go slow on the question of Opposition unity.

From the Bharatiya Kranti Dal to the Lok Dal, Charan Singh has been engaged in all kinds of permutations and combinations, all in his own interest, including occasional understandings with the Jana Sanghis, once in 1967-69 in UP and again in 1977-1979 as part of the erstwhile Janata Party for the simple purpose of gaining hegemony in some States. An authoritarian to the core, with no use for democratic form or functioning, it was inevitable that he should clash with any individual or group seeking involvement in decision-making within the party. Charan Singh has spoken, let no dog bark, is the formula on the basis of which he has been playing politics for a decade and a half now.

In this background, it was inevitable that his wrath should have turned against Devi Lal who is a Jat leader in his own right and has a political background of his own, and against others like Madhu Limaye who questioned his ways and wanted democratic functioning within the Lok Dal. The latest series of events began with a charge-sheet being issued to Devi Lal on July 21, seeking an explanation within three days. Everything possible was raked up: the Haryana elections, the alleged insult to the Haryana Governor, the alleged manhandling of a former Congress-I Minister at Haryana Bhavan in Delhi, an interview given to a correspondent of an Urdu daily denouncing the Lok Dal boss, the alleged secret meeting with Indira Gandhi (a charge based on a report in one newspaper which denied its correctness and editorially apologised for it), organising the Kurukshetra Kisan Sammelan in October 1980, participation in the Chandigarh Opposition unity convention on April 18-19, 1982 — most of which is old mutton raked up now to appear as a grand indictment; actually, it produces only a comic effect.

After this salvo the developments were rapid. On July 29 Devi Lal was expelled from Charan Singh's party for six years. All this was supplemented by a chorus against Devi Lal led by the dubious character, Satypal Malik, and other equally mysterious political entities close to the Lok Dal boss.

The arbitrary expulsion was the signal for the simmering revolt to come into the open. Three Secretaries of the Lok Dal sent in their resignations; Madhu Limaye forwarded them, suggesting that the National Executive be summoned before August 8 to consider the situation. Charan Singh's reply was a calculated snub — he had called the National Executive meeting on August 25 and would not change the date. Then came the Secretaries' decision to convene an extended meeting of Lok Dal leaders and workers on August 9, a move Charan Singh described as irrelevant. In his reply to Madhu Limaye's resignation letter of August 1, describing the Lok Dal boss as a "hypocrite" and a "megalomaniac" and listing his activities over the years, Charan Singh said Limaye was in bad shape mentally and curtly informed him that he had ceased to be a member of the party.

Such is the level to which Lok Dal politics has descended, and it is difficult to see how it can get worse. For those opposed to Charan Singh's high-handed ways or seeking democratic functioning of the party, there is no way now but to part company with him, whether they do so by insisting on calling themselves the Lok Dal or by forming a new party. But it must be noted that the kind of crisis that has come about cannot be solved by personality-based realignments or by merely getting rid of Charan Singh. The basic malady has to be tackled, and that is the heterogeneous character of the Lok Dal as it has remained hitherto. Charan Singh, apart from being a vainglorious man seeking to lord it over the flock, represents certain feudal and backward-looking elements in the countryside. Those who would break with him must break away once and for all from the values and reactionary forces of which he has been a vocal representative for many years now.

A new responsibility has been placed now on the shoulders of the Socialists and other such elements who had joined the Lok Dal in the hope of evolving a rural-based party. The Socialists particularly have a tragic history of inability to combine with forces with similar aims in the common national interest. It is time for them to overcome this handicap and seek to forge unity based on their professed ideals. Whatever label they choose to adopt for the present, the long-term perspective of a purposeful patriotic front must be kept in view.

This is the lesson Charan Singh's antics holds for the Socialists, and they would be unwise to ignore it. Others too can help.

August 4 *C.N.C.*

COMMENTARY

Bihar Gag on Press

It is the inept and the unscrupulous among politicians in power who are generally scared of the press; others take criticism in their stride and answer it by proper performance of their duties.

In Bihar, not noted for clean and efficient administration despite Chief Minister Jagannath Mishra's tall claims, the Government has been engaged in a running battle with a section of the press and even with individual journalists. This has now been escalated into a war on the press with the State Government rushing through the Legislature its Bill to bulldoze and muzzle the press and to intimidate and punish publishers and journalists who may incur its displeasure.

The aim has been declared to be to prevent publication of "grossly indecent or scurrilous matter or matter intended for blackmail". No one would approve of irresponsible journalism, but the instances are few and the papers involved insignificant. What the Mishra Government has done and plans to do must be seen in the background of the harassment of two leading newspapers in Patna and of several journalists. In his statement in the Vidhan Sabha on July 31 on the Indian Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code (Bihar Amendment 1982) Bill — published as an advertisement in some leading dailies at public cost — Dr Mishra has held forth on the responsibilities of journalists and on the need for them to be committed "to the Constitution and to the national aspirations." Criteria which presumably do not apply to certain politicians wielding power.

It is scandalous that officials should be empowered to treat as cognisable and non-bailable any offence they may deem to be "indecent" or "scurrilous" — terms whose precise meaning nobody knows and which can be interpreted so as to allow ruling politicians and officials to go on the rampage to punish or harass critics or non-conformists. The Tamilnadu law, which is being gone into by the Press Council, has been cited as a precedent. The Bihar Government could easily have requested editors and senior journalists to set up a committee to remedy the situation; or, referred the matter to the Press Council on its own. After all, Dr Mishra has admitted that "a large section of the press in the State is sober and responsible".

Apart from the immediate threat to fearless functioning of the press in Bihar, Tamilnadu and Orissa, not to speak of reports of harassment of journalists and newspapers in Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and elsewhere, there is urgent need for the Centre to take steps to prevent muzzling of the media and bullying of newsmen. The lathi charge on a silent procession of journalists in Patna is as ominous as attacks by hired goondas on newspaper offices in some other places in the recent past. If press exposure brought down an Antulay here or a Saklecha there, it must be seen as the strength of democracy and freedom of expression guaranteed in the Constitution. Law-making powers should not be allowed to be used by self-serving politicians to protect themselves and their loyal underlings from exposure.

It has rightly been pointed out that existing laws are enough to take action against the minuscule irresponsible section of the press engaged in blackmail. In case of any irresponsible or mischievous activity by any section of the press, the majority would be willing to condemn it and accept the Press Council's verdict. This should be borne in mind.

All organisations of editors and working journalists have condemned the Bihar gag move. Union Information Minister Vasant Sathe has said the Centre was not consulted. The question is whether the Centre will see to it that Presidential assent to the Bill is withheld. If it does, it can be hailed as being committed to freedom of speech and expression, as well as to self-regulation by the press. If the stamp of approval is given to Bihar's "Black Bill" by the Centre, it will indeed be a black day for the press in India.

August 4 *Observer*

Next Week

In view of the two major articles of immediate relevance being published in this issue — one assessing Indira Gandhi's US visit and the other evaluating the latest Tarapur deal — N.C.'s long article on the concept of Patriotic Front is withheld and will be published in next week's *Mainstream* (Independence Day Number).

Editor

FOCUS

Indira Gandhi's US Trip

N.C.

INDIRA GANDHI'S visit to USA (July 27 to August 5, 1982) has touched off neither euphoria nor frustration. If anything, it has once again underlined that beyond mending fences, there is little scope for any US Administration to establish with India an enduring relationship based on the recognition of the principle of equality.

No doubt the Dullesian days are gone when Washington used to look down upon nonalignment as something sinful: the hard realities of life have forced policy-makers in US to abandon the principle of military blocs and to let their client-states join the respectable camp of the nonaligned and thereby try to dilute the anti-colonial content of the movement.

What is however still missing in the US foreign-policy framework is candid recognition of the power and destiny of the Third World. One can go further and say that the Reagan Administration has been behaving towards even the closest allies of USA in NATO in a manner that most of them are getting alienated, if not actually antagonised. Such being the record of the Reagan Administration's dealings with West Europe — confirmed and sealed by the US President's performance during his ill-fated visit to the region in June last — it would have been naive on the part of Indira Gandhi and her team to have expected that her visit would mark a sudden spurt of Indo-American entente. In fact, one wondered if this was the right time for such a visit when all eyes are centred on Beirut, besieged by a regime which is entirely armed and guided by US.

As things go, the Indira visit to USA produced neither any fiasco nor any euphoria. If Indira Gandhi meant her visit to be mainly concerned with a public relations projection, then no doubt the assignment was carried out with meticulous attention to details — from meetings with media-men and scientists including the inventor of the poliovaccine, and then the business magnates, in between visiting art galleries and greeting artistes backstage and finally, talking to many segments of the Indian community even to the point of visiting a Sikh gurdwara — the vanity fair ending up in the relaxing picnic in Honolulu. No one can question the terrific impact of this nine-day non-stop public relations exercise. For Indira Gandhi all this may be personally rewarding, though one wonders if she could be excited by Reagan's comparison of the Nehrus with the Adamses — after all, the immortals of American history in the eyes of an Indian are still Washington and Jefferson, Lincoln and Roosevelt.

The PR aspect apart, what are the tangible gains out of this tour for the Indian side? Before Indira Gandhi set out on this odyssey she told US newsmen that she was taking no shopping list with her, nor would this visit be regarded as a problem visit. Not to have a shopping list meant that even before her departure, the Prime Minister had shot down the bait held out by the US State Department that it would consider if any request came from India for the purchase of F-16. One of the reasons why Indira Gandhi did not even touch it was that any consequent strain between Islamabad and Washington might lead Pakistan to seek arms in Moscow. With all the repeated rebuttals of the US preoccupation about India getting massive arms supplies from Moscow, it was throughout made clear from Indira Gandhi's stand that while denying any special relations between Moscow and New Delhi, she would not underplay the close ties that bind India and the Soviet Union.

Symptomatic of the current American obsession about the Soviet Union, it was not surprising that Indira Gandhi had to repeatedly face the same barrage of questions: Afghanistan, Soviet arms for India, and the Indo-Soviet Treaty. On each of these, her replies were firm and clear.

In fact what she said about Afghanistan was nearer to the Indian formulation at the UN General Assembly in January 1980 than the nuances of the Indian stand at the Nonaligned Foreign Ministers' Conference in Delhi in February 1981.

She did not underplay India's purchase of arms from Moscow but she pointed, at the same time, to India's policy of diversification in arms purchase. She made short shrift of such absurdities as the one raised in Los Angeles which tried to compare US supplying arms to Israel with Moscow selling arms to India. Equally significant was her typically Nehruite retort; when asked about her views on Soviet occupation of other countries, she reminded about other countries (obviously USA) intervening in other regions of the world like Central America: a warning to those living in glass houses against throwing stones at others.

It is worth noting that a section of her aides had repeatedly advised her that she would get a better response in USA if she distanced herself from Moscow; obviously Indira Gandhi thought otherwise and firmly stood by India's position on these tension-charged issues in USA, a position which definitely paid since it attracted more attention than she would perhaps have normally got. Here was the difference between her visit in 1966 and the present one.

While the closed-door exchange of notes in the White House has so far remained inaccessible, it was clear that on the question of US arming of Pakistan, the Reagan position has been inflexible: it did not go even up to Eisenhower's in 1954 when he formally assured that the US arms gifted to Pakistan would not be used against India and also offered to sell the same arms to India. Nehru, correctly gauging that this would lead to infringement of India's sovereignty and nonalignment, had rejected Ike's offer: what is significant is that even the formality of such an assurance was not forthcoming from Reagan, except a passing reference in his banquet speech. There had been speculation in New Delhi that Reagan might offer his good offices for the settlement of Indo-Pak differences — a sort of American Tashkent or Camp David. Bereft of shrewd advisers of the calibre of a Kissinger, such an offer was never broached by Reagan.

In the *tour de horizon* between Reagan and Indira, there seemed to have been hardly any mention about the Indian Ocean and only a brief reference to the Iran-Iraq conflict. On Israel's aggression into Lebanon, Indira Gandhi seemed to have raised with politeness the question of US responsibility for the Israeli blitz and also perhaps the need for immediate US recognition of PLO. At her very last press meeting in US she came out strongly about the US Administration not having acted to bridle Israeli adventurism.

Considerable expectations could be discerned in the Prime Minister's circle before her departure, that this visit would perhaps help India importing technology from USA. Nothing of the kind has yet been noticed from the media coverage of the trip. Apart from getting food technology, little seems to have been achieved.

In contrast, there is a definite strengthening of scientific and cultural cooperation between the two countries. The programme promises to be enormous and its resultant benefits cannot be minimised. Apart from the possibility of India getting acquainted with the latest US thinking in the field of higher science and technology, this will open up India's access to a wide spectrum of US intellectual opinion which can have positive impact on genuine Indo-US cooperation.

In two crucial fields, the result of Indira Gandhi's US visit will generate intense controversy in this country: Tarapur and concessional credit. Without getting into the details about the Tarapur agreement announced immediately after Indira Gandhi's meeting with President Reagan — very clearly brought out in a well-documented contribution by a specialist elsewhere in this issue — one need recall that quite some time before Indira Gandhi's departure, two differing opinions were heard among those responsible for our nuclear establishment and nuclear diplomacy: one opinion held that since US had failed to comply with its commitment to supply nuclear fuel, let it be decided by mutual consultation that the 1963 agreement stood cancelled, leaving India free in the matter of importing nuclear fuel from other countries; while another view strongly insisted that the US might be approached to arrange for the supply of nuclear fuel from other countries while keeping intact the 1963 agreement: in other words, while US would not provide the nuclear fuel, the restrictions and inspection clauses would persist.

It was obvious that before the Prime Minister's departure, the second viewpoint (keeping intact the 1963 agreement) had won and the Washington agreement was announced with fanfare as a major achievement of Indira Gandhi's visit. Predictably this has already touched off adverse reactions in many quarters in India — not all of whom could be dismissed as anti-American — while the dispute about the fate of reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel broke out within a few hours of the announcement of the Washington agreement, between the official US interpretation of it and the Indian stand which Indira Gandhi herself voiced. To say the least, this much-trumpeted agreement over Tarapur has turned out to be a damp squib if not a climbdown for India.

Why did the Prime Minister go in for such an agreement? It appears that the advocates of this agreement on the Indian side (including some of the high-ups in her entourage) had pointed out that the 1963 agreement could not be unilaterally scrapped by India; it had to be mutually agreed upon, and there was no sign of Washington agreeing to it — exposing a new form of strings. This lobby had further raised the bogey that if India scrapped the 1963 agreement it would have an adverse impact on the US establishment and might dry up the possibility of getting concessional economic aid from Washington.

India was particularly anxious to get a large portion of concessional IDA credit besides getting more from the World Bank. The Reagan Administration's decision to cut down US contribution to these international agencies was obviously discussed during Indira Gandhi's visit to Washington. Judging by her repeated pleas for more IDA credit voiced in public, it is evident that the Reagan Administration showed no signs of having budged on this score. In other words, the soft line on Tarapur negotiations has not helped in getting credit on soft terms on the economic front. The publicising of US agreeing to the third instalment of the IMF credit is not of much consequence, as it was generally expected that this would come, since it has to be largely based on the performance record of India.

An influential section of official Indian opinion wanted Indira Gandhi to make special efforts to attract US business magnates to invest in India. As far as could be made out, Indira Gandhi laid thick the present level of "liberalisation" and did not seem to go further except in the matter of streamlining the procedures. There seems to be little indication so far that the US tycoons would come in droves to oblige their Indian friends by large-scale investments in India.

Indira Gandhi's US visit can be termed as a middle-key affair — neither high-pitched nor a

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Climb-Down on Tarapur

P.K.S. NAMBOODIRI

THE Indira Gandhi-Reagan deal in Washington on French supply of fuel for Tarapur (announced on July 29, 1982) was quietly applauded here with only a few inaudible catcalls. It was as though the sleepy spectators have been relieved of an unpleasant dialogue in a long-played drama of negotiations between two principal actors. Since public and Government memory is short it is useful to recount some of the earlier scenes, before the curtain is raised to begin the next act at a new venue with a different cast and hopefully with a fresh script.

Details of the reported agreement are yet to be finalised between the Indian and American negotiators. As of now, we know that it has two major implications. First, France, and not the USA, will henceforth supply enriched uranium for Tarapur; and yet, the IAEA safeguards, which were introduced as a corollary to the US commitment to supply fuel for the Tarapur plant for its entire lifetime, will continue to operate. Secondly, despite India's claims that it retains the right to reprocess the Tarapur residual fuel, it appears that this crucial issue is left, at best, ambiguous. This was evident from the quick US questioning of the Indian claim.

It is not widely known that as far as India's Department of Atomic Energy is concerned, fuel for Tarapur had ceased to be a problem long ago. The Government of India had rejected independent offers for enriched uranium, including one from the Soviet Union during its atomic energy chief A.M. Petrosyants's visit to this country in 1979.

What India had been seeking from the US, in the face of the latter's denial of US uranium, was a 'mutual disengagement' from the dysfunctional 1963 Cooperation Agreement so that India could run the plant on its own using the indigeneously-developed MOX fuel. The present US Administration did respond favourably to the idea of termination and even furnished a framework which included nominal inspection arrangements. Why, then, this resurrection of the discarded Cooperation Agreement? Why do we want to get back to square one both in regard to Tarapur fuel and plutonium reprocessing?

Part of the answer is there in a well-documented paper prepared for the 34th Annual Meeting of the Association of Asian Studies in Chicago in the first week of April this year, (N. Ram, "India's Nuclear Policy: A Case Study in the Flaws and Futility of 'Non-Proliferation." Credit for providing much of the information in the paragraphs below goes to this paper.) The main conclusion of this study, as it relates to Tarapur — which turned out to be quite prophetic — was that towards the end of last year's negotiations the US held out a twin threat and under its weight Indian decision-makers gave in to the US proposal for a third country as source for uranium, though this was against the stand of the Department of Atomic Energy. The threats related to economic pressures the US might have to resort to under legislative compulsions for India rescinding the agreement and also the possibility that the US might like to refer the dispute to the IAEA for its decision.

The other part of the answer probably lay in the speculation that Tarapur and along with it our cherished self-reliance and nuclear autarky were being sacrificed at the wider altar of geo-political and economic gains which were sought to be reaped from the current upswing in Indo-US understanding. That is a matter for future historians to judge.

As is well known, the trouble with the Americans began soon after India's explosion experiment in May 1974. American determination to use Tarapur fuel as a lever to impose conditions to restrain what they considered India's march to greater nuclear capability was evident even before the advent of the US Nuclear Nonproliferation Act. The NNPA indeed became a convenient legislative alibi which the US Administration could use to delay and deny fuel shipments to India. Ironically, this was done with total disregard for Article XI of the Contract for the Sale of US Uranium, which explicitly rules out supersession of US obligations under the 1963 Cooperation Agreement by domestic legislation.

The first delay in the shipment of uranium occurred in respect of an application for the fuel made by India in March 1975. The 20-week delay was then attributed to procedures of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and administrative changes. The subsequent two applications filed in July and October, 1975 took 49 and 89 weeks respectively to materialise. By then the USA was creating history in its export practice by this 'special treatment' to India, as was noted in a study made by the Government of India:

> These applications saw domestic interveners filing petitions, thus making history as the first such public intervention on an export licence for nuclear material from the United States, the NRC declining an adjudicatory type of hearing and agreeing to hold legislative type of hearings ..... This was the first time that Tarapur utility was forced to pay economic penalties by having to resort to air-lifting of fuel requirements due to circumstances outside its control. The final clearance also saw, for the first time in history, a dissenting vote by one of the commissioners of the NRC. Yet another first was an order by a US Court of Appeal for a stay, quickly followed by a vacation of the stay order.

India objected to the undue delay in shipment and pointed out that this amounted to non-fulfilment of US obligations under Article IIA of the 1963 Cooperation Agreement and that it was also

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in violation of the contractual obligations the US had undertaken under the May 1966 contract for the sale of uranium for Tarapur. The American side replied that no violation was involved on account of delay in shipment since no delivery schedule had been fixed.

To rectify this situation and to comply with India's request for finalising a firm delivery schedule, two US experts came to India in September 1976. The Kiefer-Last report (known after the experts, William M. Kiefer and George A. Last) recommended a minimum scheme of delivery schedule to keep the Tarapur plant running. Indian officials were later to explain the position thus:

> Though the delivery schedules ... were much lower than those of many other foriegn customers of American fuel, India accepted the report in good faith and all applications for enriched uranium made subsequently were on the basis of the delivery schedules envisaged in this report. We are not asking the US to treat us on par with their other customers in Western Europe or Japan, but the least we can expect is that they maintain the delivery schedules recommended by their own experts.

By early 1977 President Carter was in office and his Administration began tightening the non-proliferation screw all over the world. India became a test victim for US pressure, using Tarapur fuel as a lever. A year later the American NNPA was passed and it became clear that the United States could no more be counted as a reliable fuel supplier. Yet the US wanted to keep India on tenterhooks as long as it could by various tactics, thus perpetuating the uncertainty and preventing India from taking any decisive step. Consider the following testimony of Warren Christopher, US Deputy Secretary of State, in the Senate hearings in June 1980:

> If we disapprove these shipments, India is very likely to consider itself free of its obligations under the 1963 agreement. In that event, India might reprocess the US origin fuel in India and use the plutonium in Tarapur reactors.... If we disapprove these shipments, India might also withdraw from the safeguards agreement and might decide to disregard our veto over any other material already supplied beyond its use as fuel for Tarapur....On the other hand, turning to the positive side, if these shipments are approved, we will, at a minimum, have preserved India's obligations under the existing agreements for another year or two.

Meanwhile, the BARC scientists got down to the business of developing an alternative indigenous fuel for Tarapur. The MOX, a mixture of uranium oxide and plutonium, emerged as a viable techological possibility after an intense research effort involving considerable scientific and engineering talent besides a sum of $ 41 million. MOX was regarded as a technological breakthrough and a step further in our nuclear independence. India would have been the first country to use MOX as reactor fuel. Maybe it would have shown a way out for others who would be in a predicament similar to ours. And this was something the US Government could not have taken lying down.

Closely related to the MOX issue was the issue of reprocessing plutonium at Tarapur. The MOX programme could not have been carried out in the absence of a sufficient quantity of plutonium made available from this plant. The US attitude here was even more reprehensible.

Reprocessing of Tarapur spent fuel in an Indian facility is provided for in the 1963 Cooperation Agreement, in which Article II-E states: "It is agreed that when any special nuclear material utilised in the Tarapur Atomic Power Station requires reprocessing...such repocessing may be performed in Indian facilities upon a joint determination of the parties that the provisions of Article VI (safeguards) of this Agreement may be effectively applied..." It was in pursuit of this that Indian scientists built the Tarapur reprocessing plant which was ready as early as 1975 and since then has been lying idle. Despite considerable economic costs involved in building the plant, due to its non-functioning, more funds had to be spent to expand the storage tank capacity for spent fuel from the Tarapur reactor.

India has been asserting its claim to start reprocessing the Tarapur fuel though there is no evidence that it has done so. For the first time the plant was run in April 1978, but the fuel source was not known — presumably it was CIRUS reactor. The Indo-US dispute over the interpretation of terms of the Cooperation Agreement began almost simultaneously with the delays in fuel shipments to Tarapur.

The Indian view is that the term "joint determination" related to the 'safeguardability' of the reprocessing plant rather than 'prior consent' or 'veto right' by the USA in regard to reprocessing of the residual fuel. It was according to this understanding that India provided the complete design specifications of the plant to the US and the plant was built only after obtaining US agreement to the safeguardability. It is also a fact that the US did not dispute India's interpretation before 1975. Even while the US was systematically undermining the provisions of the Cooperation Agreement, India, as per Article 10 of the Trilateral Agreement of 1971 (India, USA, IAEA) concluded a safeguards agreement with the IAEA in August 1980 and notified the United States accordingly. Thus, there is no moral justification whatsoever for the negative attitude of the USA to India reprocessing mainly for its MOX needs.

Doubts still persist within the country and outside about the viability of MOX. The AEC Chairman, H.N. Sethna, had publicly stated several times that India would not shut down Tarapur if US uranium stopped coming, but would run the plant on our own fuel. The Prime Minister had also echoed the same confidence a year back during a Parliament debate. When pressed for details of the MOX process, Dr. Sethna told the American negotiators during the 1981 talks:

> Our MOX capability has been built up in three parts. The reprocessing plant has been ready for a long time. A flexible plant to handle a variety of mixed fuels is also ready and undergoing trial runs. Finally, a major plant is under construction. All this is a result of our own efforts involving investment spread over a period of time. We started our preparations in 1977, when the delays in the supply of US fuel began. We do not want to be in the same helpless position as we were in RAPP in 1976. Having gone so far, there can be no turning back now. It is not that we have not received offers for alternative fuel for Tarapur. We have refused the offer...We realise that we will have

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August 9 : Forty Years After

We Had a Dream . . .

C.N. CHITTA RANJAN

FORTY years. A big chunk in a person's life, even if only a tiny fraction of a moment in the long, chequered history of this vast and ancient land.

Four eventful decades, with hours of glory and of sorrow, with years of inspiring hopes and enervating disappointments, with only long-term faith in our millions of people to sustain those aspiring for the new order of which promise was held out long ago.

The mind goes back beyond August 1942, for the August Movement, spontaneous and nationwide, marked the last and greatest phase of our freedom struggle, though at that time the dawn of Independence seemed a long way off yet. The mind goes back to the long years of struggle, from the close of the last century: to the petitioners who started it all without knowing how fast the national movement would grow into a mighty torrent, to the sufferings and sacrifices of the revolutionaries, to those known and unknown heroes who perished or survived as physical wrecks in the Andamans and in jails all over the country, to the militancy brought in by Tilak who awakened the collective consciousness of the masses as no one else had done before, and finally the coming of Mahatma Gandhi who introduced new techniques of struggle against imperialism and whose message reached out to the remotest corners of India, undivided India, at a time when communication facilities were close to zero.

Those of this writer's generation who were too young to participate in the struggles of the twenties and the beginning of the thirties were nevertheless aware of the impact of Jallianwala Bagh, of the boycott movements, of the non-cooperation and civil disobedience movements, of the numerous big and small actions against foreign rule in different parts of the land. The brief experiment in provincial autonomy, seen by many of our leaders as an achievement, appeared a futile exercise to the then rising generation. And when World War II broke out and the provincial ministries stepped down, there were no tears. It was one more protest against foreign rule, and one that hurt the imperialist rulers.

While the younger generation waited with bated breath for a massive struggle which they now saw as inevitable, Gandhiji caused frustration and anger by starting off the "individual satyagraha" movement. The feeling of anti-climax was sharp and painful. It was a fiasco, deservedly, the only result being to project Vinoba Bhave whose activities and utterances have been a reminder for three decades of the Mahatma's biggest mistake.

However, 1942 changed all that. The Communists hurt themselves and their movement greatly by switching overnight to the "People's War" slogan and virtually becoming war propagandists for the British rulers. Even within the Congress leadership there was a visible dilemma, the fight against imperialism and colonialism coming up against the perceived menace of Nazism and fascism and Japanese expansionism. It was towards the end of April 1942, when Gandhiji demanded the withdrawal of British power from India in categorical terms, that the atmosphere cleared; the Congress Working Committee's "Quit India" resolution of July the same year electrified the country, and when the All-India Congress Committee endorsed that resolution on August 8, 1942 — with Gandhiji reinforcing the call for struggle with the mantra 'Do or Die' — the August struggle had all but begun. With all the top leaders thrown into prison by early morning on August 9 — some went underground to provide guidance here and there — the Mahatma's advice that every Indian should fight according to his lights and take counsel from his/her own conscience proved prophetic. That is what happened.

Numerous people, men and women, went to prison, in the earlier stages by engaging in a wide variety of actions to obstruct the war effort and protest against continued British presence as well as against the induction of American troops, and in later stages by courting imprisonment by the hundred in different parts of the country. For the first time the British power realised the extent and depth of anti-imperialist feeling in India; they began to see that their days as rulers were numbered. But the participants in the struggle were far from reassured that the long struggle was nearing the end, that independence was now not very far off.

There is no need to narrate the steps by which independence was attained, at the cost of many lives and with untold suffering for millions uprooted from their homes on either side on the partitioning of the country. The scars remain, in India and in Pakistan.

But the crucial element was the central dream of the shape of free India that not only Gandhiji but Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Bose and other leaders had taught us to look forward to. It was that dream, vague and nebulous as it inevitably was, that had galvanised us who were young and felt thrilled by the thought of our great good fortune to have been born and to grow up in that period of our history.

Let us take only one quotation from Gandhiji, from a prayer-meeting speech two weeks before he was assassinated: "....there will be neither paupers nor beggars, nor high nor low, neither millionaire employers nor half-starved employees, nor intoxicating drinks nor drugs. There will be the same respect for women as vouchsafed to men and the chastity and purity of men and women will be jealously guarded. Where every woman except one's wife will be treated by men of all religions as mother, sister or daughter, according to her age. Where there will be no untouchability and where there will be equal respect for all faiths. They will be all proudly, joyously and voluntarily bread labourers." Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Bose, who inspired India's youth more than all other leaders in the thirties, were both believers in socialism, though neither they nor the leaders of the Congress Socialist group could provide clear-out guidelines or plan of action. The Communists were rigid in outlook. But all wanted equality of all sections of the people. Economic democracy was defined in many ways. Yet it was a dream and a vision which continued to inspire millions well into the fifties.

What has happened to the dreams? They are partly in the Constitution, as Directive Principles non-enforceable by law — a grim reminder that we are still far from the goals set out in the thirties and forties, if we are not actually going in the opposite direction. Even the limited provisions of the Constitution are yet to be enforced — like those relating to land reforms, ending of concentration of wealth and economic power, universal education, commanding heights for the public sector, and so on, not to speak of "principles" like every citizen's right to means of livelihood and right not to be discriminated against. It is the rich who rule, and the exploited masses remain exploited, impoverished, illiterate, without hope. Most frighteningly, we seem to have lost the basic requisite for radical change that can transform the lives of our people — namely the capacity for anger at injustice and corruption. Stray exposures and occasional noise, often for partisan political gain, in Parliament and State Legislatures, hardly provide the answer. There has been economic growth — in industry, in agriculture — but who has cornered the bulk of the benefits?

Many questions remain about many aspects of our national life. The fortieth anniversary of August Ninth is surely an occasion for those of us committed to the masses and their struggle for social and economic justice to think deeply about where we have gone wrong. What are the means by which we can change the situation?

The only point that is clear is that without meanigful unity among all parties and groups that believe in equality and social justice, the dream of 1942 cannot materialise. Such unity has to be the prelude to organising the masses to defend their rights and end injustice by fighting it collectively.

We have miles to go before we can rest. Shall we of the passing generation see at least the beginnings of new stirrings among the people towards the goals we dreamt of forty years ago? ●

Flashback on Fortytwo

MADHU LIMAYE

WE celebrate this year the fortieth anniversary of the Quit India struggle, popularly called the August Revolution. We, who were in our teens at the time of outbreak of the Second World War, are the last generation of freedom fighters. Looking back, I see the Ninth August struggle as the fourth and the culminating phase of the freedom movement.

The birth of the modern freedom movement is rightly traced to the foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. The Congress for many years was a Christmas gathering of India's educated elite who passed innocuous resolutions on reforms at their annual meetings. It was Lokamanya Tilak who first introduced a popular element in our movement. Valentine Chirol, a noted British journalist, called Tilak a "conspicuous" leader in the radical camp who was "destined to become one of the most dangerous pioneers of disaffection." If anyone can claim to be "truly the father of Indian unrest" Chirol wrote, "it is Balgangadhar Tilak." "From the Deccan his influence was projected far and wide." he wrote.

Tilak's British opponents acknowledged his growing mass popularity. "The great development of the cotton industry — which had led to vast agglomerations of labour — had given Tilak an opportunity of establishing contacts with a class of the population *hitherto outside the purview of Indian politics*." Tilak was tried and convicted for sedition twice, the second time to six years' imprisonment. There was a violent reaction among the masses. "Some of Tilak's supporters had declared that there would be a day's bloodshed for every year to which he might be sentenced ... and as a matter of fact, he was sentenced to six years imprisonment and the riots lasted six days. The rioting assumed at times a very threatening character.... The gravity of the disturbances however showed the extent of the influence Tilak had acquired over the lower classes in Bombay and not merely the turbulent mill hands." (*The Indian Unrest*, Valentine Chirol). This was the first political action of the industrial working class, and this was acknowledged even by Lenin.

Montagu who visited India in 1917-18 called him, in his book *Indian Diary*, "probably the biggest leader in India at the moment." The Montagu declaration on responsible government and the new reforms made an impact on Tilak. He thanked the King Emperor and offered responsive co-operation. Tilak was enthused by the League of Nations and thought that the subject nations could take their cases to this international organisation and obtain justice. During his stay in England in 1919 he built good relations with the Labour movement, and made a financial contribution to the Labour Party. Just as Gokhale and the Liberals pinned their hopes on the Liberal Party, Tilak saw the possibility of co-operation with the rising Labour Party. Tilak had become optimistic about the achievement of self-government within the Empire in 10 to 15 years. In 1919-20 Tilak, it is true, had no new programme of struggle to offer. Advancing age and experience, it was said, had mellowed Tilak (*Complete Works of Tilak*, Vol. VII).

Gandhiji emerged as the new leader in 1919. His non-cooperation and civil disobedience programmes drew millions into the movement. Through these constructive programmes he penetrated village India. He created a formidable new team of leaders like Rajaji, Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr Rajendra Prasad and Acharya Kripalani. He won over Jawaharlal Nehru, and Jawaharlal's entire family was swept off its feet by the personality of Mahatma Gandhi. Jawaharlal was an ardent supporter of Gandhiji's militant programme. Suspension of civil disobedience after Chauri Chaura distressed him. Despite the opposition of his father to Gandhiji's aversion for Council entry Jawaharlal remained a firm no-changer. But he was not part of the faction of no-changers headed by Rajaji. Rajaji's views underwent an astonishing transformation; from the leader of no-changers (he was called the Deputy Gandhi) he became an articulate supporter of the policy of working the scheme of provincial autonomy in the thirties, and in the forties he consistently sought accommodation with the British Government.

Jawaharlal's radicalism and militancy increased during the late twenties and thirties. It was largely under the impetus provided by him and Subhas Babu that the Congress, under his presidentship at Lahore, adopted the creed of complete independence. Gandhiji assured his young colleague that he would wage a decisive struggle during his term. He was as true as his word. Then came the famous Dandi March, and the self-suffering, inspired by Gandhiji's example, convulsed the whole country. Jawaharlal was opposed to the suspension of disobedience and the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, although, with great reluctance, he ultimately fell in line.

The passion of freedom so possessed him in those years that for him the Hindu-Muslim question almost did not exist, and much as he approved the amelioration of the depressed classes he thought Gandhiji's fast "would obscure the main issue". He was perplexed by Gandhiji's anti-untouchability campaign and his repeated fasts. He confesses in his Autobiography that his mind was not largely filled by the Harijan movement in which Gandhiji was completely engrossed at that time.

Jawaharlal opposed the 1935 Act, and he made Herculean efforts to use the election campaign of 1935-36 as a weapon of mass awakening. He was dead-set against acceptance of office in the provinces. However, he again submitted to the dominant opinion in the Congress and Gandhiji's advice. Probably it was during 1937-41 that changes in the international situation and the failure of his attempts to influence Congress ministerial policies from outside gave him a jolt. His hatred for the brutalities of Nazism, fascism and Japanese militarism diluted his militancy vis-a-vis the British, and he moved, slowly, towards a position not far from that of Rajaji. This threatened to engulf the freedom movement in a tragedy in 1942.

What was the position in early 1942? The Japanese had destroyed the French and Dutch colonial empires in South-East Asia. They had dealt a crippling blow to British naval power in the Indian Ocean. The British forces and the Indian divisions had surrendered in Singapore. Burma fell, and the Japanese were now knocking at the North-Eastern frontiers of India. The half-hearted British attempt to win over India's support in the war effort through the ill-fated Cripps proposal had failed. The Indian political leadership was bogged down in despondency and frustration. Subhas Babu, it became known, had gone to Germany and was making preparations for the liberation of India with the help of the Axis powers. Gandhiji did not doubt Subhas Babu's indomitable courage and burning patriotism. But he sincerely felt that freedom obtained by him with the help of the German and Japanese war machines would result only in exchanging one slavery for another.

Maulana Azad, Rajaji and Jawaharlal were anxious to make an honourable settlement with the British Government provided real power was transferred to Indian hands. The British Government headed by Churchill had absolutely no intention of conceding real power or a Cabinet government. They exploited the opposition of the Muslim League, the princes and others to remain as the effective rulers of the country. In their anxiety to fight Japanese militarism Nehru and Rajaji wanted to organise popular resistance under the aegis of a national government. They were disappointed. The British Government refused to budge. Rajaji, however, persisted in his efforts to secure a compromise and advocated acceptance of partition. Although mentally the Maulana and Jawaharlal were eager to co-operate, they would not agree to do it at the cost of self-respect. Meanwhile, Gandhiji was alarmed by the introduction of American troops into India. He wrote pungent articles against this. "Cannot a limitless number of soldiers be trained out of India's millions? Would they not make as good fighting material as any in the world? Then why foreigners? We know what American aid means. It amounts in the end to American influence, if not American rule added to British. It is a tremendous price to pay for the possible success of Allied arms". (*Collected Works*.. Vol. LXXVI).

Gandhiji was shaken by the possibility of India becoming the arena of military conflict. Not only because he thought the country would be devastated. He feared that India would get involved in a civil war. Jawaharlal was not opposed to the induction of American troops. He had openly talked in terms of armed resistance against the Japanese and the launching of a guerilla war. He had even said that if Subhas Babu came in the van of the Japanese forces, he would fight him with a sword in hand. The prospect of a conflict between the two most popular leaders (next only to Gandhiji) made him sleepless. He was asked about his differences with Jawaharlal and Rajaji. "I am sorry", Gandhiji said about Jawaharlal, "that he has developed a fancy for guerilla warfare. But I have no doubt that it will be a nine days' wonder. It will take no effect". He wrote to Jawaharlal on April 15, 1942 saying that he was "making a mistake. I see no good in American troops entering India and in our resorting to guerilla warfare." When Rajaji persisted in his propaganda about unity with the Muslim League on the basis of partition, pressed by Vallabhbhai and other members of the Working Committee, he advised Rajaji to resign from the Assembly. In fact, he told him that he should "sever his connection" with the Congress and then carry on his campaign with "all zeal and ability" he was "capable" of.

Jawaharlal offered to resign from the Working Committee. "I have thought over the matter a great deal and still feel that your capacity for service will increase if you withdraw." In the same letter dated July 13, 1942, he informed Jawaharlal that Maulana and himself had drifted apart. "I do not understand him nor does he understand me.... No one is at fault. We have to face the facts. Therefore I suggest that the Maulana should relinquish presidentship but remain in the Committee, the Committee should elect an interim President and all should proceed unitedly". Gandhiji had already resolved on the launching of the mass movement. Through his *Harijan* articles, interviews and statements he had fired the emthusiasm of the masses, especially the younger people. He was sorry over the differences that had arisen. He acknowledged the fact that nobody had the "drive" which Jawaharlal had displayed. He grieved that they were on the verge of a parting of ways.

In early 1928, a similar situation had arisen. After the Madras Congress at the end of 1927, Gandhiji felt that Jawaharlal was "going too fast." He received a sharp reply from his young colleague. Gandhiji suggested that if he wanted to go his own way, he was welcome to do so. He should unfurl his banner of revolt. Jawaharlal was shaken and wisely retraced his steps. The freedom

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Phulwari Sharif: Same Old Story

SYED SHAHABUDDIN

PHULWARI SHARIF was a minor affair, as communal riots go, with only 10 lives lost, 30 persons injured and about 100 shops and houses looted. The citizens of the sovereign, democratic, socialist, secular Republic of India are used to much more horrifying spectacles and much bloodier carnage. That explains why the national press, with the exception of *The Hindustan Times*, which appears to have an oversensitive representative on the spot, did not take much notice of these sordid and tragic happenings in the month of June 1982, just on the outskirts of Patna, barely 5 km from the official residences of the Governor and the Chief Minister and his entire Council of Ministers and his top bureaucrats and the Bihar Government Secretariat.

The curfew, however, lasted over three weeks. Life has now resumed its normal tenor, though some tension still persists in nearby Muslim areas and sporadic stabbings go on.

Yet, the Phulwari Sharif disturbances have features and aspects which need to be studied with care. Lessons must be drawn for the future, if the Government and the administration are sincere in their oft-repeated resolve to eliminate the communal virus.

For nearly three weeks before the storm broke there had been sporadic incidents in the neighbourhood. On May 15, in Karorichak village, south of Phulwari Sharif, there was a dispute between the Yadavs and the Quraishis over cattle belonging to the latter grazing in fields belonging to the former. The matter ended in reconciliation, but the same night there was an armed confrontation between the Yadavs of Karorichak and the Kurmis of the neighbouring village of Ranipur over a long-standing land dispute, in which one Brijendra Yadav lost his life.

This was a godsend to the police and to Hindu communal elements like Shiv Kumar Singh, local *Pracharak* of the RSS. The police immediately arrested 4-5 members of the Quraishi community, falsely implicating them in the murder of Yadav. The rumour mills began working full steam, and all sorts of exaggerated stories about the involvement of the Muslim community and its plans to attack the Hindu community were invented and broadcast. Also, Hindus were instigated to take revenge against the Muslims. The administration, despite several representations by the Phulwari Sharif Muslims, took no notice and made no effort to scotch the rumours or to take the mischievous elements into custody.

On May 26, Sabiha Khatoon, a lady belonging to a well-known family of Haroon Nagar, returning from the hospital with her child, was shot at and had to be operated upon for the extraction of the bullet. The police took no action.

The same night there was a bomb explosion in the main bazar, in which a Muslim was injured. There was no action. On May 27, there was a bomb explosion near Tamtam Stop and brickbatting on the house of Muzaffar Said. There was no action. On May 31, Maulana Ahmed Husain, the Deputy Nazim of Imarat-e-Sharia, Phulwari Sharif, the premier religious authority of the Muslims of Bihar, while going in a rickshaw, was attacked with a scythe near the Mahesh High School, and just escaped with his life. He recognised three of his assailants whom he named in the FIR. No action was taken.

On June 1, Shamim Ahmed Ansari of Gondpur village was stabbed to death near the Aluminium Factory in Islampur village. In his dying declaration he named his attackers. No action was taken.

On June 3, Mokhtar Ahmed, while coming to Phulwari Sharif from Patna, was killed near the Phulwari Sharif railway station in the presence of the RPF. No action was taken.

On the same day, Mohammed Akbar was brutally attacked near the Phulwari Sharif cycle factory but he escaped with his life and reached Phulwari Sharif in blood-soaked clothes. Interestingly, the *Organiser* has alleged that he was not stabbed but had poured red colour over himself!

All this time, tension had been rising. The Muslim community had been approaching and making representations to the Central Government, to the State Government and to the local officials for protection, but in vain. The police would not even record the FIRs. Instead, the Muslim mohallas were placed in a state of siege and surrounded by the Bihar Military Police. On June 1, the Muslim community submitted a memorandum to the Governor of Bihar — again in vain. On June 1, the Minister of State for Home Affairs, Venkatasubbiah, and the Home Secretary were apprised by the present writer of the explosive situation and were requested to make CRPF units available to the Bihar Government to replace the BMP. CRPF units were in fact deployed but not given charge of the Muslim locality where the BMP continued to operate.

The attempted murder of Akbar was the flashpoint. Some Muslim young men followed him to the police station when he went there to lodge the

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FIR. The BMP dispersed them with lathi-charge and teargas and chased them into lanes, when a country bomb was hurled at the BMP. A tea-stall belonging to a Hindu was set ablaze; no one can identify the culprit definitely. It may well have been an agent provocateur.

Now all hell broke loose. The BMP began a systematic search of the Muslim mohallas, breaking open houses, insulting and humiliating the womenfolk, arresting and beating the menfolk, looting, all without any warrant and without magisterial presence, on the pretext of looking for illicit arms and bombs. More than 200 houses were broken into; more than a hundred persons were arrested and beaten up. One of them, Abdul Rashid, died as a result of police beating. Several others have been crippled and rendered invalid.

Curfew was imposed and hundreds of persons who live in Phulwari Sharif but work in Patna were stranded at the Patna railway station. Curfew was first relaxed after more than 26 hours and as usual was so strictly applied in the Muslim locality that the sick were deprived of medicines and the families of all provisions. Distorted versions were fed to the press like the unfounded reports of the discovery of arms from houses next to Imarat-e-Sharia or of injury to the city S.P.

To complete the story, on June 4, two young boys, Rais and Mohammed Alqama, were beheaded in village Hasanpur and their bodies were thrown into a well, to be fished out days later.

On June 4, 1982, Mohammed Yunus Khan, of Nayatola, going with his brother-in-law, wife and his daughter and five-month-old child, were waylaid, beaten up with lathis and attacked with sickles. His daughter died on the spot; the rest suffered serious injuries and are hospitalised.

The basic conclusion that has to be drawn from this recital is that the Phulwari Sharif tragedy combined some distinctive features of the Biharsharif tragedy with those of Moradabad, mercifully on a miniature scale.

As in Biharsharif, exaggerated rumours were deliberately broadcast in order to excite the Hindu community. There was no direct confrontation between Hindu and Muslim mobs in Phulwari Sharif proper, but stray individuals and families were attacked by Hindu gangs. Most killings took place on public roads, close to police stations.

As in Moradabad, the Muslim community suffered major losses at the hands of the State armed constabulary, the BMP, which treats the Muslim community as a whole as an adversary and as fair game and practises sadism and terror against them. Innocent persons were arrested; respectable families were humiliated; bones were broken — while known goondas continued to strut about on the flaming stage.

It must be added that while the BJP, true to form, repeated its performance of Jamshedpur so painstakingly documented and brought out by the Jitendra Narain Commission, the CRPF came out with flying colours, as a humane, non-communal, dutiful and honourable force. There is not a single complaint against them. A Muslim lady related that when she was accosted by the CRPF while carrying a small bundle of ornaments, naturally they examined the bundle but did not touch anything. She added that had the BMP been there, the valuables would have gone and she would have been beaten up.

Phulwari Sharif is a place of pilgrimage for Muslims. It has an ancient Mazar of Makhdoom Saheb, the Sufi saint, and a Khanguah. It is the seat of Imarat-e-Sharia; yet, no Muslim Minister of the Government of Bihar, no Muslim MLA of the ruling party responded to the repeated appeals of the local people to intervene, while the tension was building up. Are they so helpless?

The Chief Minister took no notice till after June 3. Was the CID sleeping? Nor did the Central Government move. Perhaps the IB had also gone to sleep. The All-India Muslim Majlis-e Mushawarat met in Delhi on June 6 and requested the Prime Minister for an audience. They waited for six days and audience was not granted. Did the Government think, as they did in Moradabad, that the Muslim reaction on June 3 amounted to an act of 'rebellion' and that they had got what they deserved? Even a worm turns, and if a Government fails in its primary duty to save human life and property, citizens have the right to defend themselves. They will not permit themselves to be treated as, and even slaughtered like, dumb cattle.

One of the basic facts of the recurrent communal confrontation therefore is that the minority community not only feels insecure but is without any means of access to the political level and has no confidence in the impartiality of the local police or administration. It is reconciled to the view that the police and the administration will turn a blind eye when tragedy befalls them. At best they would be silent spectators; at worst, they would participate in acts of violence against them. Psychologically besieged, they have no option but to make defensive preparations — store illicit arms, hand-made bombs, countrymade grenades, even stones and bricks. The majority community also does it. Sometimes this establishes a balance of terror, and this explains why no major confrontation took place in Biharsharif. This also sets up a vicious cycle: At the first hint of trouble, the police launches a house-to-house search, and *voila!*—'There is evidence of the Muslim community having made preparations for blowing up the whole place'. But until the police and the administration change their communal ethos and learn to deal with communal situations as law and order problems and not become emotionally involved, this vicious cycle cannot be broken. Confidence in the neutrality of the administration must be restored.

Phulwari Sharif presents a micro-sample of the forces at work. It is yet another signal, yet another piece of evidence of how mischievous and communal elements are at work to disturb peace, to destabilise society, to destroy secularism. Communal riots have been largely an urban phenomenon. Once it acquires a rural dimension, it will spread like a forest fire. Who will then be able to extinguish it? ☐

Politics of Mass Hunger

BHARAT DOGRA

IN Ethiopia during 1973-75 (these were the last two years of the Haile Selassie regime) nearly one lakh people are estimated to have perished due to drought. Nearly one-third of the semi-nomadic Afar tribals are reported to have been killed. What were the factors behind this, one of the biggest tragedies of recent years?

In the late 1960s, the International Finance Corporation (a member of the World Bank Group) assisted HVA, a Dutch agribusiness firm, to expand cash crop cultivation in Ethiopia. By 1970, HVA controlled over a fifth of all the cultivated land in the Awash Valley (smaller areas were occupied by agribusiness companies from other developed countries).

The land given to these agribusiness companies was concentrated in the rich lowlands plains of this valley which had been used for several hundred years by semi-nomadic herdsmen for grazing their cattle through the eight-month dry season. The herdsmen were now forced to take their cattle to rain-fed land, distant from the river. When drought struck in 1973 these semi-nomadic herdsmen suffered the most, and died in large numbers.

This, however, is not the full story of the famine. Once the famine had occurred, how did the authorities face it?

Frances Bappe and Joseph Collins point out in their widely acclaimed book *Aid as Obstacle*: "At least half the amount of grain needed to help those people remain alive was held in commercial storage facilities within the country. In addition, Emperor Selassie's National Grain Corporation itself held in storage 17,000 tons of Australian wheat which it refused to distribute. While commercial interests thrived by selling hundreds of tons of Ethiopia's grain, beans and even milk to western Europe and Saudi Arabia, the Ethiopean Government received 1,50,000 tons of free food from aid donors. Government officials at all levels withheld stored food from the market awaiting higher prices even as peasants could be seen starving within a few kilometres of grain storage."

While the Ethiopian famine provides a glaring example of how the narrow considerations of profit-hungry companies and corrupt officials can lead to mass deaths, countless examples of the selfish mercenary interests of a few leading to hunger for many can be seen every day in the villages of the Third World countries. In a large number of these countries, to a lesser or greater extent, the situation is that of control of the overwhelming share of the land by a small number of big landowners, and overall dominance of the nation's agriculture by agribusiness companies and aid agencies based in the developed countries.

Most Third World countries have a predominantly village based economy and this economy is dominated by a small or relatively small number of big landowners and moneylenders. Due to the control of a major share of land by them, a large number of villagers are landless labourers or share-croppers. They provide cheap labour on the fields owned by the big landowners. This relationship is almost always exploitative and the landless labourers and share-croppers generally do not get enough to ensure an adequate diet and other minimum needs of their families. Their control over this exploitative system gives the big landowners not only economic gains but also helps them to gain political power, which in turn throws the doors open for further economic gains through contracts, jobs for relatives and misuse of development funds. Due to all this, the landowners are basically interested not in raising agricultural production but in retaining their grip over this exploitative system. On the other hand, the labourers and share-croppers have neither the resources nor the incentive to make any effort to develop agriculture and increase production.

In the context of this system it is not difficult to understand the shocking extent of hunger and the stagnation or near-stagnation of agricultural production in many Third World countries. Today science has advanced greatly and man has the capacity to feed a much larger population than presently exists on this planet. But science is ineffective when there are strong institutional barriers impeding the path of agricultural progress.

Unfortunately most Third World governments have not considered it desirable to change the prevailing power structure in rural areas or at least have not changed it in such a way that the poor would acquire a forceful voice in governing the country. Most governments are content to pass some inadequate legislation to help the rural poor, and implement this in an even more half-hearted manner.

Thus mass hunger in the Third World countries is not only a feature of drought or other natural calamities. Even in normal years, during the 'lean' season which can run into several months, families of landless labourers, share-croppers, petty artisans and small peasants suffer from hunger, sometimes eating only one meal a day for several months in a normal year.

However, such hunger is a 'normal' feature and the governments are generally not bothered about this. They have to be slightly more bothered about the feelings of urban people as discontent can spread more easily in their concentrated population. Hence most Third World countries have a system of rationing subsidised food to urban people, the grain being procured from the more developed areas within the country or obtained from abroad as 'aid' (mostly as loan) or commercial purchase. Generally it has been seen that most of this subsidised grain also ultimately goes to feed the relatively better-off urban groups.

According to a World Bank document (1977) titled 'Bangla Desh: Food Policy Review', 27 per cent of the food aid goes to police, military and civil services and to employees of large enterprises; 30 per cent goes to predominantly middle class card holders in six major cities; and nine per cent goes to supply mills for grinding flour for urban bakeries. Economist Joseph Stepaneck of the US Agency for International Development estimates that in practice "approximately 80 per cent of the ration supplied food serves those with cash in towns and cities".

Only during drought years do governments pay some attention to the food requirements of the rural poor. Special relief works are started. However, here too the officials corner a large share of the grain meant for distribution to the poor. Most of these officials come from the dominant class of the rural areas and are not far behind the traditional village exploiters in their oppression of the rural poor. Several others just find it more convenient and profitable to operate on the side of the dominant class. The result is that whether during 'normal' or 'distress' years, most of the benefits meant for small peasants and the landless are usurped by the dominant villagers and officials.

They, however, are not the only villains of world hunger. The prospects of food availability in the present-day world depend to a large extent on the behaviour of a handful of giant agribusiness companies involved in incredibly large-scale production, processing and trade of food items and manufacture of agricultural inputs. Directly or indirectly, the food and agricultural situation in most developing countries is strongly influenced by the decisions of these companies.

In brief, on the production side these companies desire that developing countries should follow energy-intensive strategies — the mix of HYV seeds, chemical fertilisers, pesticides and farm machinery. At the same time, these companies want to control the production of critical inputs like chemical fertilisers and pesticides in such a way that the market situation is one of scarce supplies and high prices and profits. To maintain this situation in the international market, agribusiness not only exercises strict control over its own production but also maintains close scrutiny on the availability of technology and equipment to developing countries. Thus many developing countries face a curious situation — on the one hand they are encouraged to replace the traditional farming system by a modern system of HYV seeds grown with fertilisers and pesticides, and on the other hand are charged so heavy a price for their inputs that the importing country has to exhaust a big chunk of the foreign exchange resources in importing limited inputs which can at best be used to create a few islands of prosperity. At the same time, the supply of feed-stock, equipment, technology, etc., to the developing countries is closely controlled to ensure that they do not become self-reliant in respect of fertilisers and pesticides.

However, agribusiness firms do not only supply inputs, they are also big sellers of foodgrains. So they are always on the look-out for potential markets in Third World countries. Generally aid to a Third World country experiencing food shortages should mean helping it to increase its production. But often, instead of extending such help, food surpluses of the developed countries have been hastily dumped in such countries, creating disincentives for local producers. Generally such food aid has been related to import of technical inputs or commercial export of foodgrains at a later stage.

In addition, agribusiness also utilises its direct or indirect hold over several Third World governments to obtain rubber, tea, coffee, sugar, cocoa, cotton, bananas, vegetables and several other agricultural crops needed for direct consumption or processing in the developed countries, at extremely cheap rates. Low prices for minerals and cash crop exports have been a major concern of many Third World countries and are the single most important cause of their perpetual balance of payments problems and heavy foreign loans. But at the village level, such exploitation means double distress to the peasants who are exploited not only by the agribusiness companies but also by the local merchants or other middlemen through whom their produce is sold.

Large-scale hunger appears outdated in this age of scientific miracles, but will persist so long as international trade reforms and land reforms in the Third World countries are not undertaken and implemented earnestly. □

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President's Powers

J.P. CHATURVEDI

In the context of the debate on the powers and limitations of the President under our Constitution, this contribution from a well-known journalist will be of interest to *Mainstream* readers. Chaturvedi throws some light on the Constituent Assembly debate on the question and discusses the functioning of our Presidents since 1950. —Editor

THERE has been an artificial controversy on the question whether the President of India should be elected in a contest or chosen by consensus among the political parties. When there is no consensus even on primary aspects of democratic functioning, such as how the proceedings of legislatures are to be conducted, it is unrealistic to talk of consensus on the choice of President or Vice-President.

As far as this country is concerned, although the British type of parliamentary government with modifications was thought of, the people felt a strange attachment to the form of government prevailing in the United States — perhaps because the Americans had rebelled against the British and forged their own form of government. This was why the first representative organisation of the Indian people was named the Indian National Congress, showing in a way affinity with the American Congress. The President of the Indian National Congress, like the American President, was elected by a very wide electoral college consisting of delegates. He had the power to nominate his Working Committee. Thus, not only were the principles of federalism, fundamental rights and the institution of Supreme Court as sole arbiter of the Constitution borrowed from the American Constitution, but there were some other ideas also which affected Constitution-making in India.

Before we go into the working of the Indian Constituent Assembly it would be useful to study its composition. The founding fathers of the Constitution were not just Congressmen or freedom-fighters. The majority of them were elected by the State Assemblies of UP, Bihar, Bengal, Assam, Punjab, Orissa, Central Provinces, Madras, Bombay, NWFP and Sind; and ninetythree came from the princely states. Of these ninety-three, half were Dewans or officials of the governments concerned and consisted of people like Sir Arcot Ramaswami Mudaliar, Sir Brojendra Lal Mitter, Sardar K.M. Panikkar, Sir V.T. Krishnamachari, T. Vijayaraghavachariar, Sir Prabha Shanker Pattani, C.S. Venkatachar, Sardar Gyansingh Rarewala, etc. The members elected on the Muslim League ticket boycotted the Constituent Assembly but some of them, like Begum Aizaz Rasool, participated later. Among the representatives of the provinces that were ruled by Congressmen there were representatives like Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Sir S. Radhakrishnan, the Raja of Bobbili, Dr. Sachhidanand Sinha, the Maharaja of Darbhanga, Rai Bahadur Shyam Nandan Sahay, Jerome D'Souza, Frank Anthony, S.H. Prater, Dr. M.R. Jayakar, H.N. Kunzru, Bakshi Sir Tek Chand, Sir Hari Singh Gaur, Jaipal Singh, D.K. Sen, Sir Padampat Singhania, and many others who did not belong to the Congress mainstream in those provinces. People who had Socialist or Communist leanings did not participate in Constitution-making. Mahatma Gandhi, Acharya Narendra Deva, Jayaprakash Narayan, Achyut Patwardhan, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, Yusuf Meherally, S.A. Dange, P.C. Joshi, Dr. K.M. Ashraf, Sajjad Zahir, P. Sundarayya, C. Rajeswara Rao, A.K. Gopalan, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, P. Ramamurthi and Ajay Ghosh were not in the Constituent Assembly. Nor were there revolutionaries like B.K. Dutta and Bejoy Kumar Sinha, although Baba Prithvi Singh Azad, S.M. Ghosh, A.C. Guha and Somnath Lahiri found place in it. Sir B.N. Rau was the Constitutional Adviser of the Constituent Assembly, and its Drafting Committee, with Dr. Ambedkar as Chairman, consisted of lawyers like Sir N. Gopalaswamy Ayyangar, Sir Alladi, Krishnaswami Iyer and K.M. Munshi, besides Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, both barristers.

Thus the Committee and a considerable, articulate and influential section of the membership of the Assembly was attached and attuned to the British form of constitutional government with the Crown as the constitutional head. The Union and Provincial sub-committees of the Constituent Assembly had started work even before Independence, and even before representatives of the princely states joined the Assembly. Both the Committees — the Union Constitution Committee under the chairmanship of Jawaharlal Nehru and the Provincial Constitution Committee under the chairmanship of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel—took decisions about the appointment of the Union Chief Executive and State Executives on June 8, 1947. The Union Committee decided that the President of India should be elected by the members of the both houses of parliament on the pattern followed in France under the Constitution of 1885, wherein the office of President was similar to that of the British Crown. The Provincial Constitution Committee, despite some common membership, decided that the Governor should be elected by adult franchise by the whole province. Some of the common members felt that this would make the President of India look unrepresentative of the people in comparison to a Governor.

There was a reappraisal, and then a joint meeting of the two committees was called. It was decided that an electoral college be formed for the election of the President, consisting of one delegate for every 10 lakhs of population. This was a copy of the American system. But those members of the Drafting Committee who wanted to follow the British parliamentary form challenged the right of the Joint Committee to come to such a decision as it had no locus standi. Then, as a compromise, the original proposal of the Union Constitution Committee was accepted with an amendment. The amendment was that elected members of provincial legislatures, that is, members of the State Assemblies, would also vote for the Presidentship. They would have separate vote strength based on the population they represented. Members of the Rajya Sabha were allowed to vote on the plea that as they were elected by members of the provincial Assemblies they were also representative of the people, elected indirectly. Nominated members of the Rajya Sabha, as also of the Lok Sabha and the Assemblies, were debarred. Thus it was supposed to be analogous to the election of the President in the USA, with the difference that the electoral college was a continuing body and not elected solely for the purpose of electing the President.

Even this did not satisfy everyone in the Constituent Assembly. Prof. K.T. Shah, the renowned economist, who was Secretary of the National Planning Committee headed by Jawaharlal Nehru, moved an amendment to the effect that the President should be elected by the people of India on the basis of adult franchise. The proposal was rejected.

This background provides a basis for understanding the currents and cross-currents that went into the drafting of the powers, duties and mode of punishment of the President. According to Article 52 and 53 there shall be a President of India who is the Executive Head of State. According to Article 53(2), he shall be the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. According to Article 52, the President shall be elected by an electoral college (as defined). According to Article 56, the President shall hold office for five years, and according to Article 57, he is eligible for re-election.

By themselves these clauses would have placed the President of India in the same position as the

[redacted]

Prasad, reminded him of this and said: "There is another amendment which has been moved by Sardar Hukam Singh in which he says the President may promulgate ordinances after consultation with the Council of Ministers."

The debate that ensued on this is of great importance since it shows the doubts that existed even then about the powers of the President. A.G. Noorani in a recent article on the Presidency in the *Indian Express* has insinuated that Dr. Rajendra Prasad had forgotten the debates in the Constituent Assembly when he insisted on decisive Presidential powers. Noorani evidently has not read the report of the debates carefully. Dr. Rajendra Prasad had made it known in the Constituent Assembly that, as the Articles stood, the President was not bound to accept the advice of his Ministers and advised that this omission be rectified by a suitable amendment, but it was not done due to opposition from Dr. Ambedkar. This is how the debate went:

Dr. Ambedkar: I am very grateful to you for reminding us. The point is that amendment is unnecessary because the President could not act, will not act, except on the advice of the Ministers.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad: *Where is the provision in the draft Constitution that binds the President to act in accordance with the advice of the Ministers?*

Dr. Ambedkar: I am sure that there is a provision and the provision is that there shall be a Council of Ministers to aid and advise the President in the discharge of his duties.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad: *Since we are having this written Constitution, we must have that clearly put somewhere.*

Dr. Ambedkar: This I cannot point out just now, I am sure there is a provision. I think there is provision that the President will be bound to accept the advice of the Ministers. In fact he cannot act without the advice of his Ministers.

A member shouted: Article 61(11).

Dr. Rajendra Prasad: It only lays down the duty of the Ministers, but it does not lay down the duty of the President to act in accordance with the advice given by the Ministers. It does not lay down that the President is bound to accept the advice. Is there any

[redacted]

Dr Rajendra Prasad: *Is there any real difficulty in providing somewhere that the President will be bound by the advice of the Ministers?*

Dr Ambedkar: We are doing that. If I may say so, there is a provision in the "Instrument of Instructions".

Dr Rajendra Prasad: I have considered that also.

Dr Ambedkar: Para 3 reads: 'In all matters within the scope of the executive power of the Union, the President shall, in exercise of the powers conferred upon him, be guided by the advice of his Ministers.' We propose to make some amendments to that.

Dr Rajendra Prasad: You want to change that. As it is, it lays down that the President will be guided by the Ministers in the executive powers of the Union and not in its legislative powers.

Dr Ambedkar: Article 61 follows almost literally various such Constitutions and the Presidents have always understood that the language means that they must accept the advice. If there is any difficulty, it will certainly be remedied by a suitable amendment.

It ended there. There was no amendment. Later on even the Instrument of Instructions was dropped and not appended to the Constitution. It could very well be argued that the fact that even after such a virulent attack by the President of the Constituent Assembly, who by that time had reason to presume that he was to be the first President of India, the clauses were not changed, only suggests that the Constituent Assembly wanted the question of powers of the President left open.

As far as Dr. Ambedkar was concerned, his concept of the powers and duties of the President was clear. He clearly followed the British practice and defined it in the following terms: He represents the nation but does not rule the nation. His place in the administration is that of a ceremonial device. The President of the Indian Union will be generally guided by the advice of his Ministers. The President of India has no power to dismiss any Ministry so long as his Ministry commands a majority in Parliament. Like the English King our President will have...the right to advise, to warn and be consulted and also the prerogatives of appointing the Prime Minister and dissolving the House of the people.

Apart from executive and legislative functions, the Indian President, as Head of State, has certain other functions.

When Dr, Rajendra Prasad became President — he was not the choice of Prime Minister Nehru but of the Congress Party — some differences did arise between him and the Prime Minister. He exercised his right to be consulted and to warn in the matter of the Hindu Code Bill on the basis that the majority of Members of Parliament had exercised opposition to the Bill and Nehru should not rush the Bill before going to the public in an election with this programme. Nehru obliged, and when the Hindu Code Bills were passed in Parliament Rajendra Prasad gave his assent in spite of his personal opposition. He was of the opinion that as Supreme Commander he had a right to call the Chiefs of Staff independently. There is even now a practice that Chiefs of Staff send greetings to the President on Republic Day and pledge loyalty to him. Similarly Dr Prasad felt that as Visitor (to Central Universities) he had his own responsibility and was not bound to seek or accept the advice of the Ministry. Nehru sent these notes to the Attorney-General, M.C. Setalvad, who was of the opinion that even in these matters the President must go by the advice of the Ministry.

His warnings relating to corruption or the China policy were however not heeded by the Prime Minister. Dr. Rajendra Prasad was also opposed to the dismissal of the Namboodiripad Ministry while it had a majority in the Kerala Vidhan Sabha and described it as a bad example, but he agreed to the Cabinet decision, which was also taken reluctantly, to impose President's rule in Kerala.

It was in this background that Dr. Rajendra Prasad, on the eve of his retirement, asked the Indian Law Institute to enquire into the powers and functions of the President. Himself a distinguished lawyer, he did not agree with Ambedkar and Setalvad. But this created a furore and Bhupesh Gupta rightly brought a Constitution amendment bill in the Rajya Sabha to provide that the President was bound to act in accordance with the advice of the Council of Ministers. But the Congress Party opposed it then. It was only at the end of 1976 that Parliament passed the 42nd Constitution Amendment Bill which became effective from January 3, 1977. It added a sentence to Article 74(1) saying that the President shall act in accordance with the advice given. When the Janata Government came to power, it only added a proviso (44th Constitution Amendment Act 1979) that 'the President may require the Council of Ministers to reconsider such advice either generally or otherwise, and the President shall act in accordance with advice rendered after such consideration'.

Three Presidents, Dr. Prasad, Dr. Radhakrishnan and V.V. Giri, had already exercised the right to warn which has been incorporated in this amendment. Dr. Radhakrishnan rushed to Tezpur after the Chinese invasion and publicly criticised the Government for the way it was dealing with the troops. He is also reported to have privately joined in the pressure to remove Krishna Menon from Defence Ministership.

V.V. Giri, who fought the Presidential election as an independent and started the practice of resigning from office and touring the country for propaganda, was not happy with the way the Railway strike had been handled. He had resigned earlier as Labour Minister on the matter of bank employees' wages, and planned to resign as President also. It is reported that Saraswati Giri persuaded him not to resign although he expressed his displeasure in private and in public. But that only shows that Presidents stick to the tradition of functioning as constitutional head.

Neelam Sanjiva Reddy was the first President who had to exercise by himself the prerogative of appointing a Prime Minister and dissolving the Lok

(*Continued on page 34*)

Political Systems in Developing Countries

E.N. KOMAROV

For all the distinctions in the political systems of developed capitalist countries (constitutional monarchy or republic, parliamentary or presidential system), they all have essentially the same type of polity evolved during a long period of capitalist development after the victorious bourgeois revolutions.

Things are different in the liberated former colonial and semi-colonial countries developing along the capitalist path. There, differing political systems as a rule (which has its exceptions) reflect and embody substantial distinctions in polity. This is so because the different types of government or political regimes existing there embody different stages in the rise and development of bourgeois statehood and bourgeois political power in general, or (as in the case of traditional monarchical regimes) the preservation of pre-bourgeois statehood.

Accordingly, one can single out three principal types of political systems which are also, as a rule, types of polity: the traditional monarchical type, the authoritarian-presidential type, and the bourgeois parliamentary type.

In real life the boundaries between these types are not always strictly delimited since, reflecting different stages of bourgeois socio-political development, these types can evolve from one to another. Accordingly, each of the above principal types has its variants. In the process of bourgeois evolution distinctions between concrete political systems can become more or less formal—for example, a political system originally corresponding to a particular type of polity evolves to correspond to a higher type of the bourgeois polity. This will be specified later on. However, nowadays such cases amongst developing countries are not the rule but rather the exception.

In the contemporary epoch the very bourgeois development of these countries can be interrupted, and in some countries is indeed interrupted as a result of revolutionary transformations oriented towards socialism. Therefore, possibilities for bourgeois evolution of polity in developing countries, that is, possibilities of transition from a lower bourgeois (or pre-bourgeois) type of polity to a higher type, also bourgeois, prove to be fairly limited.

Traditional monarchical regimes still enduring in some developing countries are characterised by such attributes as the autocratic power exercised by a hereditary or quasi-hereditary monarch, a decisive predominance of feudal-aristocratic elements within the ruling elite in general and in the higher bureaucracy in particular, bans upon the activities of political parties or even an absence of political parties as such inasmuch as they have not arisen yet. Though quite often such monarchical regimes proclaim themselves to be constitutional monarchies, in reality they remain traditional ones, that is, pre-bourgeois. There are constitutional monarchies typologically different from traditional ones in some of the developing countries, but they are rare exceptions.

In consequence of the growing (and more often than not swift) involvement of countries with traditional monarchical regimes in the world capitalist economy, these regimes, being pre-bourgeois for the most part, find themselves compelled to implement reforms and measures stimulating in varying degrees the development of capitalism with state support. At the same time, being deeply rooted in the traditional socio-political structure and representing above all the interests of the feudal-aristocratic elite, the traditional monarchical regimes strive to suppress the forces of social transformation brought forth by capitalist development, including bourgeois forces, which are either barred from government or play a subordinate role in it. This combination involving a stimulation of capitalist development in a measure with the preservation of the pre-bourgeois socio-political structure, and autocratic monarchical rule makes the traditional monarchical regimes in developing countries typologically more or less similar to Western absolutism.

It goes without saying that there are quite a few sundry distinctions between the traditional monarchies in present-day developing countries and the absolutism in the history of the Western countries. This being so, the distinctions determined by the historically-evolved structural and other particularities of pre-bourgeois society and pre-bourgeois statehood in the Western countries under absolutism on the one hand and in some present-day developing countries on the other, appear to be less important than the immense difference in the world conditions that obtained during the times of absolutism in the West in the late medieval period and those of today. First, the disintegration of pre-capitalist relations and the emergence of bourgeois ones usually proceed much faster in present-day developing countries, even if in traditionally monarchical ones, than in the Western absolute monarchies in the past. Accordingly, the socio-political contradictions engendered by this process also develop much faster and more intensively than formerly. Second — and this is important — the objective internal requirements of a country's social development and worldwide conditions in the contemporary epoch generate a new prospect for social progress. Consequently, the struggle against autocracies acquires, in some degree or other, a new social thrust, namely: an increasing orientation towards socialism. In attempts to prevent the realisation of this new social perspective and retain their neo-colonialist

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positions the imperialist powers sustain autocratic monarchical regimes. This imparts an anti-imperialist and national-liberatory character to the struggle against such regimes and thereby expands and intensifies this struggle.

All these factors taken together accelerate the overcoming of centuries-long social deprivation and consequent humility of the masses which in many developing countries, particularly in those under traditional monarchies, have probably been deeper than in Europe under absolutism but which are nowadays inevitably being overcome much faster than in Europe of that period.

In the mid-seventies one could count twelve Asian and African countries under traditional monarchical regimes. Their combined population exceeded 120 million or roughly six per cent of the total population of the developing countries on both continents. Significantly, in the years that followed, anti-monarchical and anti-imperialist popular revolutions were carried out in the three most populous of such countries, namely Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Iran whose combined population exceeds 80 million. The countries still under traditional monarchical regimes account, between themselves, for roughly 30 million. But even more significant is the fact that two of the above countries where monarchical regimes were overthrown in recent years have by now assumed a socialist orientation in their development.

Attempts have been made, and will possibly be made yet, to transform the traditional monarchical regimes adapting them to the political requirements of bourgeois development and, more specifically, give the rising broader bourgeois elements of society access to government. However, the transformation of a traditional monarchical regime into something akin to constitutional monarchy which could evolve into a form of the bourgeois-parliamentary set-up appears to be less likely. Rather, there is a possibility of certain traditional monarchical regimes developing into authoritarian regimes of an essentially Bonapartist type, unless in the overthrow of a traditional monarchy there occurs a socialist-oriented transformation of society.

Authoritarian-presidential systems are the most common type of polity in countries developing along the capitalist path. However, the combined population of the countries under authoritarian-presidential regimes hardly makes up more than half the total population of the developing Asian and African countries, first of all because the latter include India, an immense country with a parliamentary system and also a number of countries of socialist orientation.

The authoritarian-presidential regime seems to have a certain nominal similarity with the presidential system inasmuch as under the latter, being a form of bourgeois-parliamentary democracy in advanced capitalist countries, neither the status of the President as the supreme state leader, nor the formation of a government and its tenure, depends on the correlation of party forces in Parliament, although executive power is limited, in a certain manner, by the totality of institutions and procedures of the parliamentary set-up. And yet, under the authoritarian-presidential regime the President and the government led by him actually exercise absolute power more or less irrespective of whether or not they wield both executive and legislative power or legislative power is formally vested in Parliament.

The authoritarian-Presidential regime is usually installed as a result of a military coup and consequently evolves directly from military rule. The authoritarian-presidential regime can also emerge as a result of an anti-monarchical revolution carried out predominantly by the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois civilian political forces which raise their own military formations.

A salient feature of the structure of the authoritarian-presidential regime is the predominant role usually played by the armed forces, more specifically by their elite, in the formation of a government and in the exercise of state authority in general. There takes place a coalescence of the Officers' Corps, especially high-ranking officers, with the civilian bureaucracy, and the regime assumes a military-bureaucratic character. Under the conditions of a relatively early stage of bourgeois development in the countries in question the military and the civilian bureaucracy act as the more organised "elements", or groups, of the propertied classes. Moreover, the officers stand at the head of an army which is not only an organised and armed but also a mass force. Nevertheless, the military and the civilian bureaucracy are organised upon a functionally-specific and therefore rather narrow basis. They acquire decisive political weight inasmuch as the modern bourgeois organisation of the propertied classes on a party basis is only beginning to take shape and has not yet got sufficiently consolidated to secure politically stable power.

As a rule, authoritarian-presidential regimes have emerged in place of quasi-parliamentary regimes which for a time began to be established in a number of young Asian and African states after the parliamentary models of advanced capitalist countries. Lacking an appropriate structural base in local society, these regimes proved to be as oligarchic as they were incapable of maintaining governmental stability. This resulted in the establishment of regimes of the authoritarian-presidential type in their stead. In some cases the latter emerged in a historically more "common" way, so to speak, in place of overthrown quasi-constitutional monarchies.

Typologically, the authoritarian-presidential regimes in contemporary developing countries are comparable to regimes which emerged at the initial stage of the rise and growth of the bourgeois polity following the victorious bourgeois revolutions in a number of Western countries and which were defined as "Bonapartist". V.I. Lenin noted in this connection that "creation of constitutions and their consolidation", that is, the rise and consolidation of parliamentary democracy in the West, proceeded "in the course of generations and in some cases even in the course of centuries" after victorious bourgeois revolutions. He also pointed out the possibility of a combination, a "mixture", of features and methods of Bonapartism and absolutism, especially in the event of a monarchical system being preserved.

The authoritarian-presidential regime, just like a regime of the Bonapartist type, usually realises a compromise between the upper crust of the propertied classes inherited from the past and the emerging, and broader, bourgeois and petty-bourgeoies urban and rural strata. Upon the establishment of this regime these strata are given a say in government (via the military and a renovated civilian bureaucracy) by forcing out the former elite and even eliminating some of its elements. Initially, such a regime quite often manoeuvres between the propertied classes and the awakening toiling masses which is also peculiar to Bonapartism. At the same times, it seeks to "curb" the masses and subordinate them, often by sheer force, to the conditions and requirements of capitalist development.

The socio-political contradictions peculiar to the authoritarian-presidential regime nowadays develop much more intensively than the contradictions of the former regimes of the Bonapartist type in the West and — this is the main thing — acquire a new quality. In virtue of objective requirements of overcoming their economic backwardness, such regimes representing the interests of the propertied classes, while encouraging and implanting private enterprise, cannot avoid the establishment of a large and in some cases even predominant public sector in basic industries and infrastructure. In consequence, in the course of capitalist development, even at relatively early stages, there shape up in developing countries direct material and technical as well as certain social pre-requisites for a transition to socialist-oriented society. The possibility of achieving it is increased substantially due to the existence of the world socialist system.

The authoritarian-presidential regime, just like any other regime of the propertied classes, seeks to prevent realisation of the socialist perspective. It goes all out to encourage and implant private enterprise locally, and since the latter is weak, attracts transnational corporations. It strives to suppress the Left forces and often follows in the wake of the international policy pursued by the leading capitalist powers to the point of military-political cooperation with them. Such a regime seeks to take advantage of the increased economic role of the state for self-preservation, and its state capitalist policy becomes a factor for the preservation of the dominance of the propertied classes in its authoritarian forms.

However, all this cannot prevent the mounting socio-political contradictions engendered precisely by the development of capitalism which such a regime serves, including growing contradictions within the propertied classes themselves. Even assuring initially representation of the interests of the broader bourgeois and petty-bourgeois strata in government, the authoritarian-presidential regime inevitably becomes oligarchic by virtue of its authoritarian nature, on the one hand, and on the other, due to the conditions of bourgeois development itself. Relying not so much on certain classes as on their separate groups or "elements", this regime gradually loses its stability. (V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 130).

Some authoritarian-presidential regimes try to widen their social base and especially the organisational-political structure, allowing thereby the establishment of certain institutions of the Parliamentary set-up, and, more particularly, political parties (but Communist parties are either banned or are legalised last of all). Normally, a government party is formed which, being the regime's political instrument (but not its maker), is given preponderance over the other parties of the propertied classes which are usually fragmented. The formation of such a party has the aim of enabling an essentially authoritarian regime to utilise parliamentary procedure and elections. It is a different question whether or not such a party can become a factor for the further organisation of the propertied classes on a party basis. In any case, aside from the fact that the evolution of an authoritarian regime towards bourgeois parliamentary democracy requires a long time, the very possibility of such an evolution substantially diminishes because of the sharpness of the socio-political tensions in capitalistically-developing countries in the contemporary epoch. Mounting socio-political tensions often render ineffectual the parliamentary methods of exercise of power by the propertied classes, the more so in cases of weak civilian bourgeois organisation. Indicative is the recent installation of a military regime in Turkey where the parliamentary system had developed in the space of decades and there had evolved a system of alternative parties capable of succeeding one another in power while the armed forces performed the role of guarantor of social-political stability. Meanwhile, in a number of developing countries under authoritarian-presidential regimes, the military directly took up government upon the establishment of the regime and do not wish to yield up to others the advantages and privileges associated with this.

It stands to reason that the authoritarian-presidential regime, being a certain bourgeois form of government by the propertied classes, as a rule proves to be socially more stable, or stronger than the present-day traditional monarchies. Over the past decade revolutions in Asian and African countries took place precisely where there existed the since-overthrown monarchies and also Portuguese colonial rule. In Afro-Asian countries under authoritarian-presidential regimes political changes accompanied by an ouster and sometimes assassination of the heads of some such regimes have been made mainly within the existing social and political framework. But this takes place at the contemporary levels of the socio-economic and political development of the Asian and African countries under consideration, a much lower level compared to those of Latin America where sweeping revolutionary struggles and changes are carried out in countries which more or less have been under authoritarian-presidential regimes. Clearly, the present socio-economic levels of developing countries in Asia and

Africa under authoritarian-presidential regimes will not remain unchanged.

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THE bourgeois-democratic system, at least as regards a number of important features, has emerged in but very few developing countries. However, they include India whose population comprises roughly 40 per cent of the total population of the developing countries of Asia and Africa. In a whole number of indicators of socio-economic development, particularly indicators having to do with the "human factor" (for example, literacy) India lags far behind not only developed capitalist countries but many developing countries. However, by the level of its physical productive forces (in per capita terms), it occupies an intermediate position among developing countries, while in absolute volumes of industrial production it ranks with the first ten countries in the world, and this, apparently, is of significance when it comes to the evolution of political conditions in a given country.

The conspicuous circumstance that in India, having in general a rather low socio-economic level even amongst developing countries, there has largely emerged a bourgeois-parliamentary system can be explained briefly in the following way.

Already in the second half of the nineteenth century the nascent bourgeoisie and groups in the propertied classes "going bourgeois" began to consolidate ideologically and organise politically precisely at the "modern" world level while the masses remained almost entirely medieval. Their awakening came much later, beginning in large part with the 1920s and 1930s mostly under the ideological and political influence and organisational leadership of the Indian National Congress (INC) which was founded in 1885 and at a later stage headed a mass liberation movement, organising the growing middle strata, rallying the part of the masses that became active politically and acting as a centralised national association.

The fact that the Indian propertied classes, and above all the rising bourgeoisie forming as a class, rather early and quickly mastered the methods of bourgeois organisation, politics and partially even government whereas the masses remained largely medieval folk, was apparently due to a combination of the following two circumstances. First, "traditional" or pre-capitalist society in India by the time of her colonial conquest had contained much of what might be called "an intermediate product" for the future bourgeoisie — major mercantile communities and a large intellectual stratum (the Brahmans and certain other castes); but abysmal social deprivation of a large part of the masses, what Karl Marx called "the stigma of caste distinctions and slavery" was also intrinsic to that society ('British Rule in India', Marx and Engels, *The Works;* Vol. 9, p-1367.) Second, the conditions of British rule, Britain being the leading capitalist power at the time, fostered, to a certain extent, the bourgeois political development of India's propertied classes. The centuries-long oppression of the toiling masses continued on the whole, and their exploitation intensified reducing them to abject poverty. But the people were being aroused by the mounting national liberation movement whose development and growing social thrust were in large part stimulated by the impact of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Suffice it to recall that immediately after Word War I there arose in India an organised labour movement (though by the time of Independence workers of modern industries accounted for less than 2 per cent of the population), and as early as 1920 the All India Trade Union Congress was formed. Later on, mainly in the 1930s, the Communists who formed their party in 1925, the Socialists and other progressives in the Congress began to set up peasant organisations. From the very beginning of the 20th century other political organisations of the propertied classes, mostly, however, of communal nature, began to emerge outside of the National Congress and more often in opposition to it.

Thus, one might say, in Lenin's words, that by the time of Independence India's propertied classes and largely the middle strata already had "generations" which had traversed a certain path of bourgeois political development, notably under the conditions of a mounting national liberation movement creating democratic traditions. These traditions played no mean role in the political developments after Independence. In particular, it is indicative that upon achieving Independence the national leadership initiated measures curbing the possibility of a military take-over.

A salient feature of the parliamentary system in India, just as in some other developing countries having this system, is that the ruling party predominates oves all other parties. Under the simple majority election system this enables the predominant party to win a massive majority of seats in the legislature with less than half the number of votes cast (but normally more than 40 per cent) if, of course, the Opposition remains fragmented. The composition of government can vary, particularly as a result of factional struggles within the ruling party itself, but there is no succession of alternative political parties in government which is characteristic of advanced capitalist countries, although there are important exceptions like Japan.

It is safe to assume that the phenomenon known as "one-party dominance" under bourgeois parliamentary democracy is, in a way, due to a peculiar combination of the inherited and the new in a country's political development. The inherited, in this case, is a certain limitedness of bourgeois socio-political development itself which has not led (not yet) to a deep (vertical) party division amongst the bourgeoisie itself and, consequently, to the emergence of a system of alternative parties capable of succeeding one another in government. Incidentally, this is why one-party dominance also contains an element of Bonapartism. But it also embodies much that is totally new. One-party dominance is obviously connected with the growing role of the state, with the development of the public sector and implementation on its basis of centralised planning and economic regulation within the framework of the developing capitalist "mixed economy". But it is, in a greater measure, due to the fact that the intensive growth of class contradictions in a developing country under present-day world conditions gives rise to a striving of the propertied classes for political consolidation around the predominant bourgeois party even when the Left parties are relatively small. This is much more pronounced when there emerges a "Left and democratic alternative" as in the case of certain States in India. But the rise of such an alternative even within the constitutional framework of parliamentary democracy is no longer a development of the bourgeois polity.

Attempts to found an alternative bourgeois party have so far proved ineffective and fraught with political instability. Initially, since and in as much as the ruling INC has been pursuing, by and large, a reformist policy (partial agrarian reforms of the 1950s, priority development of the public sector with a certain degree of regulation of monopoly activities), amongst the opposition parties of the propertied classes there predominated (although not overwhelmingly) parties of a patently conservative brand which, together with the conservatives within the ruling party itself, actually represented the interests of the landlordist and monopoly elites.

This being so, the opposition parties, both conservative and reformist and each taken separately, were connected with particular local, mostly traditional, social groups, and wielded a mostly regional influence. The furtherance of the reformist policy pursued by the ruling party — the INC — in the early 1970s (for examples, selective nationalisattion of certain industries formerly owned by local and foreign monopolies — roughly 17 per cent in terms of production by the organised private sector; further agrarian reforms and measures for removing shackling forms of exploitation of the rural poor) evoked an intensive counteraction by the conservative parties and groupings which began to unite against the ruling party. However, their combination at elections could undermine the power of the ruling party rather than assure a political alternative which was fraught with general destabilisation and eventually led to promulgation of Emergency (mainly from June, 1975, till December, 1977). The conditions of Emergency including persecution of the Opposition led to an alliance between a number of Opposition parties, now both conservative and reformist ones. This to a great extent conditioned the victory of their combine — the Janata Party — in the parliamentary elections 1977.

However, upon the termination of the effect of the above two transient factors (intensification of the reformist policy evoking the stiff resistance of the conservative forces and then Emergency), the Janata combine disintegrated, having lasted slightly more than two years. The INC again assumed power as the dominant party. As a result of the splits that occurred in 1969 and 1978 it became more homogeneous, on the bourgeois social plane (absence of former "ideological factions"). Opposition parties of the propertied classes again became fragmented. But today they proclaim positions that are closer to the present moderately — reformist position of the ruling party. The distinctions have narrowed down even if they have not disappeared.

Thus, a system of alternative parties has not yet evolved on a national scale. However, in some States of India there either exist, or are emerging, bipolar party structures differing in their socio-political content. The growth of Opposition parties of different trends can undermine the dominance of the ruling party without providing any stable political alternative nationally and thereby lead to political destabilisation. This being so, the introduction of a presidential system in place of the existing parliamentary system (after the British pattern) has been mooted inasmuch as the former makes the government largely independent of the correlation of party forces in the legislature. This by itself, certainly, would not spell the establishment of an authoritarian-presidential regime but rather a modification of the form of the political system in the country, although, given definite circumstances, this could encourage authoritarian tendencies.

Nevertheless, noteworthy is the fact of replacement of the parliamentary system in Sri Lanka, in 1977, by a presidential system. Ever since the 1950s that country's two leading parties had regularly succeeded each other in office (usually in coalition with other, smaller, parties) and in the 1977 elections the party now ruling the country gained an overwhelming majority of seats in the legislature; so, there seemed to be no question of government instability. A reform of the electoral system has been implemented impeding representation for the smaller parties and coalition politics which is prejudicial to the Left parties.

Two countries of South Asia — Pakistan and Bangladesh — have since the 1950s been mostly ruled by authoritarian-presidential regimes and in separate periods by military governments. The affirmation of military-authoritarian forms of political power and the rise of the corresponding tradition there, were largely due to the original territorial structure of Pakistan (prior to the formation of independent Bangladesh in 1971) and also to the military support of the authoritarian regime by the USA and later by China, still being rendered to the present regime in Pakistan. Meanwhile, both in Pakistan and Bangladesh, just as in a number of other developing countries under authoritarian regimes, there exist democratic traditions and potentialities as well as forces striving for their realistion. Significantly, the more important socio-economic transformations aimed at the elimination of the colonial feudal legacy began to be implemented in Pakistan and Bangladesh in the first half of the 1970s precisely under conditions of political democracy, whereas the military regimes of the second half of the 1970s, pursued mostly conservative policies.

This experience, particularly the experience of India, shows that it is the conditions of political democracy promoting the activisation of the masses that enable a country to pursue the path of independent national development affirming democratic traditions and accumulating popular strength for further social progress.□

Iran-Iraq War

DILIP HIRO

AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI'S decision to order an all-out attack on Iraq stemmed directly from Israel's invasion of the Lebanon. Until the Israelis attacked on June 6, the leading Arab nations were working on their plan to meet the demands put forward by the Iranians, following their recapture of Khoramshahr at the end of May.

These demands were based on complete Iraqi withdrawal from the areas of Iran captured nearly two years before; the establishment of a Gulf Reconstruction Fund (largely funded by the Gulf states) to provide Iran with compensation for war damage; and the replacement of the Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein.

Tel Aviv's action enabled Saddam Hussain to transform military defeat into a magnanimous gesture. Arguing that all efforts must be concentrated against the common Zionist enemy, he first ordered an immediate, unilateral ceasefire; and then an unconditional evacuation of the occupied Iranian territory by June 30. This was insufficient to placate Khomeini, who had good reason to believe that the increasingly unpopular Saddam Hussein would be overthrown by his disillusioned colleagues on the ruling Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council.

But two days before the final withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Iran, Saddam Hussein ended any chance of a palace coup against him by dismissing all the nine members of the RCC. This left Khomeini with only one way of ousting Saddam Hussein; a military assault on his regime.

With some 150,000 troops involved in the fighting in Southern Iraq, the two countries are now engaged in the biggest military confrontation since the Second World War. Its outcome depends partly on the size, morale, firepower, and tactics of the troops on each side. It also depends on the 'Shiite factor.'

Iran is a country overwhelmingly dominated by the Shiite Muslim sect. And Khomeini, its religio-political leader, is revered by Shiites everywhere, including those in Iraq. The Iraqi Shiites, who form 55 per cent of the population, are concentrated in the south, where their holy cities, Najaf and Karbala, are situated. They are aware that Saddam Hussain and other leaders are mainly Sunni, and that relations between Shiite clergy and the Government in Baghdad have always been either distant or hostile. Soon after Iraq's invasion of Iran in September 1980, the Shiite supreme leader, Ayatollah Mohammed Bakr al Sadr, was taken from Najaf to Baghdad by the security police and secretly assassinated because he persisted in his opposition to Saddam Hussein's action.

The 'Shiite factor' inhibited Saddam Hussein's conduct of the war. Aware of the Shiite majority among his army's conscripts (and afraid of creating popular disaffection by incurring high casualties), Saddam Hussein repeatedly vetoed his general's advice to press home the military advantage of their surprise offensive in the early days of the war.

Now Teheran hopes that the continued presence of Iranian troops near Basra — a predominantly Shiite city of half a million — would embolden the long-oppressed Shiites to challenge the central authority.

Saddam Hussein's public lament over 'the collapse of Arab unity' shows that he feels isolated, and betrayed by fellow Arab rulers. His bitterness is understandable; for he invaded Iran at the behest of Saudi Arabia and America — not to mention the Iranian generals and politicians of the former Shah's regime.

This move, though, lost him the sympathy of the Soviet Union with whom Iraq had signed a 15-year treaty of friendship in April 1972. Moscow deplored Baghdad's action, arguing that the war undermined the movement for national liberation in the Middle East against imperialism and Zionism. The Russians stopped supplying weapons, or even spare parts, to Iraq — a policy which continues.

The Soviets were even-handed in supporting the Security Council's recent resolution calling for UN observers to supervise the ceasefire in the Gulf war (So did the Americans). Iran rejected it angrily. 'Where were you when our country's integrity and the basis of the Islamic Republic of Iran were under threat from the Iraqi mercenaries?" asked Iran's Foreign Minister, Ali Akbar Velayati. "Has one single word been uttered by the vast United Nations Organisation to condemn this wild aggressor?"

The Gulf state that feels most threatened by the sudden breakdown in the region's security is Kuwait. Its border is only two hours' drive from Basra. The Americans have offered consultation on security to all Gulf states. Internally, 30 per cent of Kuwait's population of 1.3 million is Shiite, and another 25 per cent is Palestinian. The Kuwaiti elite, one of the richest in the world, is nervous, and has already started transferring its capital out of the country. But in view of Washington's intimate links with Tel Aviv, Israel's invasion of Lebanon and attacks on the PLO, and the anti-American feeling prevalent among the Shiites in the Gulf states, it is hard to visualise the Kuwaiti ruler consulting the Americans about the security of his country. The Gulf is in for a long period of convulsion. (Courtesy: *New Statesman*, July 23, 1982).

WOMEN'S WORLD

Real Issues and Wrong Emphasis

BELA BUTALIA

THE quagmire of confusion and uncertainty in which one finds the women's movement in India is an indication of its inability to focus the women's question properly.

That women are becoming conscious of the need to break away from traditional behaviour patterns is obvious at least in all spheres of professional and university life. Whether they know where they are going is less obvious. The presence of a certain degree of consciousness is visible in the mass agitations against bride-burning and the anti-dowry protests. But it is also true that for every case taken up, ten are allowed to slip by, as though fighting for one case will help eradicate something that is at the very root of man-woman relationship in India.

The way each organisation of women — from the so-called 'independent' ones to those that come with party banners aloft — tries to push itself or a party forward, giving the impression that the issues taken up are just a springboard for publicity. Again, women's demonstrations, where ladies' clubs and organisations vie with one another in exhortations to the younger elements to be more vociferous in their slogans, are quite a sight! Feelings range from pious tolerance of the most aggressive women to ladylike disapproval of upraised voices and noisy demonstrations to shyness about marching on the streets.

In other words, what the women are carrying forward, while searching for a new image, is the same old image of 'womanliness' that they have been burdened with through the centuries. Those who fight against this image seem to have no other model except that of the male, aggressive and vocal to the point of exasperation. To be fair, the question of what role to take up when one gives up the old one, is one that has plagued women's movements all over the globe, and often the radicalisation of dissent has eventually led to fragmentation and defeat of the women's struggles also. Witness the case of America, where the 'tit for tat' attitude, arising out of a sense of justice for historical wrongs suffered, has led to the isolation of these groups from the mainstream of the movement. At the other extreme, there has been the myth of a 'return to domesticity' and the wife's role, as a result of the hostility shown to men, targeted at the sole oppressors of women. Within such an atmosphere, return of fundamentalist tendencies, and attempts to abrogate the victories of women, and limit their rights, like those of abortion and the right to motherhood, have become possible.

In India, we are still not facing those problems. But if the women's movement does not rise above sectarianisms and tendencies to make personal capital out of another person's problems, its path is going to be the same. The first question that comes up is: Why is it that in the case of every issue denounced by women's organisations so far, the protagonists and the victims of the incident are nowhere to be seen or heard? Instead, someone speaks for them always, and that too within the limits of her own experiences, without so much as admitting that the victim in question may have other problems to face. Again, do the women who have pushed themselves to the 'avant garde' position in the movement ever do any self-analysis or introspection of their own attitudes to their husbands, their sons and daughters? Do they pay attention to the attitude of men in general, and to that of other women? Is the aim solely to be the Messiahs of the 'poorer' classes, in an excess of missionary zeal, or is it to at least try to erase the class structure that even now divides the richer woman from the poorer one, the educated from the uneducated? I feel the crux of the problem lies here, that is, our natural rebellion against outmoded and archaic social restrictions still stinks of 'caste' distinctions of which all Indians are a product.

The inability of a poorer victim to break out of the rigours of customs and social mores is condemned, criticised and ridiculed and there are instigations to make a break, without giving them any alternative to their condition. The alternatives lie in economic independence for women, in increasing communication and breaking the isolation which is almost-like a leaden yoke on a girl from the day she is born to the day she dies. It lies in trying to create social points of congregation, where women from all walks of life can meet other women, talk about their problems, get advice, share their woes and slowly acquire a consciousness. Instigating a young tradition-bound girl to make the break is unfair when one knows that she will again be thrown back on the mercies of the same social background which has created her. We have to create forums where young men and women converge to express their ways of thinking and to subject them to scrutiny by other men and women, so as to confront values, encourage open talk, and lead to a change in thinking. Condemning existing customs without giving an alternative social value will be of little help.

We as women are handicapped in that there is no substantial theoretical study of a strategy to be adopted for bringing about changes in women's status. Though there are ample studies of the history of women's exploitation, there is no adequate strategy to make the movement come out of this situation with a new social message. But perhaps this is also an advantage, since it can provoke us into thinking of an alternative culture to the one which we have imbibed and rejecting the message of violence which has been the culture of the past. Our problem is also unique in that it does not fall within the confines of the Marxist theory of class oppression, as women of all classes, rich or poor, workers and housewives. face oppression of the same kind.

Our curse has been that of being condemned to a strictly 'private' role in society, But this very curse has created in women an acute sense of the subjective element, a heightened intuitive capacity, and very men's good organisational capabilities. Instead of aping models, or trying to compete with them on their own terms — a battle lost at the outset — we must learn to be proud of what history has, if only by accident, helped us to acquire.

It is not the 'external, authoritative' power alone which plots to hinder our emergence as full human beings: it is above all secret admiration and envy of male patterns which are the main obstacle to our development. The caste system was strictly a male development in Indian society — and the very fact that a woman belongs to no part of manush's body is proof of that. Why should we help to continue it, by distinguishing between one woman and another?☐

Dreaded Daughters

VIMAL BALASUBRAHMANYAN

But for the fact that women's organisations have protested loudly against female foeticide, the Government may not even have given it a passing thought. The following extract from *Poverty and Population Control* (1980), which I found shocking when I read the book last year, now falls neatly into place against the facts emerging in the current uproar over amniocentesis.

In one of the essays, a Swedish researcher in obstetrics and gynaecology says: "One of the most cynical attempts to isolate the poor family struggle for survival from its social and economic context — by having large families — was presented in a post-Bucharest conference in Stockholm in 1974 by Dr D.N. Pai. The notorious idea presented by Dr Pai was based on the fact that sex determination by amniocentesis...is possible in early pregnancy. Since in India the value of sons is much greater than that of daughters it would thus be possible to tell an early pregnant woman that her foetus is male or female. By telling her the sex of the foetus she is expected to be easily persuaded to undergo abortion directly upon sex diagnosis in case of a female foetus. Dr Pai seriously seems to believe that selective abortion of girls will contribute to the solution of the problem of mass poverty in India...One is tempted to ignore and neglect this incredibly cynical idea but *it is important to realise that the idea is deeply rooted within the Indian family planning establishment and has obviously already been considered by the WHO.* Abortion after sex selection is one of the most explicit examples of the desperation prevailing in countries like India where the explosive situation due to economic injustice calls for fundamental political change." (Emphasis added). The Government's condemnation of female foeticide seems to be just another piece of hypocrisy.

A recent study of peasant women in a Punjab village published in the latest issue of *Manushi* is also revealing. The researchers say that when asked what were the things that made them most happy since their marriage, a large number of the women interviewed mentioned the birth of their sons. While most of the women clearly admitted that daughters were more emotionally supportive and would be more helpful at home, than sons, their dread of having daughters was explained thus: (1) Their own lives as women and those of their mothers caused an aversion to 'producing another sufferer'. (2) Their own lives were made more miserable every time a daughter was born. (3) Daughters are a burden not only because of dowry, but even while they are part of the parental economic unit, their contribution is less because of the diminishing employment and earning opportunities for women. The survey also showed that son preference was more pronounced among the propertied class of farmers.

(Two articles on this subject were published in *Mainstream*, July 24, 1982)

Again, rich or poor, all parents today seem to want sons because 'only sons will take care of aged parents'. Side by side in the fight for a better deal for women is the need to change the tradition according to which it is 'not done' to be dependent on one's daughter.

However, son preference is perhaps not confined only to traditional patriarchal societies. In *Making Medical Choices: Who is Responsible?* (1978), American journalist Jane Stein has this to say on sex-selection and 'misuse' of medical advances: "The medical profession is uneasy about its new-found ability to detect sex for sex's sake." But then she goes on to quote one doctor who argues: "If people have the right not to have children — based on the right to have an abortion — why can't they have the right not to have a boy or not to have a girl, as they wish?" The author also describes a report on foetal sex determination tests in China which according to a Chinese medical journal were being done "to help women who desire family planning". In one instance two-thirds of 46 women carrying female foetuses elected to have abortions.

However, the American examples in the book suggest that sex determination is occasionally also done because of daughter-preference. In one instance a woman with two sons is quoted as saying that if she could be sure that the third (accidental) pregnancy would result in a daughter, she would go ahead and have the baby. The situation is a far cry from what prevails here and I mention it only as a study in contrasts. Interestingly, while sex selection is no doubt being done by those US doctors who do not consider it unethical, Jane Stein writes that most doctors feel that 'abortion for sex selection tends to trivialise medical technological advances'. This again is a far cry from the arguments put forward by Dr Pai who had presumably been authorised to speak on behalf of his Government.☐

COMMUNICATION

'Accommodation-Containment'

I wish to convey my appreciation of the excellent analysis of Indo-US relations done by Girish Mathur in his article "Accommodation-Containment" (*Mainstream*, July 24). However, I would like to point out that the author has failed to identify the subtle yet important differences between the US policy of accommodation towards India during the Chinese aggression of 1962 or Carter's visit to India in 1978 and the present US accommodation policy. While no one can possibly deny the author's contention that the big show of providing arms aid to India during the Chinese invasion was motivated to satellisation of India, it is difficult to share the view that the present US invitation to Indira Gandhi is also directed towards the same purpose.

A deeper analysis of the present international scene will clearly reveal that the present US policy of accommodation is mainly the result of the realisation on the part of US foreign policy-makers that their application of the containment policy against India is not in the larger interests of America, at least for the time being. This is because the main objective of the US policy of containment of all independent centres of power has been to protect US influence around the globe. But since Washington is now, by and large, bereft of its old ability to influence and dominate events through out the globe, it has become imperative for it to review its old policy of containment at least temporarily. The decline in US influence is evident in many ways.

There was a time when the US could have swiftly stepped in to prevent a clash between two allies, but it failed to do so in the case of Falklands crisis. Washington's subsequent turn-around in full support of Britain alienated not only Argentina, but a number of other Latin American countries. This gave an opportunity to Cuba and the USSR to exploit the situation to America's disadvantage. Likewise, US policies in Africa, which had taken a positive turn during Carter's diplomacy, are now in a mess, with Washington appearing closer than ever to the hated apartheid regime in South Africa. In the case of West Asia, the US objective of achieving "strategic consensus" by bringing together in its fold the Arabs and the Israelis, has miserably failed due to the Israeli *blitzkrieg* against the Palestinians. The US had already lost Iran after the Shah, now it cannot rely also on post-Sadat Egypt. In East Asia, a subtle but definite sign of strain is discernible in Sino-US relations, owing to the US supply of arms to Taiwan. Even in the case of US allies like Japan and the West European countries, one can clearly see that these countries have begun to assert their autonomy even if, for the present, within the framework of their alliance with the US. These countries' criticism of the arms race and US 'politics of pipeline' and their sympathy towards the Palestinians may be cited in support of this contention.

With its policies thus getting unstuck on practically every continent, it is natural that the US should take a long, hard look at India. Thus, the present phase of US policy of accommodation towards India reflects its desire to acquire India's friendship on the basis of equality, and not necessarily to satellise India, as the author seems to believe. This interpretation was strengthened by the statement of the US. Ambassador to Islamabad, Spears, when he said that India cannot be a satellite of any other country (*Nav Bharat Times*, June 23, 1982). This argument gets further credence when one reads the key recommendation of the staff report of the Foreign Relations Committee of the US Senate. The report says: "A US policy that fails to recognise the simple facts of geography and demography is short-sighted and in the long run may compromise vital US interests. Recognition of India's importance and in particular some sensitivity to its perception of itself as an independent world power could do much to improve relations at little cost." (*India Today*, July 31, 1982).

Nalini Kant Jha

New Delhi

Girish Mathur writes:

"Containment" and "accommodation" are two facets of the same policy which, as far as India is concerned, can best be summed up in Indira Gandhi's famous phrase "keeping India down"; there is no neat and clean line dividing the two, and they often overlap. They can only be distinguished by the main thrust of US policy in a given period, and the object of both is satellisation. But even colonialism did not follow the same pattern everywhere, its form being determined by many factors including geography, history and the level of development of the object-country. No other British colony had the same kind of imperial-rule as India had, and no other colonialism took the same form as British imperialism.

The kind of relationship with India which President Carter sought in 1978 had to be different from the one which Duncan Sandys and Averell Harriman sought to impose on it in 1962; India and the world had undergone a change in the intervening decade and a half. And the US itself had been humbled by the heroic people of Vietnam. India, on the contrary, had established its pre-eminence in the subcontinent in 1971 and its leading position in the non-aligned world and the Group of 77. The Third World with its demand for a new International Economic Order had become a factor in international relations; North-South relations had emerged as a new element in a world moving towards East-West detente.

Carter needed India as an honest broker in US dealings with the Third World: to that extent Pakistan had lost its importance for the US. With the unleashing of a new cold war (this is not the place to discuss what makes it a "new" as distinct from the earlier, "old", cold war), Pakistan has again become important for the US and, as pointed out in my article, on this occasion as well, containment of India is one of the objects of the supply of high technology arms to Pakistan. But, as the grandiose nature of the reception accorded to the Prime Minister at the White House and the generosity of tributes paid to her and three generations of her family (Jawaharlal, Indira and her son) shows, the United States also needs India, and needs it to the extent that it finds it necessary to indulge in sycophancy. As a number of Indian reporters covering the Prime Minister's visit have pointed out, the US needs India because of the uncertainty about its relations with a China locked in an internal power struggle, the fragility of the regime of the Generals who are its allies in Islamabad, the unwillingness of the rulers of West Asia to be seen by their people as US proxies, and above all the "loss" of Iran. India appers to the US as the only island of stability in the region.

That however does not mean, as suggested by Jha, that the US seeks a relationship with India on the basis of equality. His point will be answered by the outcome of the Prime Minister's visit. It is too early to make an assessment of the visit, but even at this stage the reports of Indian newsmen accompanying her make it clear that on no issue has the US, to quote a *Times of India* headline, "yielded ground" to India; nor has India. Obviously, the US wants a relationship basen on its own terms, on India's acquiescence in its policies for the region. Before Indira Gandhi left for Washington, US Ambassador Harry Barnes had told Indian newsmen, "My own perception is that 'what the United States is trying to do to the extent it can, is to have an influence in the area." He added, "We want to be where we can." He should have added that "we want to be where we can". with the US armada deployed in the Indian Ocean, the nuclear base at Diego Garcia posing a menace to India, the threat of financing Opposition parties and press and unleashing the CIA with its powers enhanced and secrecy of operations doubly ensured, hanging over India's head, and formal and informal military alliances encircling India. Seeking "influence" in this context amounts to satellisation, nothing else, whatever the form of satellisation.

Bankruptcy in Turkey

Sam Corbin's excellent article on Turkey (*Mainstream*, July 24) mentions that both the IMF and the World Bank have "decided to do their best to support the Turkish economy, which is being managed along approved 'free enterprise' lines." He also refers to the testimonial that the World Bank President gave to the military junta that under it the Turkish economy was "doing fine".

What is concealed in this testimonial from the World Bank is the grim reality that a large part of Turkey's banking and industrial capital has fled to the West, threatening the entire economic structure with bankruptcy. In June, Banker Castelli, one of the biggest banking groups in Turkey, closed down: it had deposits totalling more than 70 billion Turkish lire, mainly from small depositors. The president of this banking group fled to Switzerland. All this led to a panic in Turkey's financial circles and inevitably IMF has stepped in to "discipline" the economy of the country.

The military junta is naturally worried at this flight of capital together with the big shots of Big Business and Big Money. It has issued a directive to the security police not to let out of the country the directors of more than twenty top industrial and financial houses of Turkey. Even Generals are reported to be trying hard to keep their capital safely abroad, particularly in West Germany. Many of the economic experts ascribe this crisis to the exorbitantly high rates of interest imposed by the Reagan Administration.

R. Hughes

Bombay

'Take Our Ganpat . . .'

G. N. Acharya wrote the article 'Take Our Ganpat...' (*Mainstream*, June, 22, 1982) evidently with the purpose of downgrading G.D. Tapase. The illustrations cited by him indicated Tapase's poor knowledge of the English language. Shall we judge a man on the basis of his knowledge of English? Such an approach indicates a servile attitude. The sooner we give up this type of approach, the better. We are crying hoarse that we should use our own national language (Hindi) in all our activities. In some States, English language has been omitted from the curriculum of study at primary or secondary education levels. Still we have the slavish mentality of sticking to English culture. Additionally, the illustrations cited are from the early life of Tapase — maybe 30 years old.

Acharya has said that *Mainstream* is not exactly the right journal to tell old wives' tales in. Certainly it is not.

Calcutta *D.P. Sen*

DOCUMENT

SWAPO Nails Pretoria Lies

Following is the text of a statement issued by the South-West Africa People's Organisation (July 31, 1982) rebutting allegations made by the South African regime:

A few days ago South Africa's racist Minister for Foreign Affairs Botha visited Namibia and accused SWAPO nationalist leaders of having ordered the assassination of those leaders who are not members of SWAPO. We want to make our stand very clear to the world community that SWAPO is a liberation movement which is recognised as the sole authentic representative of the Namibian people by the United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity, the Non-Aligned Movement and all progressive forces the world over.

SWAPO, which was formed by the suffering people of Namibia under the leadership of Comrade Sam Nujoma, has pronounced itself ready to sign the cease-fire agreement under the UN Security Council resolution 435 of 1978. This was proved by the pre-implementation conference held in Geneva from January 7 to 14, 1981. At the conference, the South African fascist racist regime, which is occupying Namibia illegally, refused to sign the cease-fire agreement on the false excuse that it would be premature to do so.

South Africa and her US imperialist allies are continuously resorting to all manner of lies and tricks to confuse public opinion about the situation in Namibia. The UN resolution 435 on UN-supervised elections that would lead the country to independence was worked out by the Gang of Five, the so-called contact group headed by the United States.

Yet, it is these same powers, especially the Reagan Government, who are now talking of linking the implementation of the resolution to what they call withdrawal of Cuban troops in Angola. Insofar as SWAPO, Angola and the Frontline States are concerned, the presence of Cuban troops in Angola is a matter for Cuba and that country. At the talks in Geneva in 1981, as has already been stated, SWAPO had expressed its readiness to sign the cease-fire and for the implementation of that UN decision. However, at that conference too, the racists resorted to tricks aimed at scuttling the talks, coming out with the unfounded allegation that the UN was biased in favour of SWAPO. In fact they resorted to turning those talks into a propaganda platform for their puppet Turnhalle Democratic Allience, a stooge body created by the Pretoria fascist regime.

In this connection, it can be clearly seen that Roelef Botha's latest lies and slander against our National Liberation Movement and its leadership, are but part of delaying tactics to buy time, in the futile hope of resolving the situation in their favour in both the military and political spheres.

From their own statements and the warning given to the international community by the President of SWAPO, Comrade Sam Nujoma, on the dangerous plans of the Pretoria fascists aimed at undermining the UN settlement on Namibia, it is clear that they are planning full-scale aggression against the Frontline States, the People's Republic of Angola in particular, as well as to intensify their bloody repression against the people and their National Liberation Movements in Southern Africa, SWAPO and the ANC of South Africa in particular, with the sole aim of undermining the UN efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict.

We categorically condemn in strong terms and denounce the fascist regime for these unfounded lies, slander, delaying tactics and attempts to undermine the UN resolution 435.

Lastly SWAPO would like to reaffirm that, as in the Geneva talks in 1981, it is ready to sign the cease-fire and do everything to ensure full implementation of the Security Council resolution 435.

Sohan Singh Josh — A Saga of Sacrifice

I.K. GUJRAL

On the afternoon of July 29, in the bleak atmosphere of Amritsar Hospital, death, which he so often faced with open eyes, laid its hand on Sohan Singh Josh.

Dead, his powerful and cheerful spirit will continue to influence the land for which he did so much. For this remarkable man there can be no conventional praise or blame. Physically and mentally he was outsize. He was one of the most impressive political figures of his generation.

Devoted to accomplishment of a political end, that he believed to be in the interest of his country, with courage, devotion and earthy common sense, he was a completely dedicated man.

How can one sum up this prodigious figure except in terms of the history of the era that he helped in shaping?

I well remember my first meeting with him in 1937. He was contesting for membership of the Punjab Legislature and this contest had already attracted considerable notice. His opponent was a rich feudal landlord who was backed by the entrenched Unionist Party. Local administration and resources were all on the other side. But Josh's backing came from the impoverished landless and small farmers.

Some of us studying in Lahore went to campaign for him. Amritsar District of those days was very different. In the absence of irrigation the water table in these areas had fallen and the lands were mostly sandy with nominal yield. Plight of the rural poor was miserable and there were no roads. Our effort was hardly needed since a mass upsurge in his support had already been generated by the tireless work of Kisan Sabha workers.

And then at Jandiala, I saw this tall handsome man with lovely and dignified flowing beard standing on an improvised platform. He was speaking in chaste Punjabi which had a lyrical quality. Though he was in a hurry to reach the next meeting, he was equally keen to explain the role of imperialism and his concept of scientific socialism. He was not canvassing, indeed he was educating his audience. And then, to wind up, he told them that on the day of polling not only they must walk to the distant booth but also put some money in his collection box as a 'symbol of solidarity'.

He won convincingly and his box had gathered thirteen thousand rupees — all in small coins. This thrilled us and we in Punjab started looking at him taller than he physically was.

My youthful enthusiasm often took me to watch the sessions of the Punjab Assembly. The two sides of the House represented the sharp divide that we faced outside. In his admirable style, Josh was often able to add a totally new dimension to the debate. To him the Assembly provided an excellent forum to raise his powerful voice against the feudal power of the Unionist Party.

The period between 1937 and the beginning of the war was very brief. All freedom fighters were beginning to be aware of the international dimension of the national struggle. India was now encircled by fearsome enemies: Naziism, the Japanese aggression and, of course, the atrocious British rule inside.

The Congress decided to leave the Assemblies in protest against India being dragged into war. Thus ended that brief honeymoon with parliamentary illusion.

Sohan Singh Josh's political life had started much earlier. As a young boy in his early twenties he had participated in the legendary Akali fight against the British to release the holy gurdwaras from the deathly stranglehold of the Mahants. Suffering and sacrifice threw up a large number of Punjabi Sikhs who could visualise that though a battle had been won, the war against the colonial rulers was still to be seriously fought.

Sohan Singh Josh and his colleagues had a sense of history. They perceived that the struggle needed the added dimension of ideology.

The decade between 'Chauri Chaura' when Gandhiji suspended his struggle and the historic Congress session at Lahore was a crossroads in our national life. There were serious differences about 'ends and means'; about the concept of socialism and the influence of the October Revolution.

Heroes like Bhagat Singh had lost patience with the non-violent approach. The organised Left movement had now two main streams: the Socialist and the Communist. The Congress functioned as a broad platform against imperialism but gradually the Left parties though small in size, emerged as lobbies with considerable influence.

Sohan Singh Josh saw that his thinking agreed with the Communist ideology. Of course it meant more hardship and suffering at the hands of foreign rulers. But he opted for it and soon emerged as a leading light of the Communist Party. Most of his time was now spent either living 'underground' or in prison. But he and his colleagues succeeded in building a powerful Kisan and students' movement. The Communist Party's influence in these and also in the trade unions in Punjab dominated the national struggle.

My own friendship with Sohan Singh Josh, who was some twenty years my senior, started then and lasted till last week.

Today I recall my last meeting with him on the morning of May 2, this year in Mavlankar Hall.

Some of us hailing from Punjab had met there to discuss the growth and problems of Punjabi literature. This conference of writers had been fixed much earlier. Meanwhile distressing news about internal fratricidal fends in some towns and cities of Punjab had started appearing in the press. To every sensitive Punjabi it was a blow. Here we were witnessing the rich tradition of our culture, sanctified by the historic sacrifices of the gurus and sustained in the contemporary period by heroic anti-imperialist struggle, being reduced to ashes. The separatist demon was striking at the most unexpected point!

Sohan Singh Josh had not been keeping good health. A minor accident had broken his leg bone. He now needed help and crutches for moving about. But he came to the conference to express his anguish.

He was not a passive protester, all his life he had accepted challenges and he thought once again, he was called upon to stand up and be counted on the side of sanity and integrity of our proud heritage.

He could not climb to the rostrum so he spoke from his seat in his translucent sincerity. One noticed some stammer in his eloquence but his passion was undimmed. At the evening of his life he reminded us of his own 'love affair' with an abstraction which had taken a physical form by mingling with the sons of Punjab soil. This in turn had helped in building a proud tradition which, to his dismay, was being deeply injured.

By the time he ended, we all had a wet eye. It was to be our last tribute to that living legend.

In between also I had met him several times. The meeting that comes to my mind was in Moscow.

The land of the October Revolution was a symbol of his own dream. Whenever he visited that country he felt spiritually renewed.

His preoccupations in India had made it difficult for him to go to Moscow for many years. This time he came because of his ill-health which necessitated a long stay in a nursing home on the Black Sea. On release from hospital he came to spend an afternoon with us.

He had the stamp of maturity and serenity on his dignified face. With child-like simplicity he showed us his new over-size top-coat. He was hoping that soon, in better health, he would fill it again.

Soon he went into his own familiar world of books and literature. In the sanitorium he had read a lot but he had spent more time in completing his biography which indeed was a chapter of our history. He read to us some excepts. For me also it was a journey into nostalgia.

That whole afternoon he reminisced a great deal about the Ghaddar party and the Kirti movement and the historic role of Communist Party in India. He had now attained a lofty spiritual height, when he could look at human limitations with sympathy and understanding.

When he left us, my wife and I continued to talk about his warm personality that had imbibed the best of our culture. He was charming and soft — greatly mellowed and enriched by his long struggle.

Sohan Singh Josh was indeed a prodigious son of the Indian people whom one can sum up only in terms of our national Renaissance. ●

Flashback on Fortytwo (*from p. 10*)

movement gained as a result. In 1942 also the two had continuous discussion. Gandhiji had taken the position that the British should withdraw from India. If they could not entrust power to a national government they should leave the country to anarchy or God. He thought that the continuance of British rule in India and the increasing strength of the American forces would invite Japanese invasion. He calculated that the Japanese had got bogged down in China and had swallowed the entire South-East Asia. Their main concentration would be against the Americans, and if no threat of a flanking movement developed from the West (India) the Japanese might not embark on a new adventure. Even if they did, Gandhiji thought that a free India would so catch the imagination of the people that they would be able to resist the Japanese onslaught. Gandhiji was so determined that he proposed to undertake a fast unto death and self-immolation followed by similar fasts and self-immolation by his closest followers.

Jawaharlal, although his emotions impelled him the other way, was convinced by the deadly logic of Gandhiji, his innate self-respect and sense of discipline. Nothing illustrates this better than the article he wrote in the *National Herald* on June 30, 1942, which made it clear that he was not contemplating a break with Mahatma Gandhi and that he would not join the Rajaji campaign. He declared that the empire must go, not only because it was evil but because it was a hindrance to victory of the progressive forces in the world. "*That is why the cry of 'Quit India' becomes a vital, urgent and essential cry for victory.*" Even more revealing is his letter to Sampurnanand, who was himself worried over Gandhiji's thinking. Jawaharlal admitted that he also was worried and distracted beyond measure. He continued:

> "Yet gradually I have come to the conclusion that there is no other way out. I am convinced that passivity is fatal now. Our soldiers will largely surrender to the Japanese, our people will submit to them. There is only one chance of changing this and that is by some action now. The risk is there. I hate anarchy and chaos but somehow in my bones I feel some terrible shake-up is necessary for our country. Otherwise we shall get more and more entangled in communal and other problems, people will get throughly disillusioned and will merely drift to disaster" (*Nehru — Selected Works*, Volume Twelve).

This time again Jawaharlal compromised with his leader and mentor. Again the nation was the gainer. The objective situation and the obstinacy of British imperialism forced Jawaharlal to support Gandhiji's plan of struggle. Gandhiji prepared draft instructions for civil resisters. This document was dated August 4, 1942. This was to be an all-out campaign, including hartals, withdrawal from government services, satyagraha and even no-tax campaign. Every Indian, in the event of the arrest of the national leaders, should obey the dictates of his or her conscience and offer such resistance as he or she could. He laid down only one condition: that the people should not have recourse to violence. Gandhiji knew that a movement of this magnitude might not remain absolutely peaceful. So he made it clear that that outbreak of disturbances would not, this time, deter him from pursuing his programme.

And so the AICC met at the Gawalia Tank Maidan in Bombay in the second week of August. I attended that meeting: I was only 20 years old then; I had started political and mass work in Khandesh at the end of 1939. In 1940 I had been sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment on account of my anti-war speeches. After my release I had resumed my work in the two districts of Khandesh. We young socialists had become convinced, after the entry of Japan into the war, and, especially, after the fall of Singapore, that the country could not be saved from a Japanese take-over except by forcing British withdrawal through a mass struggle. In February 1942, on the insistence of Sane Guruji, I accompanied Vinoba Bhave on his tour of Khandesh. I remember I had asked him only one question: Can we attain Swaraj without a big mass struggle in the immediate future? The spiritual heir of Mahatma Gandhi said that we should cencentrate on constructive programmes and village self-sufficiency and the British rule would automatically disappear. No struggle was necessary. I felt heart-broken. If this was the view of Vinobha, I thought, Gandhiji also must be thinking on the same lines. My delight knew no bounds when Gandhiji mounted his offensive after the collapse of the Cripps Mission and the introduction of American troops into India. We began our preparations in right earnest, and after the meeting of the District Congress Committee at Shirpur in Khandesh we left for Bombay. With the help of Yusuf Mehrally, the then Mayor of Bombay, whose fondness for the young people was proverbial, we managed entry into the AICC pandal itself. By the time Gandhiji began his inspired speech in Hindi (followed by a speech in English) I and my friends had edged very close to the platform. I was a witness to that grand moment in India's history. I was a critic of some of Gandhiji's views, but by that inspired utterance late in the night he captivated me and millions of young people.

Gandhiji and the national leaders were not allowed formally to start the struggle. Gandhiji had declared that he would meet the Viceroy and make one final effort at an honourable compromise. In the early hours of August 9, 1942, the British Government arrested those leaders and they remained in jail virtually for the next three years. I do not wish to relate here the brave deeds of our people. They form a glorious chapter in the history of our freedom movement. If Gandhiji had not given the Quit India call, I have no doubt that our freedom would have been delayed. I was not happy about Jawaharlal's activities in the first half of 1942. We thought that he was launched on a disastrous course. But he controlled himself in time for which I pay him a tribute. ☐

EPI: Mismanagement and Worse

SASHANK

The fiftieth report of the Committee on Public Undertakings (1981-82) on Engineering Projects (India) Limited reveals the glaringly unbusinesslike manner in which the company has squandered crores of rupees without any regard for public accountability. Even simple rules of business were thrown overboard, and "the gainers in the process seem to be the clients, middlemen and sub-contractors besides some unscrupulous officials of the company itself." It was truly a *carte blanche* style of functioning where everybody gained something at the cost of the state exchequer.

The company's account discloses loss of the order of Rs 21.05 crores during 1978-81. There was also net foreign outflow to the extent of Rs 41.51 crores during the last three years of operation of the company. In the case of two major foreign projects — Ain Baghze Housing Project at Kuwait taken up in 1976 and the Council of Ministers Building Project, Baghdad, the losses anticipated now are Rs 45.25 crores.

In addition, according to the report of the Committee (PUC), there were heavy claims lodged by the sub-contractors/associates of the company as well as the penalties imposed by the clients for the delays in completion of the projects. Claims to the extent of Rs 102.51 crores were lodged. Most of these claims were however rejected by the company. Taking into account the anticipated completion dates of the projects, the report says, the maximum penalty liability of the company had been to the extent of Rs 42 crores. Of this, penalty to the extent of Rs 38.88 crores had already been imposed by the clients up to September 30, 1981.

The company had taken up construction works in Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi. Of these, the major projects were the Ain Baghze Housing Project in Kuwait (original value Rs 230 crores) and the Council of Ministers Building Project, Baghdad (the IDBI-approved tender value was reduced from Rs 53.24 crores to Rs 32.85 crores). As in September 1981, the company had on hand projects of the value of Rs 824 crores. Sixty-eight per cent of the total value of orders were for the overseas projects.

Though the original objective of the company was to develop 'profitability' for the setting up of industrial projects in the home market, the company, without first developing the necessary infrastructure, embarked upon large civil construction work abroad. While giving evidence before the Committee, the chairman and managing director of the company conceded the fact that the company did not have much experience of handling such big housing projects. But this was not the only cause of the losses. Mismanagement of company affairs and the modus operandi, the report says, were the main reasons for the massive losses.

The EPI was established in 1970. The PUC in its conclusions says the EPI "embarked upon very large civil construction works abroad in a big way in 1976 without developing the infrastructure necessary for it". The report refers to the losses in the period 1978-81 arising from the process that began in 1976. Incidentally it may be mentioned that in 1976-78, Mohammed Fazl was Chairman and Managing Director of the EPI; Fazl is now a member of the Planning Commission. O.P. Narula took over in 1978 and his tenure ended in 1981.

The company kept a very low profit margin of 5 per cent. The reason for this was that the company went in for sub-contracting. Actually, there were no guidelines. That apart, the question of national prestige also affected the profit margin. When asked by the Committee the reason for reducing the quotation for building the Council of Ministers Building in Baghdad to Rs 32.85 crores, the chairman and managing director gave an interesting reply — he said that the project was considered to be very prestigious because it was known that the non-aligned summit of 1982 would be held in the building, so everybody wanted that the name of EPI having built it should be there so that "we can get a good name". Also, EPI and the Indian Embassy in Iraq wanted that "we must try and get the contract", the company told the Committee.

The company spent Rs 3.58 crores as "sponsorship fee and service charges" during 1976-81 for its various projects. When asked for the reasons for the "sponsorship", the company told the Committee that in most of the countries in the Middle East there was a law under which the company must have local sponsors before it went in for a contract. "Otherwise it cannot operate in that country." The fee varied from 2.5 per cent to 5 per cent. In some countries it was as much as 20 per cent of the tender value. In selecting the sponsors the company took the advice of the Indian Embassy. "Usually the sponsors are very influential people .... he helps us to get the work done... he also performs the duty to get the bills passed," the company's chairman and managing director said in evidence before the Committee. As on March 31, 1981, the company had five sponsors in respect of the overseas projects.

Secondly, though the tender conditions provided that the contractor shall not engage any agent for the project, an amount of Rs 86.04 lakhs was paid to an agent for the Kuwaiti project from the company's account. Eventually the agent rendered no services for the project, the report says. In addition to this the company paid to an agent employed by Fujita Corporation — the main contractor for the Kuwaiti project — an amount of Rs 34.72 lakhs. The EPI was the sub-contractor for the Sief Palace Area Building Project. For all this no advance approval was obtained from the company's board of directors. The managing director admitted before the Committee that the company did not receive much help from the sponsors. They were not even in a position to "bail them out" of difficulties, he said.

The Committee also found out that even in respect of home projects the company had paid a sponsorship fee of Rs 6.20 lakhs during 1976-81.

The Kuwaiti housing project work was awarded to "small-sized contractors" who did not have sufficient experience of handling overseas construction projects. In case of the Council of Ministers Building Project, the Committee was informed that when the contract value was reduced to Rs 32.85 crores, it could not get good contractors. Eventually two labour contractors were employed and the company took up responsibility for the purchase of materials. When asked to explain why it was necessary to employ sub-contractors/associates, the Secretary of the Ministry of Industry (Department of Heavy Industry) simply stated that for "such a large order the company could not have done it alone."

The company paid large amounts of advances to the sub-contractors. As on March 31, 1981, the total amount of advances was Rs 86.90 crores, of which Rs 65.67 crores was in the shape of unsecured advances. This was done even when there was no such provision in the contract. The company took the plea before the Committee that this was done "to meet the deficit in the cash flow". The sub-contractors had no overdraft facilities, so it was done to meet their overdraft requirements, it said. Again, the project managers and the chairman and managing director did not obtain advance approval of the committee of directors which had been specially constituted for the overseas projects. In most of the cases it was *ex post facto*.

In making the advances the company ignored the directions given by the committee of directors that the advances should be made only against bank guarantee and only if an equal amount in rupees had been deposited by the sub-contractors in India. It was also directed that the ad hoc advance would carry interest at the market rate. When the managing director was asked by the Committee whether any interest was charged from the sub-contractors who had taken advances, he replied that the whole thing was in dispute because they had refused to pay the interest.

In addition to the sponsorship fee, the company paid an amount of Rs 7.27 crores largely to the intermediaries out of two funds, namely, PCI-EPI common fund and EPI-Fujita fund which were kept outside the accounts of the company without any audit. The mismanagement is mind-boggling. An amount of Rs 651.33 lakhs was spent out of the fund, out of which payment of commission to three parties alone accounted for Rs 583.79 lakhs. A sum of Rs 1.25 crore was credited to the account of a party who was actually not an agent. Part of the payment was released even before it was due.

About Rs 55,000 per month was paid as salary and house rent for the project director at Baghdad.

The director (finance) told the Committee that sundry expenses or service charges were not defined in the board meetings. Actually, he said, he did not even know whether they were discussed at the meetings at all. Asked whether there was any agreement with the parties to whom an amount of Rs 5.84 crores had been paid, the director (finance) referred to a letter dated May 12, 1976, from the chairman and the managing director to one of the agents which inter alia stated as follows:

> I hereby propose to offer your organisation 1 per cent of our contract value as fee for various services to be rendered by you at various stages of implementation of the project.

The nature of the services were not specified in the letter. The director informed the Committee that he did not know what services were actually rendered by these people. The mode of payment to such persons was also bizarre. The Committee was informed that bearer cheques were drawn from time to time for all the payments towards agency commission except in a case in which an amount of about Rs 1.25 crore was transferred to a bank in Bahrain for credit to the account of a party who was not actually an agent. But receipt for this amount was given by the agent. Further the witness said: "It cannot be said whether the agents received the amount of commission in cash or by bearer cheque issued by the company. The receipts obtained from the recipients of the agency commission also do not indicate whether the payment was received by cheque or in cash since there is no reference about this in the said receipts. In one case, however, an amount of Rs 37.50 lakhs was paid through a/c payee cheques."

When asked to state why these payments were called promotional, the director (finance) stated that it was because their vouchers could not be obtained. After crores of rupees had been released in this manner, the project director simply left the company.

Climb-Down on Tarapur

(Continued from page 7)

> problems with supplies from any country...We appear to work best in a crisis situation.

In mid-1981, Sethna also informed the American negotiators that the fuel supplied by the US to Tarapur was sufficient to keep the station run on MOX until 1989-90. The cut-off date for the original US supply arrangement is 1993.

During negotiations, various modifications to the Cooperation Agreement were proposed by the US side to ensure that the American 'vested rights' and 'rights in perpetuity' were secured even under fresh fuel supply arrangements. A major US concern seems to have been the likely repercussions for the US non-proliferation strategy arising out of Indian withdrawal from the IAEA safeguards. Hence the US anxiety to see that India is bound to the safeguard ties. A US State Department fact-sheet prepared for Congressional hearings on Tarapur fuel shipment in 1980 states:

> India has indicated that the refusal of the United States to provide fuel needed for the Tarapur facility will relieve it of its corresponding obligations under the relevant agreements. In that event...India might also remove the Tarapur facility from its present coverage under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency — a precedential step with ominous implications for the entire structure of IAEA safeguards. This would be the first case anywhere in which IAEA safeguards were withdrawn.

The Department of Atomic Energy consistently opposed keeping alive the Cooperation Agreement in any form. Dr Sethna once remarked that the Agreement "stands or falls as a whole." At the end of the negotiations, Sethna's delegation is known to have recommended that, in the absence of any perceivable common ground for an "orderly" or mutually agreeable termination of the Cooperation Agreement and in view of the attempt by the American side to stretch out the process of disengagement, there seemed to be no alternative for India but to act decisively to free itself from the non-performing agreement.

The negotiations that took place in 1981 were the offshoot of an Indian communication sent to US in January 1981 which almost amounted to an ultimatum:

> The Government of India had regarded the decision of the President of the United States to authorise both the overdue fuel shipments for the Tarapur plant as a positive development for the continued implementation of the Cooperation Agreement of 1963. Subsequently, only the first of the overdue consignments was shipped and the second consignment has been withheld and made subject to conditions extraneous to the Cooperation Agreement of 1963. The position of the Government of India has already been conveyed to the Government of the United States on December 2, 1980, by the agent of the Government of India in the United States.
>
> 2. The Government of India on several occasions reiterated their inability to consider acceping any conditions outside the framework of the Cooperation Agreement of 1963. The Government of India have exercised considerable restraint in the past but regret that they will not be in a position to accept further delays and uncertainties in fuel shipments for the Tarapur station. Fuel shipments for the Tarapur Station have to be ensured on the basis of the agreed Kiefer-Last schedule for the entire duration of the Cooperation Agreement of 1963 and in accordance with its provisions. If the United States Government are not in a position to perform their obligations, and if no positive assurances in this regard are received from them by the end of February 1981, the Government of India would be constrained to make alternative arrangements for the efficient and continuous operations of the Tarapur utility.
>
> 3. The Government of India have also put up with operational constraints and paid economic penalties due to the delay by the Government of the United States in cooperating with the Government of India for completing the "joint determination" exercise initiated in 1968 for the reprocessing of the spent fuel produced at the Tarapur Station by a visit to the Indian reprocessing facility constructed for this purpose. It had been agreed in the Cooperation Agreements of 1963 that such reprocessing may be performed in Indian facilities "upon a joint determination of the parties that the provisions of Article VI of this Agreement may be effectively applied."
>
> 4. The application of the safeguards provisions of the Cooperation Agreement of 1963 was transferred to the IAEA by the Trilateral Safesuards Agreement of 1971. Pursuant to Section 10 of the Trilateral Agreement, to which the United States is a party, the Government of India and the IAEA have on August 12, 1980, concluded the necessary Subsidiary Arrangements for the application of the safeguards provisions of the Cooperation Agreement of 1963 to the special nuclear material produced at the Tarapur Plant. In accordance with these arrangements with the IAEA, the Government of India have decided to shortly commence the reprocessing of the special nuclear material produced at the Tarapur plant. The Government of India will be prepared to offer to the Government of United States any time before the end of February 1981, opportunity to confirm during a visit to the plant that the provisions of Article VI of the 1963 Agreement, covered by the Subsidiary Arrangements with IAEA, will be effectively applied.

The US Administration, though it was getting increasingly convinced about the only available option of mutual termination, continued to restrain India from any unilateral abrogation by giving an impression that a negotiated termination could be arranged. It was in pursuance of this that three rounds of negotiations were held in New Delhi and Washington in April, July and November 1981. Though the US side continued to harp on the theme of continuance of IAEA safeguards, it was clear that some sort of a mutually agreed termination was imminent. It was then that Foreign Minister Narasimha Rao told Parliament that what remained to be done to the Indo-US agreement was to arrange a "decent burial."

It appears that the new US Administration, not particularly known for its non-proliferation frenzy, as was the case with the Carter Administration, was somewhat flexible and thus probably India could have managed a respectable end to the Indo-US nuclear relationship. The chief US negotiator, James Malone, had confirmed that "the US has decided not to press approval for reprocessing of the spent fuel" and also promised to be responsive to India's "sensitivities" on Tarapur. He was prepared to accept "a low key and unobtrusive arrangement with the IAEA, with no US involvement."

It was subsequently, probably sensing a mood of compromise in New Delhi, that Malone offered a carrot in the form of a third country source for uranium (either USSR or France — the USA preferred France) and at the same time also brandished a stick in the form of certain repercussions on economic assistance to India. The Indian officials promptly rejected such suggestions: and the Indian stand as contained in the following excerpts continued to be valid till the end of the last round of negotiations in November 1981 in Washington:

Under Article VI of the 1963 agreement, it is clearly mentioned that India accept safeguards only because it is limiting its resources of fuel to US supplies of enriched uranium ... The safeguards are the result of the supplies of US fuel ... The question of new source of fuel for Tarapur does not arise at the moment, as we intend to run the plant with mixed oxide fuel, utilising plutonium obtained from the reprocessing of the spent fuel ...

We have the right to abrogate the agreement unilaterally on grounds of material breach...There is a limit to which we can go on being accommodating. Apart from pressing technical reasons we are also answerable to our public opinion...

At our Parliamentary Consultative Committee meeting there was unanimity on the point that we would not accept continuing obligations under the termination of the 1963 agreement. If India were to go in for a new source of supply, safeguards could have been considered. This is ruled out since the supplies are to be indigenous...

It was then that the Political Affairs Committee

RETREAT ON NUCLEAR POLICY

Following is the text of the editorial in The Hindu, *August 2, 1982, on the latest Tarapur accord.*

THE Skeletal Agreement announced in Washington on the future of the Tarapur atomic power station raises some troubling questions about the consistency and course of India's nuclear energy policy. The essence of the political deal struck on the occasion of the Prime Minister's visit appears to be this: Preserving the 1963 Indo-US agreement for nuclear cooperation as the control framework, France would supply enriched uranium fuel for the Tarapur reactors in place of the United States as the exculsive supplier. In the first place, it entails the continuation of external safeguards administered by the IAEA at Tarapur — on the reactors, on the spent fuel, and of course on the fuel to be supplied by the West European power. During the three rounds of negotiations on the subject in 1981 (in April, July and November), the Indian delegation headed by the Chairman of the Atmomic Energy Commission, Dr H.N. Sethna, took its stand on the basic position — embodied in Article VI of the 1963 agreement — that the acceptance of safeguards at Tarapur is conditional on (or in consideration of) the external fuel supply and that, once the latter condition is breached, "nothing survives". This position was developed in linkage with the longstanding principle — established during the time of Bhabha — that safeguards or restrictions on specific nuclear facilities or operations or material may be accepted, realistically, through mutual agreement between India and the external supplier, but strictly in return for external supply arrangements. The US side was also informed that a top-level decision had been taken to run Tarapur on the mixed oxide (MOX) fuel developed indigenously, and that there was full confidence in the technical and operational viability of the process. The new decision to let the US continue in the role of a sleeping partner — who, however, is insistent on his rights surviving from the time he was an active participant — is a near-complete reversal of the basic negotiating position. Not only is the indigenously developed MOX route (available only after a considerable investment) ruled out for the immediate future through this decision; a dent has been made in the fundamental nuclear energy stance that — as part of the refusal to accept the discriminatory global nuclear bargain — India will not accept externally instituted safeguards or restrictions on its nuclear activities except as a quid pro quo for external supply.

It might be argued from an official stand point that, even if a concession has been made in the policy stance, in operational terms a new external source of fuel supply has been gained for Tarapur — that too, without treading on the corns of the ex-supplier. In that case, three kinds of questions must be answered. In the first place, if that was the "pragmatic" course, why was it not agreed to when the US side pressed an alternative external source of fuel on India in the 1981 rounds and stubbornly opposed the MOX route? (The technique of using the control framework of the 1963 agreement for facilitating a new external supply relationship was proposed secretly by the leader of the US delegation Mr. James Malone, on the eve of the third round of Tarapur talks in November 1981 — if only as a way to perpetuate IAEA safeguards.) Secondly, why has the non-supplier been allowed to get away with maintaining (publicly) that it can continue in effect to block the reprocessing of the spent fuel by not going through the exercise of "joint determination" of the safeguardability of the Tarapur reprocessing plant? Mrs. Gandhi herself has contested the US position by asserting that "we have the right to reprocess" (under IAEA safeguards), but the point is that the US has even backed out of its earlier negotiating offer to give up its objection to reprocessing as part of an overall settlement. Letting rival interpretations of the rights over reprocessing have it out cannot be treated as an academic or legal exercise — especially because the storage of the spent fuel poses a serious operational problem and could (unless tackled boldly in time) turn into a sensitive public issue. Finally, what exactly will be the terms and external restrictions asked for by France, in return for the low-enriched uranium fuel supplied? Will a "pursuit clause" be introduced, which means external safeguards chasing the derivative material to any facility (such as Kalpakkam) where it might be used? Will the new supplier demand a "veto" on reprocessing the fuel supplied, a right claimed as a matter of standard formula under the new nuclear suppliers guidelines?

The compromise on nuclear policy issues apart, the failure to answer these questions concretely seems to involve vacillation and uncertainty on the operational front. The general agreement — no doubt at variance with all that the nuclear scientists and technologists primarily involved might have been working for all these weeks and months — is thus a politically driven event. It would be interesting to see what precisely are the returns, in the political, economic or development field, for a major policy movement in this direction.

of the Cabinet decided to announce abrogation of the agreement in Parliament. The announcement date was, however, postponed in view of the then proposed, but later aborted, visit in December 1981 of the US Secretary of State, Alexander Haig.

What happened thereafter in the corridors of power is a matter of conjecture. However, in the same month (December 1981), Prime Minister Indira Gandhi addressed the Parliamentary Consultative Committee and laid down two essential conditions for the ending of the Cooperation Agreement. The new position altered the official posture on Tarapur substantially.

The first condition set forth by the Prime Minister was that a decision on the agreement would have to ensure continued operation of the Tarapur power station. Secondly, such a decision would have to be taken within the context of "the national interest and overall bilateral relations with the US."

While the first condition was interpreted as lingering doubts, at least at the political level, about the efficacy of the MOX fuel, the second was definitely taken as a climb-down on the Indian demand for termination of 1963 agreement. The ground was thus laid for the deal in Washington.

But the Tarapur drama does not end here. Important questions are still left unanswered; yet, on these issues depend the future of not only Tarapur but much of our nuclear effort:

(i) Is there going to be an explicit delivery schedule for uranium which is worked into the agreement providing for heavy penalties for default?

(ii) Will the US undertake a fresh commitment that the spares required for Tarapur specially for its safety system, would not be blocked in future and that all pending shipments would be cleared forthwith?

(iii) Can we embody in unambiguous terms India's right to reprocess the spent fuel at Tarapur into any future agreements?

(vi) Can we also ensure that as a result of new negotiations and new arrangements on safeguards, no additional burden is placed on Indian facilities such as the pursuit clause, etc.?□

President's Powers (*from page 17*)

Sabha. He started constitutionally after the resignation of Morarji Desai, and requested the Leader of the Opposition, Y.B. Chavan, to form the Government. Then he, on the advice of Chavan, asked Charan Singh to form the government, and later on, without making Charan Singh prove his majority in the Lok Sabha, as originally proposed, kept him as "caretaker" Prime Minister for more than six months. He thus showed the enormous power the President has in appointing the Prime Minister and dissolving the Lok Sabha in certain circumstances. When he appointed Charan Singh, he had been assured of majority support for the latter in Parliament but soon the support had disappeared and there was a demand for dissolution which Reddy accepted. A President, going by this example, can continue not one but many Prime Ministers till the time comes for convening Parliament according to the Constitution. This was not intended by Dr. Ambedkar or his supporters of the British model.

The President has a certain judicial power also. That is the power to grant clemency or pardon. Mercy petitions to the President are dealt with by the Home Ministry and the President has to consent. Dr Rajendra Prasad did not want to be party to the execution of any innocent person, so he scrutinised every mercy pettition, questioned the Home Ministry on any defect he found and then passed orders. But this practice ceased with him.

Jawaharlal Nehru has said that the office of President may have no powers but has great dignity and authority. Leaving aside his ceremonial and other functions and duties, the President is the symbol of national unity. But in the final analysis, it is mainly his inherent goodness and greatness, his love and understanding, knowledge of people and problems that will make an ideal President in a country like ours. □

Indira Gandhi's US Trip (*from page 5*)

low-key business. While little that is tangible can be said to have been achieved in removing Indo-US differences — a prospect which can never be realised so long as Washington remains a prisoner of its own concept of master-client relations in its dealings with the Third World — one has to be on the look-out for subsequent follow-up developments. The long-standing allergy about India in official US has not disappeared though it may have been reduced. Indira Gandhi's performance in USA may have been a setback for those who wanted her to chime in with Washington's stand on every issue pertaining to world developments but it is equally true that these conservative elements have been hardly ousted. In the weeks and months to come, the tussle will certainly continue between the contending forces, both openly and *sub rosa*. What can be said safely is that despite all the demonstration of goodwill particularly by the common millions in USA, the direction of Indo-US relations has not yet been firmly set. (*August 4*)

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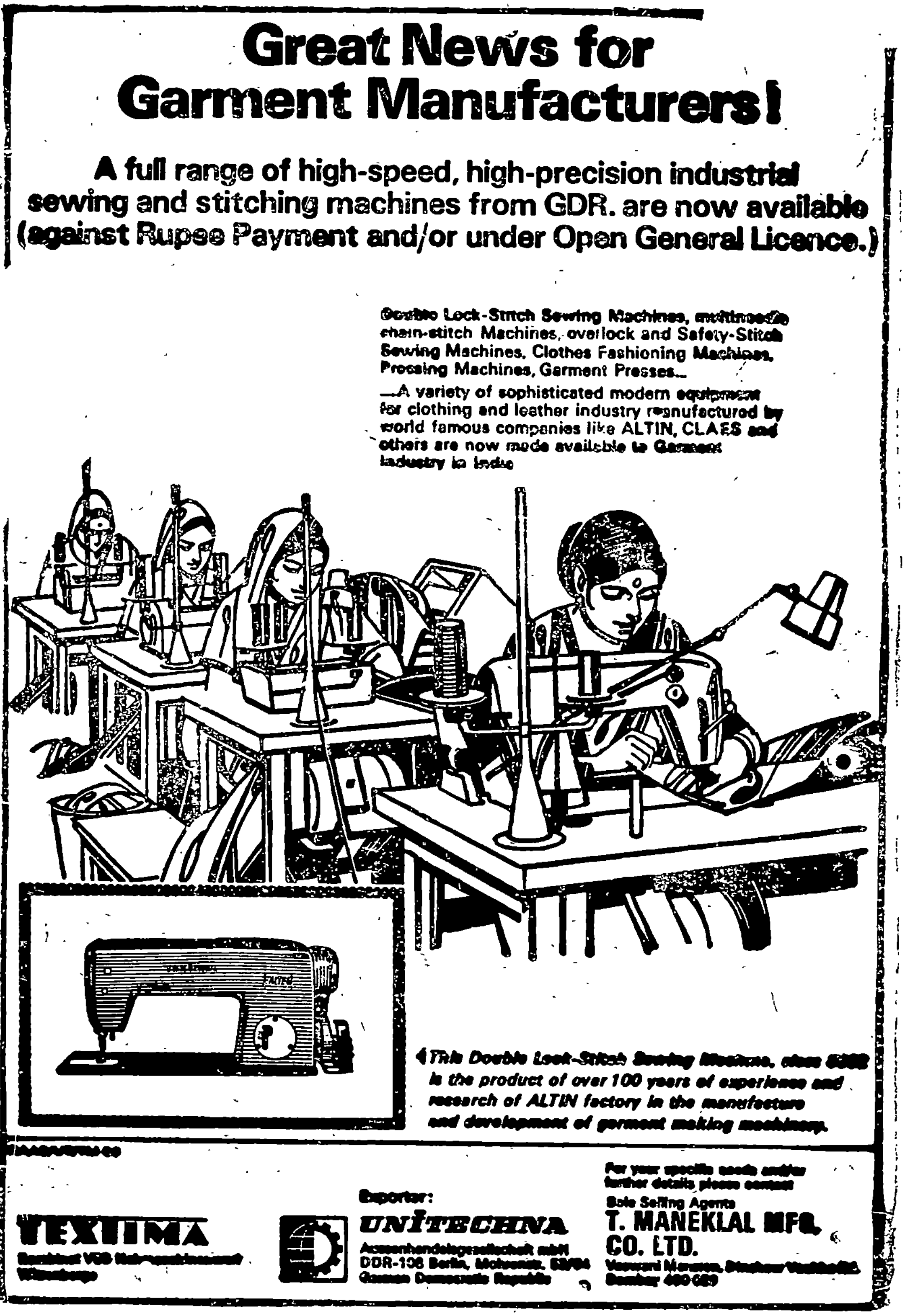

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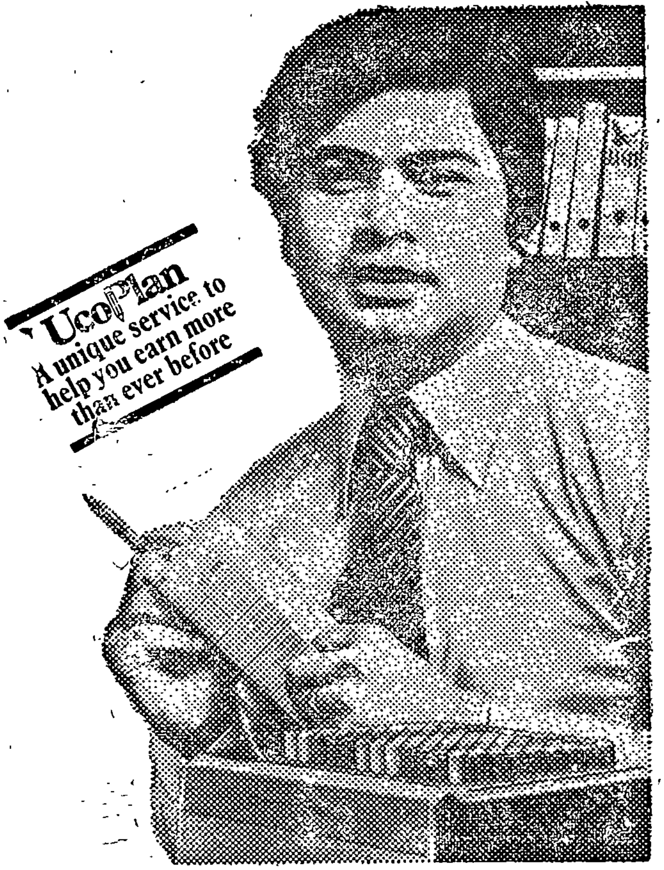
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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Towards New Horizons

THE remembrance of the day when the sun set on the British Raj in this land of ours is more than a mere ritual to be gone through year after year. No doubt it is the day when one feels proud of being a son or daughter of India, proud of having been part and parcel of that vast concourse of humanity that forced the alien ruler out and unfurled the flag of freedom over this country which used to be described even in the British-prescribed textbooks as the epitome of the world.

In the welter of crashing values and bitter frustration at the attainment of freedom having yet been unable to eliminate poverty, of petty squabbles and vast tasks still left undone, it is but natural for us to lose the perspective that beckons this great nation. Sometimes one is overwhelmed at the outbursts of insensate regionalism. At other times, one is engulfed in the stifling odour of casteism and communalism. And at yet other times, one is shocked at the sight of brute force beating down the underprivileged. Corruption stinks to high heavens and the respectable and the eminent in society are found to be indulging in it without the least iota of shame, even when they are bereft of conscience.

All these dark patches on the fair face of free India need to be emphasised on this birthday of our independence, for these stand out as an inventory of jobs yet undone. But they must not cloud our vision. The smog of deception and falsehood, of pettiness and intrigues, has to disappear and the sun has to shine bright and clear. This nation of nearly seven hundred millions cannot be made to forget its destiny by small-town operators or big bullies and black-money bosses.

If our political life is polluted by discredited politicians, if those who were once committed to the task of ushering in a new and equitable social order have abandoned their responsibility through folly, ignorance or mental atrophy, there need be no cause for dejection. In the life of a nation, as of an individual, there come patches of dark or grey, but they do not last long if the nation is strong in its moral fibre.

Our politicians may have proved miserably wanting, but not so our people — the

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millions who toil and produce the wealth of the nation. The genius of our people, the riches embedded in our soil, the calibre of the nation with its heritage that few people can claim — all these have made India great, and out of this chemistry shall come new leaders, new giants among men and women whom not only this nation but the whole world will look up to.

In the comity of nations, India has arrived. In the last few days many in the corridors of power and in the quadrangle outside, have noted the respect and deference with which the rulers of USA, claiming to be the mightiest in the world, have treated India's Prime Minister. Gone are the airs of a superior race, gone are the patronising attitudes. Even when they disagree with the policies and perceptions of this country, they can no longer afford to be slighting or express their annoyance. This is not because a Reagan or a Shultz or the entire American establishment have suddenly changed their views. The simple truth is, they can no longer ignore or bypass this great country.

This episode is a symptom of the new times which we are about to enter. We have to cast away the mentality of a camp-follower. For we, on our own, have to stand up and survey the world.

History has seen great epochs of nations and also their decline. It is time to discern new signs, new signals. Great empires have collapsed, and now we are to witness in the years to come, the decline of the mightiest among the existing powers. Those who are dismissed as lumpens of the world and lumped in disdain as the Third World have become wide awake.

In the epoch about to open up, the Third World is destined to come up to the stage, and at the centre of that stage is the place for India, the most mature in experience and expertise, and at its command a sufficient level of development to establish its position in the company of peers of strength and vitality.

To attain this position in the world of tomorrow, India has not only to set its own house in order but to develop a new culture that helps to eliminate the sources of conflict, in which the millions of have-nots have to get their due place and power, and which will enable its sons and daughters to conquer new horizons of science and technology, to make our beautiful land a better place to live in.

On this Fifteenth of August, let the nation dedicate itself to such a movement of regeneration.

N.C.

COMMENTARY

Fight the Gag

C.N.C.

IF the Bihar Bill to gag the press has caused greater furore all over the country than similar laws enacted earlier in some States (Tamilnadu made its law more stringent only last year), there are two reasons.

First, most Governments in Bihar, always a badly administered State, have been highly allergic to criticism. Repeated exposure of maladministration and inefficiency — some issues like the Bhagalpur blindings and the plight of undertrials had to be taken note of by the Supreme Court — has, instead of leading to introspection at high levels and correction at all levels, led to increasing hostility towards the press and individual journalists. Indeed, the State Government has been engaged in a running battle with certain newspapers in Patna.

Secondly, Jagannath Mishra has left no one in doubt that he has every intention of making maximum use of the draconian provisions of the Bill, if it gets the President's assent. There is no reason to doubt that once the Bill gets into the statute book the present State Government will go all out to harass, intimidate, humiliate and punish journalists, and even non-journalists like hawkers, to achieve its purpose of suppressing facts about the administration and individuals in power even when such facts need to be brought to light in the public interest.

The three-member team sent to Bihar by the Editors' Guild, whatever one may think of the bias in its composition, has come out with a telling report which clearly shows (a) that the Chief Minister has no case worth the name against the press or any section of it; (b) that the State Government's sole aim is to intimidate and frighten those whose job it is to ferret out information which the administration wants hidden from the public and place such information before the public; and (c) that Jagannath Mishra considers all existing laws in this sphere to be *bakwaas* and wants to put fetters forged in his own factory. "Yellow journalism", even if the term has no precise definition, is easily recognised, but the Bihar Government's intention is not to deal with the "yellow press" alone but with all its critics, including many outside the press, even if the press is the immediate target.

From the replies he gave to questions from the Guild team it is clear that he is angry with the press but is utterly ignorant about the laws in force to deal with writings of the kind on which Article 19(2) of the Constitution says "reasonable restrictions" can be imposed. For example, till the Guild representatives pointed out his mistake, Mishra was not only under the impression that the notorious Press (Objectionable Matter) Act of the early fifties was still in force but went to the absurd length of claiming that his own and the previous Government had filed cases under that long dead law during the last five years!

In the early fifties the country had leaders of considerable stature with great moral authority but despite that, the Press (Objectionable Matter) Act was widely and angrily denounced as obnoxious and as an attack on the independence of the press. At that time fear of misuse of the powers assumed by the Government was, it must be said in fairness, far less justified than it is today in respect of not only the Bihar Bill but also in the case of the laws in Tamilnadu, Orissa, and Jammu and Kashmir. There

grossly indecent or scurrilous matters intended for blackmail, punishable". Of course the press as well as representatives of public opinion can be faulted for not raising hell over the Tamilnadu and Orissa laws. The significance of the trend for the whole country was evidently not adequately appreciated — not even in the case of Tamilnadu where after tightening of the measure last year there has been persistent harassment of pressmen and publishers.

But that does not mean we should take the Bihar Bill lying down. If we have been lax in the past, we have the duty of correcting ourselves now, not only in the interest of proper functioning of the press but in the public interest. It is for this reason that the forceful criticism of the Bihar Bill by pressmen as well as public men including Opposition members and even several Congress-I personalities, should be welcomed warmly.

For the same reason, Union Home Minister Venkataraman's ominous observations in Parliament on August 7 are shocking. It is amazing that Venkataraman with his background should have gone out of his way to defend Jagannath Mishra's indefensible Bill, though the houses of Parliament have been told that the Centre has not yet received the Bill for purposes of securing Presidential assent. The Home Minister did say that the Government would give the Bill "judicious" consideration when the stage came for assent. He could have

acquiesce in suppression of inconvenient sections of the press without itself coming directly into the picture. This is not a healthy situation. Venkataraman's performance, reminiscent of his earlier spirited defence of Antulay in the cement scandal, has not added to his stature or to the credibility of the Central Government which in any case was not even consulted if what Information Minister Vasant Sathe says is correct. And Vasant Sathe, who has been waxing eloquent about the need for the press to regulate itself, should feel ashamed of having done nothing so far to prevent organised governmental attacks on the print media. He should take note of the token protest by the Press Gallery whose members boycotted the question hour on August 10; and even refused to accept the bundles of written answers which are provided daily. Sathe has, perhaps unwittingly, made the honest disclosure that there is no thinking process at work in the Government even at the Centre.

Last week's *Mainstream* (August 7) mentioned the objectionable features of the Bill briefly. It may be noted that the provisions are sweeping. Printing, causing to be printed, distribution, causing to be distributed, or in any manner putting into circulation any matter deemed by the authorities to come within the purview of the legislation is a cognisable, non-bailable offence, punishable as prescribed with imprisonment for two years or fine or both. Sale and even possession of such material as strangulation of free speech and expression in a democratic set-up. Such an enactment will perhaps put even Emergency censorship and harassment into the shade.

In his widely advertised statement in the State Assembly on July 31 Jagannath Mishra quoted the Code of Conduct for the press suggested by the First Press Commission and offered a sermon on the responsibilities of the press. He should read that Commission's recommendations carefully, particularly paragraph 1472 which reads: "Abusive writings, publication of false and distorted news or sensational reports or reviews in bold headlines are matters which should not come within the purview of the law. The real cure for such manifestation of irresponsibility is both subjective and organisational, and we cannot recommend any abridgement of the freedom of expression by legislative measures." The Commission recommended a Press Council which has been subsequently set up and is functioning. And Mishra did not deem it necessary to refer the question to the Press Council though he makes much fuss about the Code suggested by the Commission. The Council on its own had to seek information on the Bill after learning of the protests against it.

The Editors' Guild team has inferred, not without justification, that the Bihar Government's effort now is to cover up corruption and maladministration which have reached enormous proportions, make up for its inability to "manage" the press, and prevent publicity for the major mass movements taking shape in the State so as to be able to crush them without fuss. The team has also explained the dangers inherent in the vague expressions used in the Bill (the word "scurrilous" is to include "any matter which is likely to be injurious to morality or is calculated to injure any person"; the other words are not even explained in this perfunctory manner).

The press has its duty to perform and cannot allow itself to be bullied without laying itself open to the charge of betrayal of the public interest. But organised resistance to attempts at muzzling the press is a tough job at all times, and more so now. All sections of public opinion must be brought in, and there are large numbers of people in different fields of activity who would be ready to help if newemen's organisations take the lead.☐

August 11

COMMUNICATION

Tarapur Puzzle

I read with great interest in *Mainstream* (August 7, 1982) the article, "Climb Down on Tarapur" by P.K.S. Namboodiri, together with the editorial in *The Hindu* (August 2, 1982) captioned "Retreat on Nuclear Policy" which *Mainstream* has reproduced.

I am puzzled because I find an exactly opposite assessment of the Tarapur deal in *The New York Times*, reproduced in the *International Herald Tribune* (August 3, 1982). There seems to be another side of the picture. I am quoting the entire editorial of the *New York Times* under the caption, "The Reagan-Gandhi Deal:"

"The eight-year struggle with India over its nuclear weapons program is ending in draw. The deal between Mr. Reagan and Mrs. Gandhi is not a defeat for either, but neither is it a victory for nonproliferation.

"The laudatory aim of the settlement was to sweeten the atmosphere for a rapprochement, symbolised by Mrs. Gandhi's first visit to the United States in more than a decade. But in strictly nuclear terms, India gained. By substituting France for the United States as the supplier of civilian nuclear fuel, the deal eliminates the American pressure, through fuel delays and cutoffs, to get New Delhi to accept "full-scope" safeguards — international inspection of all its nuclear facilities.

"Mrs. Gandhi comes away with a guarantee of nuclear fuel for at least 11 more years without having to prove her claim that she is not making bombs. She has not even promised like her predecessor, not to conduct another nuclear explosion. There is ground for complaint that the deal undercuts the Nuclear Nonproliferation Act.

"Still, a second Indian weapons test has not, in fact, occurred for eight years — undoubtedly because of American pressure and world opinion. It remains unlikely. There have been other gains. India's clandestine diversion of civilian nuclear aid made the world more alert to the dangers lurking in peaceful nuclear projects. There has been a general tightening of precautions by all the nuclear supplier nations. And no other potential weapons maker has so far exploded a nuclear device.

"The Indian-US standoff had in any case become unstable. An agreement in 1963 obligated the Indians to use US fuel in the US-built reactor at Tarapur. But, uniquely, it also obligated America to supply the fuel for the reactor's presumed life of 30 years. Thus when Congress in 1978 insisted that fuel be denied to those nations whose programs were not fully inspected, India had a legal case for declaring the agreement broken.

"That risked the diversion of American aid to military projects. Most disturbingly, India maintained it no longer needed US consent to reprocess nuclear waste, even if the resulting plutonium fuel could also be used as a bomb explosive. It notified the United Nations that spent US fuel rods were being shipped to a new reprocessing plant.

"Given India's political importance, there was a strong case for liquidating this controversy — provided a vigorous anti-proliferation program were in place for the rest of the world. The surrender to India can be defended as a surrender to necessity, to retain the remainder of the 1963 agreement's inspection and reprocessing safeguards. But the Indian deal is sadly symbolic of the Reagan Administration's weakened interest in nonproliferation. It has been making other deals that similarly circumvent the spirit, if not the letter of the Nonproliferation Act.

"South Africa and Brazil, whose US fuel is also blocked by the law, have also been helped to European substitutes, although they had no comparable legal claims. Supplies and epuipment for sensitive facilities which the Carter Administration would have opposed without the law requiring it have been approved for Argentina and South Africa. Pakistan's nuclear transgressions have been overlooked in providing aid.

"Most important, the Ford-Carter campaign against premature use of plutonium as a fuel has been abandoned in the United States and in Europe and Japan. And this context gives the new Indian arrangements a somber cast. Once plutonium is widely used in key countries, it will be hard to deny to other friends. Congress had better look again, and fast."

New Delhi — *R.C. Kapur*

Lok Dal Split: What Next?

NARENDRA SHARMA

THE inevitable has happened. The incompatibles have parted company. The split in the Lok Dal was formalised on August 9. A last-minute bid by Karpoori Thakur and Biju Patnaik to restore unity failed. Charan Singh refused to accept the conditions that internal democracy be established in the party, that no decision be enforced individually and that Charan Singh accept curbs on his powers as president. The two leaders offered to convert the Lok Dal rebels' meeting into a reconciliation convention if these conditions were acceptable to Charan Singh. The outcome was never in doubt, and Karpoori Thakur and Biju Patnaik were aware of this; their move appeared to be an exercise in playing to the gallery, so that they might not be charged with not having made one last bid to save Lok Dal unity.

The stage was already set to hold the rebel leaders' meeting at the Vishwa Yuvak Kendra in New Delhi. In a formal resolution adopted at the meeting, Charan Singh was accused of having "destabilised the party structure" through his "persistent anti-democratic conduct" and his "numberless resignations from the presidentship of the party and even from its primary membership"; it expressed want of confidence in Charan Singh, removed him from the office of president and elected Karpoori Thakur as the new president of the party. They claimed theirs was the "real" Lok Dal, with seven out of the ten Lok Dal Parliamentary Board members and 25 out of 46 National Executive Committee members on their side along with a majority of the Lok Dal State committees. They also claimed the support of 83 out of the total of 146 Lok Dal legislators in various States and of 18 out of 65 Lok Dal Members of Parliament — 8 out of 32 in Lok Sabha and 10 out of 15 in Rajya Sabha. Whatever number the Lok Dal has in Tamilnadu, Madhya Pradesh (one MLA each), Andhra Pradesh (6), Orissa (12) are at the moment with the rebels, besides the majority of the legislature parties of 42 and 27 in Bihar and Haryana respectively. UP Lok Dal legislators however are solidly with Charan Singh excepting perhaps two.

Thus the battle has been joined between the "real" Lok Dal led by Karpoori Thakur, Devi Lal, Biju Patnaik, George Fernandes and Madhu Limaye, and the "fake" Lok-Dal presided over by Charan Singh. It was declared from the "real" Lok Dal rostrum that the aim was to fight for and preserve democracy inside the party, so as to make the stance of fighting for democracy and against authoritarianism in the country meaningful. From September 1980, when the Lok Dal was formally launched, it took these leaders thirty-five months to draw this simple lesson.

Moreover, with mini-Charan Singhs like Devi Lal in their ranks, it is to be seen how this new experiment will shape. The mini-Charan Singhs can well turn out to be the Achilles' heel of the "real" Lok Dal.

The defection of the entire Gujarat unit of Lok Dal to the ranks of the Janata Party marks another important trend which should serve as a warning. Whether Biju Patnaik with his following will do the same in Orissa remains to be seen.

There was once again talk of unity of "all opposition forces wedded to democracy and social change", with a view to building a viable and credible alternative to the Congress-I. The question who stood in the way in the past was also answered: Charan Singh's greed to "grab absolute personal power in the united party" was "one main reason" for such moves being frustrated in the past. But then this had not only been tolerated but positively supported in the past, in the name of party unity, by the very leaders who gathered at the Yuvak Kendra on August 9.

However plausible this charge of Charan Singh acting as a dictator may sound — his authoritarian and ambitious ways were never a secret — and however genuine and welcome these leaders' concern for democracy and their parting company with Charan Singh may appear to be, they will have to own and disown much before they can hope to gain credibility. Some of them with long and varied experience in the Socialist Party, Congress and Janata cannot be believed to have been taken in by the personality of Charan Singh. The fact is that the backward-caste outlook of Charan Singh—which degenerated into downright casteism during Janata rule, resulting in the backward castes in the rural areas unleashing a reign of terror on the poor, landless Scheduled Castes—came to be seen as his strength. And this caste outlook and backing of Charan Singh was sought to be projected as a force to be eventually used for the "upliftment of backward castes". That casteism and democracy are mutually contradictory was surely known at least to those who claim to be socialists, though the Devi Lals may not be expected to see this point.

The "real" Lok Dal will have to fight its battle for survival in the States of Haryana, UP, Bihar, that is, the Hindi-speaking States largely. It is this area where once the Socialists used to be the strongest Opposition force. It is this area where caste and communal forces were strengthened in the Opposition's anti-Congressism of the post-1967 period. In this context, the agreed programmes of the opposition and the Janata's 1977 election manifesto were seen to become irrelevant once the struggle for power started within the then ruling Janata conglomerate.

So the question is whether the "real" Lok Dal leaders will learn the lesson and project a credible image of themselves in contrast to that of Charan Singh on the one hand and their erstwhile Janata partners on the other. (*August 10*)

DISCUSSION

This contribution is meant to start off a discussion on the present political perspective before India.

Concept of a Patriotic Front—I

N.C.

THE very suggestion of a Patriotic Front has touched off an angry chorus of condemnation from both the Left and the Right establishments that this is a trap to get people to rally behind Indira Gandhi. That the Left and the Right should join hands is of course no longer a matter of surprise for an observer of the present-day Indian scene.

If one goes by the prevailing framework of politics in our country, there is good ground for the misgiving that any call for a Patriotic Front would lead to total support for the ruling party. Whenever there is a threat to national security — as it happened at the time of the Chinese aggression in 1962 or Pakistani attacks in 1965 and 1971 — it is conceivable that the nation as a whole, barring a handful of dissenters, would stand behind the Government of the day, provided that the political parties are convinced that such a government is defending the nation's frontiers and upholding national interests.

The international environment around India today is certainly grave, and by all assessment, whether from the West or from the East, the danger of a large-scale armed conflict, if not of a world war, is very real in the neighbourhood of India. Since this country is not an insignificant entity in the international balance of forces, it has perforce to play a role, a major role, in the event of a military showdown in the region around us. Obviously, to meet such a danger, the need for all-out national unity becomes an urgent issue and the concrete form in which such a unity can manifest itself could be the concept of a patriotic front.

It is to be conceded that the situation in our neighbourhood is critical beyond measure — the unprecedentedly large arms concentration in this region, the crisis over Afghanistan, the gathering storm over Iran; Israel's Hitler-type blitz, first against Iraq's nuclear plant and then on a massive scale in Lebanon; the mounting tension in the Gulf, the RDF and Diego Garcia — each one of these developments can any day set off an international explosion when viewed in the sombre background of the resumption of the super-power Cold War. At the same time, the imminence of an attack on our sovereignty or our country getting involved in any large-scale military conflict is not yet embedded in the national consciousness. Neither the Government nor the Opposition reflects an awareness of the emerging threat of an armed conflict in our neighbourhood.

In fact, there has come over in our national outlook a reluctance, if not resistance, to make the effort at understanding the fast-changing international scene. A strange attitude of insularity pervades the national spectrum. This is particularly noticeable since the liberation of Bangladesh, a little over ten years ago. Not that we do not have exchanges of VIP visits; we get excited when our leaders collect bouquets in distant lands; we are appalled at the ghastly barbarities being committed by the warmongers of Israel. But we have virtually ceased to make an effort at following closely major world developments, the interplay of powerful forces, the implications of the new technology on human affairs — the sort of things that were the daily fare of Jawaharlal Nehru's utterances. For a nation which is up and coming — whether it likes it or not — it can ill-afford to have an atavistic view of the world such as that of a Morarji or a Charan Singh.

In such a climate of self-complacent isolationism, it is not surprising that we should prefer to be blissfully unaware of the dangers beyond our borders. Rather, we seem to prefer to indulge in the traditional pursuits of factional in-fighting, or let Antulays and Kamalnaths, with their stinking corruption strut about, or permit a Jagannath Misra to get away with a press gag, or get worked up over the third-rate antics of a Maneka Gandhi. The world beyond — the convulsions behind the Great Wall of China, the US headaches with West Europe, the changing configurations in Africa, the new urges in Eastern Europe, the challenge to Uncle Sam in restless Latin America, Japan's desperate quest for a new identity, the emerging power game in Antartica — how much do we care to watch them at close quarters, not to speak of understanding them? If we had, we would have perhaps grasped the frightening dimension of the war danger at our doorstep.

Obviously, with such a level of consciousness, to talk about the need for a Patriotic Front mainly based on the external factor is, to say the least, unreal and is liable to be misconstrued as a gimmick to provide fresh support for Indira Gandhi.

(Continued on page 31)

Mischief behind Misreporting

C. N. CHITTA RANJAN

NEITHER our newspapers nor the Government-controlled mass media with their wider reach have presented a fair and truthful account of the Israeli aggression in Lebanon, which began on June 6 and is continuing, accompanied by sadistic genocide reminiscent of the Nazi terror campaign against the Jews about four decades ago. Most of what we have been getting is a subtle version of Western pro-Israeli propaganda and mischievous misreporting of heroic Palestinian resistance under the leadership of the PLO. A couple of newspapers and one or two journals with limited circulation have tried to present the other side, but against the powerful combination of the Western-run transnational news agencies these stray attempts at presenting the truth have been almost totally ineffective, howsoever laudable they may be.

It is in this context that the initiative taken by the Indian Federation of Working Journalists to focus attention on false, distorted and one-sided reporting on Lebanon (symposium, New Delhi, August 7) must be warmly welcomed. Leading journalists, intellectuals and others participated in the symposium, and many of them marshalled facts masterfully to demonstrate the pro-Israeli, US-inspired slant in the columns of our press whose top dogs do not tire of pious protestations about "objectivity" in reporting.

It is disgraceful that our affluent newspapers, which have extra-special correspondents at key points over the globe and which do not hesitate to spend lavishly where the owners have a special interest, direct or indirect, in a particular kind of news coverage, could not send their men to ravaged Lebanon to get first-hand accounts of what the US-backed Israeli military machine has been doing to innocent men, women and children in that peace-loving country during the last two months and more. Only two correspondents actually visited the war zone, one from the Capital's largest circulated daily, the *Hindustan Times*, and the other from the new Calcutta daily, the *Telegraph*.

The *Hindustan Times* man, Bharat Karnad, who at the IFWJ symposium spoke like an unofficial public relations officer of the Israeli military command, made out that he had gone to Israeli-occupied areas and got his briefings from the aggressors as well as Western correspondents stationed in a hotel in the occupied territory only because there was no way of reaching western Beirut where six thousand Palestinian commandos and nearly six hundred thousand civilians were surrounded and were being bombarded daily. This contention was instantly shown to be false by Seema Mustafa of the *Telegraph*, a young girl who had the guts and initiative to find her way to western Beirut and could give a first-hand account of Israeli atrocities as also of the high morale of the Palestinian commandos.

Bharat Karnad is not a very significant journalist, but he does represent a mentality that pervades the ranks of those who own and run our major newspapers. Perhaps some others of the tribe would not go to the extent of treating genocide casually with the profound observation that in war people are bound to be killed. Perhaps some of them would not even pose the kind of stupid question Karnad posed at the symposium: the Israelis had over the years built a powerful army, why didn't the Palestinians? The simple answer was made obvious by some of the other speakers (like Prof. M.S. Agwani of JNU, D.R. Goyal, PLO ambassador Feisal Aweida, Subrata Banerjee): Israel had been created by the Western powers, notably Britain and the United States, it had been armed to the teeth by the USA, its aggressions over the years and its expansionist policy had been backed fully by the USA. They naturally have the most sophisticated arms and a fully trained army, with massive air and naval support guided by the United States, while the Palestinians, driven out of their homeland, living in their millions virtually under the sky, with no supply of anything but the crudest military equipment, have had no opportunity to build a powerful fighting force of their own. It is their patriotism and their determination to get back to their homeland that have kept them going. Hence the Israeli plan to liquidate them and, on the pretext of dealing with them, to annex as much of Lebanon as possible. After all today's Israel is not, in geographical terms, what was conceived initially; it is three times larger, at the minimum. Why not make it four times, five times larger?

But to get back to our media and their coverage of Lebanon. In the case of every national liberation struggle, the most glaring example being that of Vietnam, our media have chosen to depend on the Western news agencies. Even the Press Trust of India preferred arrangements with these transnational agencies to having an external wing of its own and sending its own correspondents to report events keeping in mind the need to provide truthful information to the Indian public — a step recommended by the First Press Commission twenty eight years ago, as was pointed out by M. Chalapathi Rau, who was a distinguished member of that Commission. With some sorrow it has to be pointed out that even some of our progressive newspapers, whose editors could rush to Teheran to interview the Shah and project him as a socialist or more recently tour many countries beyond Lebanon and get their own photographs prominently published alongside lengthy reports and interviews, could not send correspondents to the land of tragedy and grief, Lebanon.

Some speakers at the symposium, including Agwani, A. Raghavan and Mankekar, who have been carefully studying the situation and not basing themselves merely on the distorted and propagandist trash dished out as "news", referred to what many who have access to Western newspapers and periodicals and other material have known: that even Indian correspondents posted in the Western capitals have failed to focus attention on (a) some major reports of Israeli atrocities in Lebanon covered by Western correspondents, and (b) the protest movements gathering momentum not only in the USA, Britain and elsewhere but within Israel itself.

In the case of the symposium we have to take Karnad, much as we hate to publicise ill-informed and biased upstarts, as the symbol of what is wrong with the Indian press. He pretended that everyone but himself was biased in favour of the Palestinians (he could have had the grace to acknowledge the existence of Ram Jethmalani) and that the Lebanese situation could be linked to what he described as the "civil war" that began in 1975. Even persons like the present writer who have not specialised in West Asian affairs, know that India has always had a positive policy of sympathy for the Palestinians, a policy pre-dating the achievement of national independence. Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru were outspoken about the unfairness and cruelty of establishing a Jewish state of Israel hostile to the whole Arab world through conspiratorial and terroristic methods. Not only has nothing happened to make us modify that policy, but everything that has happened since has only proved its correctness and strengthened its validity. As Haksar put it at the symposium, rejecting Karnad's strange arguments about military equations, "we can't be indifferent to the politics of war", war being only one of the many ways politics was projected in the international arena. Politics involved, inevitably, concepts of right and wrong. And non-alignment and our national interest were intertwined in the process of our making political judgements on such issues.

Apart from the failure of our major newspapers to cover Lebanon keeping such criteria in view and also the importance of correcting the slant given by the Western agencies, another aspect was brought out at the symposium. The PTI has an arrangement with the Nonaligned News Pool. Of course the Pool does not have the resources to compete with entrenched agencies like Reuters, AFP, AP, DPA. The gathering was informed by M.R. Chandran, General Manager of PTI, that though Pool wordage was much smaller than that of the transnationals, the little that was given to correct the slant of the West was largely ignored by the newspapers here. The Palestinian news agency WAFA sent despatches many of which were "first rate, exclusive and always having a different angle". But these had not been properly utilised, even allowing for the time lag of a few hours in some cases which was unavoidable because of the resources constraint. The Pool includes other agencies too, some of them well known, like Tanjug and Prensa Latina.

The newspapers are flooded with ready-made copy from the Western news agencies (on Lebanon, roughly seven thousand words daily as against the Pool's eight hundred), and nobody in the newspapers concerned is bothered about correcting the slant in the Western reports. It was pointed out at the symposium that even Pool reports landing a few hours behind the rest contained enough material for the newspapers to use them with some editing. Even some of the important statements by PLO chairman Yasser Arafat put out by PTI-WAFA and ignored by the transnational agencies found no place, at least in the Delhi press. Pool stories so ignored by our "national" press included those relating Nazi tactics of the Israeli forces in Lebanon, torture of prisoners by the Israelis, the ghastly bombing of hospitals, genocide, and US backing for the Israelis. Where the "bias" lies in the Indian press is obvious.

Apart from ignoring Pool reports, the press by and large is guilty of accepting the deliberate playing down of the Palestinian versions and statements, burying these deep down in their columns and mostly dismissing them in a couple of sentences. Even misleading and slanted "leads" or introductory paragraphs are allowed to stand, as was pointed out by Mankekar, Professor Agwani and Romesh Chandra of TV News Features. Words like "terrorists" are used freely to describe the Palestinians, while in fact it has been Israeli terrorism throughout, from the days of Irgun and the Stern Gang (late forties) to the present in Lebanon. Even worse is the fact that newspapers which have arrangements with some Western papers have carefully omitted reports that brought out the Palestinian position more or less truthfully.

Neither the Western news agencies nor US-oriented Indian newspapers can stop the Palestinian people, whose number is not small and whose cause is indisputably just, from achieving their goal in the future. But we are certainly concerned that our newspapers should not continue to feed us on falsehoods and one-sided reports. This trend has been there for long, and the working journalists have to be in the vanguard of the fight against such inspired mischief. It is a matter for satisfaction that the IFWJ has taken the initiative. But we cannot stop with a stray symposium. The public, including parliamentarians, must take up the cause.

As for the Government media, we are entitled to an explanation why news that vindicates our tested policies gets blacked out or underplayed. As was asked at the symposium by Romesh Chandra, why didn't AIR and Doordarshan send their own representatives to cover Lebanon and tell our people the whole truth about Israeli atrocities and US abetment? There is an AIR West Asian correspondent: why has he not gone to West Beirut, from where BBC men transmit their dispatches?

(August 9)

U.S. and Israel

GIRISH MATHUR

DURING her US visit, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi made probably her sharpest statement when, just before she left Los Angeles, she said in a TV interview that the US had not done enough to restrain Israel in its wanton aggression against Lebanon and its attempts to exterminate the PLO. Even this statement was formulated in diplomatic language. For, who can say that Reagan has done anything to restrain Israel when 52 US warships including four aircraft-carriers are in the neighbourhood of Lebanon and of these two aircraft-carriers with accompanying warships are in Lebanese waters to provide aerial protection to the Israeli blitzkrieg into Lebanon? The least that Reagan could do was to withdraw US warships from Lebanese waters. And while the US naval power — the largest concentration in the region since 1973 — was providing protection to the Israeli advance, Reagan's special representative Philip Habib was helping Israel to achieve by diplomatic means what in the US view could not be secured by its military push — the pull-out of the PLO from Lebanon.

The Prime Minister was right in pointing out that most of the arms with Israel were American. On the eve of the invasion of Lebanon, Israel had 567 combat planes; of these 457 had come from the United States, and another 80, locally assembled Kafirs, had US-made (GEC) engines, and the remaining 30 had been obtained from NATO members. It has been established that Israel has used cluster bombs, obtained from the US, against civilian targets; Israel itself has admitted that. Under pressure of world opinion the US has now postponed, not cancelled, further supplies of these bombs; after the Israeli attack on the Iraqi reactor the US had suspended the supply of F-16s but within weeks it was resumed. Even after the suspension of the supply of cluster bombs, a formal letter offering Israel eleven additional F-16s, the fighter-bomber which Israel has used in Lebanon — with deadly effect, thanks to the aerial protection by the US aircraft-carriers in Lebanese waters — is being processed in the Pentagon in the routine manner, as if nothing had happened. $ 1.5 billion worth of planes, self-propelled howitzers and armoured personnel carriers are in the pipeline, and the flow of $ 550 million worth of spares continues as before. And everyone of these 1.5 billion and 550 million dollars is to come from the US military aid to Israel — which means that the US Treasury is paying the US arms industry to supply to Israel the war material it needs for continuing its occupation of Lebanon.

Yet Reagan reacted with simulated self-righteous anger when Brezhnev in a personal message wanted him to hold back Israel. Reagan said that the US was doing all it could. The Prime Minister said in her TV interview that what was needed was not strong language but strong action. She obviously was referring to Reagan's statement when Israeli Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir came to see him that "US patience had been exhausted long ago." But this statement of the Prime Minister also gave Reagan the benefit of the doubt. For, what was the reality behind his strong language? Even while saying that US patience had been exhausted, Reagan equated the aggressor and the victim by saying that fighting should stop as if the Palestinian and Lebanese commandos who were resisting Israeli advance into West Beirut were as much responsible for the fighting as Israel which was bombing civilian localities of no military importance in the city. In fact, Reagan provided an alibi to Israel by saying that cease-fire was a two-way traffic and the PLO too was violating it and in some cases had been the first to do so.

To act the role of "exhausted patience", Reagan put on a grim face while posing for photographs when Yitzhak Shamir met him. On previous occasion he and Shamir had posed for photographs standing side by side with smiles on their faces to underline the close relationship between the US and Israel, but on this occasion not only was Reagan grim-faced, there was a table separating them, according to White House spokesmen, to show the distance between the two. Photography over, the two sat down for serious talks. Later, White House officials were quoted as saying that Reagan was "very tough" with Shamir, but the same "officials were evasive" in reply to questions by pressmen about the action he proposed to take. Israeli officials also said that "the President was firm in what he wanted to say," but, they added, "there were no threats." On the contrary, they said — and White House officials confirmed — there was agreement on "first things first" which meant that first of all the PLO should pull out of West Beirut and Lebanon, but there were differences on how to achieve that, with Reagan maintaining that strict observance of cease-fire would give time to negotiate PLO withdrawal while Shamir held that Israeli squeeze alone would push the PLO out. This certainly does not amount to restraining Israel.

"The sharp Israeli thrust into West Beirut coming so quickly after President Reagan's blunt warning to Israel to uphold cease fire", as the *New York Times* analyst put it, showed that the "strong language" to which the Prime Minister referred in her TV interview was meaningless. Israeli Prime Minister Begin rejected Reagan's "sharply worded message" carried by Yitzhak Shamir. Begin said that the US could not dictate to Israel, a ridiculous thing to say when it is known that despite nearly 140 per cent rate of inflation, an increase of

(*Continued on page 34*)

US Arms Sales to India

SREEDHAR

During Indira Gandhi's recent visit to the US, American media reported that the US is planning to sell about $ 1 billion worth of arms to India. Though the whole transaction is still at "the offer being made" stage, it has once again revived the debate about the desirability or otherwise of India shopping for US arms.

To understand the Indian arms acquisition programme, a quick survey of its policy in this regard is necessary. If we take 1962 Sino-Indian border conflict as the bench mark for large-scale arms acquisition by India, the First Five Year Defence Plan for armed forces modernisation, formulated in 1964, offers some significant clues.

The objectives of the plan were:

— build-up and maintainence of a well-equipped army with a strength of 8,25,000 men;

— maintainence of a 45-Squadron Airforce and improvement of the air-defence and communication facilities;

— a phased programme for replacement of over-age ships of the Navy;

— improvement of road communications in the border areas;

— strengthening the defence production base; and

— improving the organisational arrangements.

At the same time, some broad policy guide-lines were also laid down to increase indigenous defence production. The Indian desire to standardise its equipment and choose a proper mix of weapons to suit its specific requirements became explicit during this period. In addition, the Annual Report of the Ministry of Defence (1964-65) explicitly stated: *Weapons and equipment best suited for our conditions are not available in any one country; nor is it possible to ensure a steady supply of such weapons and equipment from the respective countries of origin in the case of our being involved in hostilities. Therefore it becomes a basic necessity to establish manufacturing capacities, especially for weapons, ammunition and equipment which are required in considerable quantities by our Armed forces.*

By 1970s the guiding principle for India's defence production policy became "modernisation of arms and equipment and achievement of the maximum degree of self reliance and self-sufficiency in the shortest possible time."

It is against this backdrop one has to examine India's arms acquisition policy. A quick survey of arms sales policies by the US and the Soviet Union show how the policies pursued by the two major arms suppliers come into conflict with or in support of our own policy. A policy directive issued in July 1981 by the Reagan Administration observed that while the USA alone could not defend the free world's interests, the USA must strengthen its own military capabilities, but must also be prepared to help its friends and allies to strengthen their capabilities through the transfer of conventional arms and other forms of security assistance. Such transfers would complement American security commitments and serve US objectives, it added. In the Reagan Administration's perspective, conventional arms transfers are an "essential element of the US global posture and are an indispensable component of its foreign policy." Applied judiciously, according to this view, the arms will help to deter aggression by enhancing the state of preparedness of allies and friends. This policy envisages the following courses of action:

— increase the US armed forces' effectiveness by improving their ability in concert with their friends and allies to project power in response to threats posed by mutual adversaries;

— support efforts to foster the ability of the US forces to deploy and operate with those of its allies and friends, thereby strengthening and revitalising mutual security relationships;

— demonstrate that the US has an enduring interests in the security of its friends and partners and that it will not allow them to be at a military disadvantage;

— foster regional and internal stability, thus encouraging peaceful resolution of disputes and evolutionary change; and

— help to enhance the US defence production capabilities and efficiency.

However, in making arms transfer decisions, the USA will give due consideration to a broad range of factors including:

— the degree to which the transfer responds appropriately to the military threats confronting the recipient;

— whether the transfer will enhance the recipient's capabilities to participate in collective security efforts with the US:

— whether the transfer is consistent with the US interests in maintaining stability in the regions where friends of the USA may have differing objectives.

— whether the transfer is compatible with the needs of the US forces, recognising that occasions will arise when other nations may require scarce items on an emergency basis:

According to *Foreign Military Sales and Assistance Facts* a US Department of Defence publication, India received US arms worth $ 96 million between 1950 and 1980 under Foreign Military

Sales: another $16 million as commercial sales and another $-90 million under Military Assistance Programme. In addition, 702 military personnel underwent training in the US under International Military Education & Training Programme of the US Government. Interestingly, almost the entire US military aid to India and over $ 85 under Foreign Military Sales Programme was prior to 1971. Commercial sales is a phenomenon of 1970s. Thus, on an average US arms transfers to India amounted to less than $ 7 million per annum:

This low level of arms purchases from the US can be attributed to the stringent terms and conditions attached with them. The built-in checks and balances within the US overall policy of arms transfer have discouraged countries like India who are interested in building up an indigenous defence industry. Some of the terms and conditions imposed by the US in its arms transfer policy are:

(a) delivery of contracted arms is subject to cancellation without compensation in case the USA considers that tension is developing in the region of the recipient country; and the decision of the US is final.

(b) outside the NATO and Pacific alliance framework the USA will not permit any licensed production of equipment based on advanced technology;

(c) the recipient will not be allowed to sell the equipment to a third party;

(d) the USA will fix the time-table for supply of spares. The need for additional spares will be assessed by US experts from time to time; and

(e) while the recipient country should sign the contract immediately after the negotiation, from the supplier side the contract will be considered final only after ratification by the US Congress.

In the subcontinent, Pakistan is the biggest recipient of US arms. The unilateral suspension of arms contracted for by Pakistan after the outbreak of hostilities in 1965 is an indication of how these conditions listed above are applied. However, there were two exceptions in the past to these conditions; Yugoslavia in 1950s and Israel in 1973. But in both the situations, the US response was more an exception than a general rule.

SOVIET arms transfers since the 1950s have been less diversified than those of the United States. The Soviets arms transfer policies are also characterised by an attempt to create in-depth relationships with a select group of countries, an approach that quite often seems to have failed with disastrous consequences, as in the case of China in the late 1950s, Indonesia in the mid-1960s, Egypt in the early 1970s and Sudan and Somalia subsequently.

In addition, Soviet arms transfers, which were largely in terms of aid in the 1950s, were converted into cash sales in the 1960s, and to hard currency transactions since the early 1970s.

The Soviet Union, however, continues to offer easy terms and conditions with long repayment periods in cases like India, where it has certain vital strategic and foreign policy interests.

According to US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency estimates, during 1974-78, of out $ 1,900 million arms acquired by India, while the share of the Soviet Union is more than 75 per cent the US is less than two per cent. However the 1970s also saw a deliberate effort to diversify the sources of supply, if the terms and conditions offered by the arms suppliers suited Indian interests.

An overview of India's arms acquisition policy since 1963 shows that Western reluctance to supply arms and equipment, on the plea of lack of technological infrastructure in India and their sensitivity to Pakistani factor, prompted India to tap the Soviet Union. An interaction between the Soviet Union and India, enabled the latter to acquire the needed infrastructure, to build an indigenous arms industry capable of absorbing intricate military technology. The moment India acquired such capability, it started diversifying its sources of supply. In addition, there is a growing realisation among the US and Western arms manufacturing countries that India has an alternative and reliable source of supply in the Soviet Union, and this in turn appears to be bringing about a change in their attitudes. □

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Punjab's Anguish

I. K. GUJRAL

Historically, it was unfortunate that linguistic States were conceded most unwillingly. Potti Sriramulu had to reach martyrdom before Andhra Pradesh was delinked from Tamilnadu. Gujarat and Maharashtra were separated only after a great deal of agitation and sacrifice. In case of Punjab this reluctance was far more persistent and long-drawn-out and ultimately it was conceded in 1966 when Sant Fateh had made it convincingly clear that he would immolate himself.

The 'Punjabi Suba' demand, as distinct from that of other linguistic States, was not joined in by all sections of Punjabis. While the Akali leadership unfortunately gave it the coloration of a 'Sikh demand', the Hindu leaderships, by and large, saw their own interests better served in a composite State. The front cracked when Haryana Samiti led by Chowdhury Devi Lal and Prof. Sher Singh demanded severance of Haryana and made common cause with the Akalis. This weakened the voice of the Punjabi-speaking Hindu leaders — both in the Congress and outside. They permitted themselves to be outmanoeuvred since they had not realised that their historic destiny lay with their fellow Punjabi Sikhs.

Absence of this vision had been exhibited even earlier when an ill-advised movement was started asking Hindus to declare Hindi, and not Punjabi, as their mother-tongue.

To a large extent, the genesis of the present-day situation lies in this blind sectional approach on both sides and no major effort has seriously been made by either of them to evolve a joint platform to safeguard Punjab's interests. Twice in the history of Punjab, the Akali-Jana Sangh, and later the Janata-Akali alliance, pushed Congress out of power and coalition governments were formed. This may have been a happy augury in terms of Punjabi unity, but its impact did not travel to the roots. Any attempt to build 'Punjabi consciousness' was really not made. It is indeed an irony since culturally, religiously and in social relationship, there is far more to unite and hardly any element which can divide the Hindus and Sikhs. Historically, the Punjabi personality, which is rightly called 'Punjabiat', owes a great deal to the emergence of the Khalsa, which was a movement of heroic resistance against the tyranny of the Mughal rulers. The great Gurus gave a distinct philosophy to a land which had suffered the brutalities of various invasions from the North for nearly ten centuries.

This high tradition of bravery and valour was sustained in the fight against the British as well. It was not mere chance that Jalianwala Bagh should have happened in this heroic land.

Every history book of Punjab narrates the tales of the heroes who offered shining examples of sacrifice, culminating in the leadership of the Tenth Guru — the great Guru Gobind Singh. He sanctified the Khalsa by giving it tremendous courage to fight against very heavy odds for the great cause.

Sikhs did not come from outside, they grew out of the very earth of Punjab. It has been a common practice in most of the families of Punjabi Hindus that at least one son of the family would be a baptised Sikh. In a sense, this was the expression of determination on the part of every Punjabi to actively participate in the resistance movement. Symbols of Sikhism openly and boldly pronounced defiance and readiness to make even the supreme sacrifice. My own family has many such examples. As a matter of fact, a larger number of my own sub-caste — the Gujrals — are Sikhs than Hindus. My sister is married in a Sikh family and my mother's parents had firm faith in Guru Granth Sahib. My mother recites the 'Guru-Bani' every morning. Not many outside Punjab perhaps know that the Granth Sahib contains the sayings of all leading sufis and saints of our land: Baba Farid the Muslim saint, Kabir, Nam Dev. Name any great saint of the era and you find his verses have been included in the holy Granth Sahib.

The tenets of the Sikh faith in many ways are the continuance of the richer aspects of Hinduism and reflect the composite culture of our land.

It is indeed a great tribute to the Gurus that even while suffering the atrocious behaviour of Mughal and Afghan satraps, they did not turn anti-Muslim. They drew a distinct line between the tyrannical rulers and Islam's teaching. In fact, Guru Arjun Dev invited Saint Mian Mir to lay the foundation stone of the holy temple of Amritsar which was appropriately named Har-Mandir.

It is a common tradition amongst a large number of Hindu families of Punjab to enshrine the Granth Sahib in their homes and go to Har-Mandir or any other leading Gurudwara for prayers.

The Sindhis are mostly what is called 'Sehaj-Dhari' Sikhs — that is, they believe in the Gurus and the Granth Sahib, though they may not be keeping the Kesh.

This tradition of cultural unity and amity, fortunately, is still holding fast despite some ugly happenings in the last few months. These acts of sacrilege have been condemned by all sections of Hindus and Sikhs.

The Akali movement has a glorious tradition too. It put up a great fight against the British in the early twenties. Almost all eminent Sikh leaders of Punjab, at one stage or the other, had been associated with the Akali movement. With the passage of time, the Akali ranks got divided on various issues. Since the death of Master Tara Singh and of Sant Fateh Singh, the party has been fragmented and no leader of status has emerged who could unify their ranks and command universal recognition.

In its political functioning, the Akali Party has been split and even within the major streams, there are distinct factions.

The 'moderates', led by S. Parkash Singh Badal, are primarily a parliamentary group. Most of them are well-educated and have built their reputations as realistic and balanced administrators. They fully understand that Akalis can regain power only in alliance with politically organised Hindu opinion. Such alliances have varied from time to time. The Gurnam Singh Ministry had the support of the erstwhile Jana Sangh. Lachhman Singh Gill come to power with the help of the Congress, and Badal had to come close to the Janata Party.

The other main section of the Akalis is led by what is known as the 'Jathedar Group'. They are the people devoutly wedded to religion and take a great deal of interest in Gurudwara politics. The Shiromani Gurudwara Prabhandak Committee is the main organisational centre for the management of a large number of Gurudwaras. Organisational control of the Committee is thus a high source of influence and finance. With very extensive organisation and abiding faith of the Sikh 'Sangat', they are always able to effectively intervene in elections. This group is by no means unified either. There are deep factional fights, and some of them, led by Sardar Talwandi, have walked out and set up their own organisation.

Punjab Congress politics could never succeed in acquiring a sustained power base. It has primarily depended on the 'anti' and 'pro' waves generated in Delhi at the time of General Elections. Because of this, the Punjab Congressites have not thrown up leaders of size except Pratap Singh Kairon and Swaran Singh. The former had a very limited base amongst the Sikhs. In the then unified Punjab, which contained Haryana and parts of Himachal, the Hindus had a dominant position in the Assembly and this provided his legislative base.

Sardar Swaran Singh is indeed an eminent personality and he has played a significant role in national life. But he has kept himself away from Punjab politics. His influence on events there has been limited and he has hardly made any contribution in shaping the post-Independence history of Punjab.

Hindu Congressmen's role in Punjab shrank with the exit of Bhim Sen Sachar from Chief Ministership. The Central leadership, particularly since the separation of Punjab and Haryana, has preferred to treat Punjab as a 'Sikh State'. Gurmukh Singh Musafir, Giani Zail Singh, Darbara Singh — there is an array of prominent persons but the coalescing faction of Hindu Congressmen were not encouraged to acquire any stature. As a result, effective Hindu leadership slipped out of Congress hands. In religious matters, the Arya Samajist approach has come to dominate and in political sphere the RSS and Jana Sangh-BJP have held sway.

There are some economic factors which also need understanding. Prior to Independence, the Punjab always had two distinct regions. The present Pakistani Punjab which was the heart of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's empire, did not get 'Sikhised'. The peasantry there were predominantly Jat Muslims. The Hindus and Sikhs there were mostly involved in urban occupations. In villages they were mostly shopkeepers and moneylenders. Even when they owned land they hardly tilled it themselves.

In the newly irrigated areas of Montgomery and Multan, the British inducted Sikh peasantry from other regions. The British irrigation development plans were mostly confined to the terrain covered by four of the six rivers: Sind, Jhelum, Lower Chenab and Ravi. Sutlej and Beas received rather limited attention.

After the partition of India, the population exchange brought to India the migrated Sikh peasantry. A large number of Punjabi Hindus now settled in Punjab continued pursuing their non-agricultural vocations.

As the impact of the Bhakra Canal system was felt, the land of Punjab received a renewed impulse and soon turned into the main granary of the country. In some regions, the canal network raised the water table offering new opportunities for rice cultivation. This made Punjab the largest producer of rice also in the country.

Industrial growth of Punjab has not kept pace with agriculture due to a variety of reasons. The entrepreneur class, both Hindus and Sikhs, came and settled in Delhi. They made Faridabad and the areas around Delhi (which were then part of Punjab but are now in Haryana) the focal point of their activity. While Punjab may not have grown industrially, the Punjabis have come to occupy positions of eminence amongst the industrial elite.

The Hindus living in Punjab mostly took to commerce and small-scale industry. With agrarian prosperity coming to the fore their share too has been considerable.

In the absence of industrial growth, sizeable agrarian and commercial savings of the Punjabis have been channelled out of the State through the banking network. It is commonly believed that about two-thirds of Punjab's bank deposits get invested outside Punjab.

The Punjabi migration abroad, unlike that of Gujaratis, for instance, has been mostly to UK and the Americas. Mostly the landless and the deprived section of society left their home land to seek a living abroad. Their remittances to their kin have added a great deal to Punjab's prosperity.

Similarly, the Punjabi Sikhs particularly occupy a proud position in our armed forces. Their remittances too help a great deal in boosting Punjab's remittance-economy. The remittance-economy does not find productive avenues for investment. Land values, both urban and rural, have therefore risen a great deal. Price of an acre of agricultural land, say near Jullundur, has no relevance to its productivity.

The absence of industrial development channelises this affluence into unproductive consumerism. As a result, an unhealthy competition in 'show-offism' results in some pronounced social distortions like the evil of dowry and ostentatious living.

Agricultural surpluses and wastes also need industrial outlet. Unless these are re-cycled, Punjab's economy will not find adequate resource utilisation.

Punjab has nursed a grievance that even agriculture-based industry has not been built adequately. This year, for instance, the State had a bumper sugarcane crop. The two comparatively medium-sized sugar mills could not cope with this harvest. After a great deal of persuasion and agitation, two new sugar mills have now been sanctioned. This hardly touches the heart of the problem.

Similarly, some regions of Punjab have been producing cotton. Apart from some ginning factories there are two or three small-sized textile mills. With Bombay Textile Mills on strike, the outlet for Punjab cotton will shrink, resulting in further frustration.

Some other issues like the control of Bhakra Canals, management and division of water between Punjab and Haryana should have generated a joint Punjabi front. But here too the divisive policies prevailed and political leadership of the Congress and BJP did not mind it when more water was passed on to other States. Without going into the merits of the proposition, it looks rather odd that additional water to Punjab for generation of energy should not interest them.

It is the unfortunate legacy of Punjab politics that grievances like these are voiced by the Akali Party. Neither the Congress nor Jana Sangh (BJP) has ever taken these up in a convincing way or on a sustained basis.

The planners in Delhi dismiss most of the Punjabi demands on the plea that 'Punjab is already prosperous, let others first catch up'. While this may sound justified on the face of it, India's composite personality, at this stage, has to effectively deal with second-generation problems of growth of every region on merit. Regional imbalances cannot be corrected by thwarting the growth of some parts. On the contrary, it should induce us to accelerate economic growth. In a way it is interesting to see that while Punjab's demand for industrialisation is rejected, nobody in his senses ever wishes to limit its agricultural growth. This exposes the fallacy of the argument.

The Punjabi protest is against being treated as 'producers of raw materials only' while the 'value-added benefits' go to others: not to the backward regions but the industrially advanced States. Unfortunately issues like this, deeply affecting the economic interests of the entire State, have not been used to unify all Punjabis.

For their own reasons, the Imperial rulers chose to recruit only 'martial races' to the then British Indian Army. On this basis, in undivided Punjab, their selection was mostly confined to Muslim, Hindu and Sikh Jats. With the division of the country, the Muslim jawans and officers mostly opted for Pakistan. The Punjabi segment of the Indian Army comprised mostly young men coming from the Jat families of Haryana and Punjab.

In independent India the divisive concept of 'martial races' was rightly abolished. Young men from all sections of society are now free to join the armed forces, subject, of course, to their fulfilling the required standards. So far so good. But then someone decided that future recruitment from Punjab would be in proportion to its population. This in practice meant that the Punjabis would get about 1.5 per cent since they are about a crore and a half in the total Indian population of nearly 70 crores. This is a dangerous concept and is in sharp conflict with national policies. Apart from the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, governmental jobs are given on the basis of merit. Once we start recruitment in any service on communal proportional basis, we lay the foundation for the fragmentation of our national life. The Akalis have taken up this issue too. According to them no satisfactory reply has been given even by the Prime Minister. I am sure this 'grievance' is somewhat distorted, and the national leadership must correct it even if initially someone has made a mistake.

In a vast and diverse country like India, democratic participation and federally decentralised administration are synonymous. Reluctance to fully grasp the desirability of such devolution of authority to the States is resulting in increasing number of agitations everywhere. The Constitution-makers had the foresight but in the contemporary phase of our history, the political leadership at the Centre has, in practice, diluted this concept. Now you witness Centrally nominated Chief Ministers and Ministers who derive their authority from their party's central leadership rather than from their own people. This reduces their status from that of 'leaders' to 'subedars'. This line of thinking has given birth to 'regionalism' and one now sees quite a few States preferring regional parties with local roots.

Centre-State relationships are now assuming the shape of serious controversy. With the passage of time, the federal polity of India has been weakened. The Central Government (more informally than formally) has assumed most of the powers. This trend is weakening the infrastructure of our national life. A large number of problems emanate from the false belief that centralisation of powers makes a country strong. On the contrary, this leads to the emergence of a callous bureaucracy. Local leaderships lose contact with grass-roots and start paying court to powerful coteries in Delhi. As a result, local frustration leads to agitations and the setting up of regional parties.

In Punjab the movement for devolution of powers has been led by the Akali Party. Both the BJP and the Congress have exhibited a lack of interest. If at all, these parties, representing the bulk of Hindu opinion, have given the impression that they would prefer the status-quo or even more centralisation.

In totality, divisive politics has now led to a situation when, both politically and economically, the Akalis have been invested with the task of raising the voice of Punjab, while others — non-Akali Sikh leaders and the Hindu leaderships — have led themselves to believe that they have to remain cool or lukewarm. A joint broadbased Punjabi front around the vital issues of Punjab

(Continued on page 34)

Social Change and the Unchanging Press

M. CHALAPATHI RAU

I must confess that in my early post-graduate years in the early thirties I was attracted more to the Soviet Union and Communism than to nationalism because I could not understand Gandhi's methods and remained unaffected by what seemed his eccentric movements. Communism too seemed a moderate creed to me in those days. I wanted immediate revolution and when Comrade Chandram was being transformed from a nationalist to a Communist I called myself an atheist and socialist. And since then I have remained a firm and committed socialist throughout.

All these years I found it useful as a journalist not to be member of any party while remaining unashamedly socialist. As one of those intensely interested in national freedom, I along with others am supposed to have made some sacrifices. But they are nothing before what Comrade Chandram and others made. Not the least important of his services has been his contribution to the founding of progressive, Communist journals in Telugu. Apart from other journals and newspapers he was the organiser of *Visalaandhra*, a newspaper which I was receiving from the day of its birth and the services of which to the social revolution in Andhra in particular have been well known.

I have been campaigning for years for change in the ownership structure of newspapers and I admire the way Visalaandhra and other Communist journals run by dedicated journalists have been organised and run. The broad feature of the Indian press is that it is an industry which is owned and managed by other industries and whether even the modest recommendations of the Second Press Commission will be implemented or not, the growth of newspapers run by parties committed to social and economic change can be one of the checks to the stranglehold of the capitalist and monopoly press whose editors enjoy freedom to write on some matters but not on the need for social and economic change...

Newspapers in general, particularly newspapers run by big business houses with their demoralising [redacted] can identify their ownership and their policies. Press opinion in general too has valued party journals, but while the Congress and other parties have no discipline or certainty of policy in running their journals, I welcome the existence of Communist journals as they are committed to progressive principles and policies.

I must now come to the subject I have chosen as the theme of the First Chandram Memorial Lecture. I thought that the most appropriate theme in memory of Comrade Chandram and newspapers like Visalaandhra with which he was associated, would be "Social Change and the Unchanging Press", which is my favourite subject also.

To take you back to the true origin of newspapers and the meaning of news, which is related to anything that is new, not mere sensation. According to the old American definition if a man bites a dog it is news, and if a dog bites a man it is not news—in the search for circulation, not to serve the people. If the press has any social role it must be concerned with what is new. In this sense change is news and lack of change also is news. Social and economic change is the most important, but in the big business newspapers with their resources or in the glossy magazines which are growing like mushrooms from untaxed profits, with all their attempts at what is called investigative reporting, social values and what is socially important do not matter. It is sensation that is sought and it is valueless vulgarisation that is achieved. It has been my life-long conviction that the only worthwhile sensationalism is the sensation of social and economic change. Unfortunately for the Indian press, from the time of Mahatma Gandhi to that of Maneka Gandhi, the press has been specialising in the cult of personality. What some person does, how he behaves or what he says is important, not the issues that matter, the causes that move men, the desperate needs and urges of the people at large, the living conditions of jhuggi dwellers and pavement dwellers.

The romance of Malkhan Singh's surrender is source of all other corruption apart from the economic causes including capitalism under the patronage of multinationals and international funds.

The journalist is a historian in a hurry, but even in his hurry he should not, if he is to be true to his profession, give up the historical sense, forget the historical perspective. He has to combine many disciplines and in recording and interpreting what is happening to the society around him, he has to be a sociologist also. It is the social responsibility that is lacking in much of the new journalism, which is an extension of the *Time* tradition of sensation and manipulation which Henry Luce started and which is often used to make the world safe for capitalism. I do not want to deal here with the role of press barons who Baldwin, the British Prime Minister, said enjoyed the privilege of the harlot throughout the ages, power without responsibility. There is much talk of democracy with the ruling party distorting it every day but little recognition that democracy cannot prevail in the conditions of capitalism and can go only with socialism.

It becomes the duty of the mass media, though the application of the word 'mass' to people was deprecated long ago by Carlyle, not only to record whatever social and economic change takes place but to promote it. The word socialism seems to have been banned from the vocabulary of most political parties. In the Sixth Plan document, Indira Gandhi mentions the word Socialism in the first para of her foreword. But socialism does not occur elsewhere in the whole Plan document, either the name or the content. Socialism has been receding in recent years. While rooted in capitalism and ground between inflation and corruption, we are helplessly witnessing the rapid growth of the big business press and the link between the Government, big business, the big business press and the Government-controlled media. Large segments of society are not covered. The working class, the poor peasant, the landless labourer do not exist for the mass media. It is natural for Congressmen of the ruling party variety to forget socialism when they are not prepared to read even Nehru's works, apart from their aversion to Nehru's policies. Nehru kept socialism alive at least as a goal. It has been annotated into social transformation and other things now but there is no attempt at transforming anything and socialism is no longer the goal.

The planning process has become a distorted, disjointed process. Every country plans and even capitalist countries plan. In Indian conditions planning could only be socialist planning but, the Indian people have lost track of planning because there was a Plan holiday or a period of planlessness, later called rolling plans. It is possible to plan democratically, if the people are taken into confidence and their needs are consulted, but planning divorced from responsibility and action would be largely Platonic. India's problem is to stick to processes known to be democratic and plan for turning an underdeveloped economy into a self-generating economy.

The lesson from planned economies has been that under-developed countries can make rapid advances by planning and sacrificing some consumer needs in the short run. Such planning is not easily accepted in India where socialism even to many socialists means only social and economic betterment, not basic social and economic transformation. It should be possible to take planning to the people even if they cannot be consulted on Plan targets. For participation in planning, one should know one's share of the Plan, each production unit should know its target in each Plan and publicity can be a part of the Plan, not something adhering to it. Every Indian in the field or factory or elsewhere should know what his share is in the Plan, particularly at the Plan site, not only Delhi or the State capitals. In such planning, newspapers can play their part as an instrument of change, and planning and publicity can be one process. This is not totalitarianism. It is common sense and is the only way that the benefits of development will be distributed and not go only to the rich.

The cult of personality, whether it is Indira Gandhi, Maneka Gandhi or Malkhan Singh, means the apotheosis of the individual which is not good for democracy. Lord Acton with his great foresight not only said that power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely, but that the so-called great men were almost all bad men. Napoleon believed himself to be a man of destiny. He had a steep and tragic fall from power and glory, and it is surprising that a biographer of Nehru called him a man of destiny. Nehru himself said that we are all men and women of desitny.

Present-day journals, which seek to be popular by trying to be sensational, are practising the cult of personality in the crudest possible form and by avoiding analysis and analysing only what is superficial in an artificial style are making of instant history a vulgar version of human affairs. The cause of social change is more important than the cause of uncovering scandals or crime, though these should be quickly exposed and promptly punished.

If the country has arrived at its present phase I think there must have been something wrong with Gandhi, something wrong with Nehru and, of course, many things wrong with Indira Gandhi. As in the time of the Caesars we ask for bread but get only circus. Freedom has assumed many forms but has not acquired social and economic content. It is difficult for the mass media to rise above the environment but it is the duty of the mass media to remember their social role and try to change the environment. If they forget their social role they need not exist at all. Radio and TV are not playing their part even in chronicling whatever development is there because they are dominated by the personality cult, and the freedom of what is known as the free press has no meaning with the present forms of ownership, management and control.

It is for the practitioners of the profession of broadcasting and of journalism to endow their activities with social purpose. And for this not only should they show intellectual honesty and courage but work for restructuring of the mass media in social interest.☐

An Orissa Study

Rural Development Snags

KAILAS SARAP

THE incidence of rural poverty in Orissa has reached alarming proportions. About 67 per cent of the population were below the poverty line in 1977-78. Over 76 per cent of operational holdings are below two hectares in size. The households concerned cultivate tiny parcels of land which are inadequate to support them at a decent level. More than 10 per cent of rural households work as tenants, paying a large portion of their produce to the landlords. Further, 30 per cent of rural households work as agricultural labourers on daily and seasonal basis. They are mostly from Scheduled Castes and Tribes. The SC and ST population constitutes 40 per cent of the total population. These sectors of the rural community form the majority of the rural poor in the State. The operational priority for planners in Orissa is how to increase productive employment and income by raising the productivity of land and labour of the rural poor.

Rural development in Orissa has been virtually synonymous with agricultural development. Rice is the single largest crop, covering nearly 80 per cent of the gross cropped area. The yield of winter rice, which constitutes 80 per cent of the total rice production and covers 77 per cent of the total rice area, has been stagnating (yield 9 quintals per hectare) for the last two decades. In the State, 87 per cent of the population depends on agriculture. Thus, agriculture in Orissa is characterised by acute land scarcity, labour abundance, massive dependence on rice combined with low productivity.

The strategy of development in the first two decades after Independence was to maximize GNP through increasing investment. It was believed that the growth of GNP would ameliorate poverty. This expectation was belied in the early 1970s and emphasis was shifted to attacking mass poverty through rural development. Thus, a number of programmes including labour-intensive employment-oriented schemes, minimum needs programmes, the Small Farmer Development Agency (SFDA), Marginal Farmers Development Agency (MFDA), Drought-Prone Areas Programme (DPA) and Antyodaya were started in the early seventies. Of late many of these programmes have been grouped under the Integrated Rural Development (IRD) Scheme. The basic instruments of implementation will be ongoing programmes administered through Government machinery with credit support from institutions.

Rural development is interpreted to mean improving the living standard of the mass of the population (low income group) and making their development self-sustaining. Any such programme should have three important strands. Firstly, setting priorities in the mobilisation and allocation of resources to provide welfare and productive services to the subsistence rural sector over time. Secondly, mass participation to assure channellising and effective utilisation of resources in the desired direction and making the services reach the mass of the poor. Thirdly, to make progress self-sustaining, development, participation and coordination of institutions at local and regional level are required. These institutions are necessary to mobilise resources (physical, financial and manpower) for the speedy and continuous development of the area. Continuous interaction and coordination are necessary among participating institutions.

The present article analyses the process of interaction between some participating institutions under the IRD Scheme which has been in operation under the SFDA in Sambalpur district, western Orissa, in recent years. The SFDA has been working in the district for seven years now. Its area of operation was confined to 16 non-irrigated blocks (out of a total of 29 blocks). It has covered 159 gram panchayats in 2061 villages with a population of 8.08 lakhs. During 1980-81, all the 29 blocks of the district were covered under the operational zone of the SFDA. At present it is known as District Rural Development Agency.

The purpose of the agency is to assist small and marginal farmers, agricultural and non-agricultural labourers, and rural artisans to improve their living standard. This has been done under different schemes covering agriculture, animal husbandry, piggery, fishery and rural industries. Eligible members are being identified and given help under different schemes by various institutions of the district. Broadly speaking, most of the schemes are credit-oriented. There have been some achievements under these programmes, but there are some constraints that have inhibited progress.

To what extent have the programmes been effective in improving the living standard of the beneficiaries? What constraints have been faced in realising the objectives? How have these constraints been removed? What are the implications of the performance of the programmes for choice of target groups, types of targets, policies and institutions in order to improve the condition of the poor masses? Some of these issues will be touched upon here with particular reference to Sambalpur district. The observations are based on the experience of these programmes in the second half of the 1970s.

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Agriculture is the mainstay of the population of the district. Nearly 66 per cent of households derive their income from agriculture. More than 70 per cent of the operational holdings are below two hectares in size. About 38 per cent of the cultivated area consists of *Att* (ridges) and another 34 per cent *Mal* land (slope). These are inferior land and require tremendous improvement. Hardly one-fifth of the net sown area is irrigated. Out of 29 blocks, eleven are irrigated by the Hirakud Canal project, irrigating 459 villages in these blocks. The other 18 blocks are rain-fed. Credit requirement for cultivation is mostly met by the district central co-operative bank and is being distributed through primary cooperative societies. Of late, commercial banks including the Regional Rural Bank have started financing agricultural operations. But the amount of bank finance is meagre, especially in dry areas. Moreover, most of these banks are located in urban areas. For instance, out of 38 branches of commercial banks functioning in the district, 21 are located inside Sambalpur town. A majority of small farmers have been left out of the purview of formal credit institutions. The share of informal credit in meeting the needs of marginal farmers (holding below one hectare) is the highest. Nearly 78 per cent of these households secure their credit needs from informal sources. About 98 per cent of the agricultural labourers have no access to the formal credit market. The SFDA has been working in the district for the last seven years in the above background.

The performance of the SFDA shows the following trend. Up to 1979-80, 48,652 small farmers, 49,919 marginal farmers, 1,945 agricultural labourers, 23 non-agricultural labourers and 16 others have been enrolled in the agricultural cooperatives. Up to December 1979, the cooperatives have sanctioned Rs 58.02 lakhs as medium-term farm loans and Rs 66.02 lakhs as long-term loans to enrolled members. The commercial banks have financed them to the extent of Rs 12.56 lakhs during the same period. During 1979-80, the total amount of credit availed of by the selected beneficiaries came to Rs 198.18 lakhs, of which cooperatives alone financed 67 per cent. Up to 1979-80, 11,559 small farmers and 7,954 marginal farmers have been motivated to adopt improved agricultural practices including introduction of High Yielding Varieties (HYV) seeds during the kharif and rabi seasons. The SFDA has provided finance for 10,051 dugwells, 283 pumpsets, 450 units of milch cows, 3,406 units of goats and sheep, 62 units of agricultural implements, 1,137 pairs of bullocks and 146 bullock-carts. Under the minor irrigation programme, irrigation potential to the extent of about 4,000 acres has been created.

Though more than one lakh members have been identified, less than one-fourth of them have received some benefits. Further, some of the benefits are potential in the sense that they are yet to be realised. Both in SFDA and IRD programmes, more than 60 per cent of the total expenditure has been spent on minor irrigation. Only half of the dugwells financed had been completed. Similarly, many community irrigation projects were incomplete. Non-completion of irrigation projects and dugwells has been a continuing feature since the inception of the agency. Moreover, hardly 4,000 small and marginal farmers and agricultural lobourers have received some sort of benefits annually. Agricultural labourers have received marginal benefits and non-agricultural labourers and rural artisans are yet to get any. By and large the labourers have been left out. No attempt has been made to popularise dry farming technology. The performance of the SFDA suggests that progress is minimal and slow.

One important aspect is that these schemes have been implemented on the existing infrastructure and institutions without taking into account their effectiveness in implementing the schemes. The progress seems to have been tardy because of the interplay of several factors — like poor infrastructure, lack of coordination among participating institutions, dominance of certain forces in the credit institutions and the existing agrarian structure in the district. There are no up-to-date land records with the farmers. Several factors work against the small farmers getting credit from the institutions. The bureaucratic and complex procedures of identification of beneficiaries and getting loans deter many small farmers from going to these institutions. Without proper land records, many small farmers cannot get credit and subsidy from these institutions. Since the principal criterion for getting credit is ownership of land, tenants without any land rights are debarred. Tenancy arrangement is mostly informal. Therefore, informal tenants are left out in respect of benefits. On the other hand, large farmers, due to faulty land records, can avail of the benefits meant for small farmers. The provision for guarantors and the unfavourable terms and conditions of credit discourage many small borrowers. The risks involved in the new allied activities may also discourage many poor farmers from seeking loans from the institutions for these new activities. The frequent occurrence of diseases among domestic birds (hen, duck) may deter them from taking loans. Similarly, marginal farmers have to apportion their time between working for daily wages and animal husbandry. When they evaluate their daily work and uncertain income from the new activity, they do not like to take a risk.

The cooperative societies are the premier institutions through which the major part of the credit is distributed. A large number of cooperatives serving in the dry areas of the district are dormant or non-viable units. Further, the percentage of overdues to total loan outstanding in the SFDA area is very high. For instance, in the district as a whole, more than 50 per cent of the total borrowing members are defaulters, and it is higher in the dry areas. Moreover, the managing bodies of the cooperatives are heavily influenced by large farmers, and the so-called small farmers are either traders or contractors and the like and derive a major portion of their income from sources outside agriculture. It has been found that the same members continue in the management of the cooperative for more than one term in one or other capacity. Conversely, genuine small farmers are not in a position to participate in the decision-making process of these institutions. Rather, the pseudo small farmers represent the genuine ones in the governance of these institutions. They seem to influence the credit-giving institutions in their own favour. As a result, while the bulk of available credits is swallowed by a few big and influential farmers, the large number of small farmers do not get loans at all or get insignificant amounts though they are members of the cooperatives.

The system of crop loan distribution, under which the farmers are first given fertiliser, and then cash after an interval, is time-consuming and costly for the small farmers. It also delays their agricultural operations. In such a situation, getting credit at a later date may induce the farmers to spend the money for other purposes, including consumption and repayment of old debts. Further, the impact of shortage of fertiliser in the peak season falls more on the small farmers than on the large farmers. Late arrival of fertiliser is aggravated by poor infrastructural facilities, especially in the Kharif season. Sometimes, the cooperative officials sanction a smaller amount of cash than provided for, discouraging small borrowers from misusing the loan. Ultimately, the amount becomes meagre even if credit is availed of. The lower marketable surplus with the small farmers in dry areas also influences the cooperative officials unfavourably in the disbursal of loans. Occasional embezzlement of funds by some cooperative officials and its adverse impact on the members discourage new and poor borrowers from approaching the cooperatives.

Marketing arrangements for products are very poor. Though this affects every section of the farming community, the small farmers are affected in greater measure. They sell the produce at a lower price immediately after harvest, buy for consumption at a later date at higher price, and sometimes tie their crops against credit taken earlier. Those cultivators who have been denied access to the formal credit market rely heavily on local credit markets and get lower price when they sell their products. In such a situation, middlemen or creditors siphon away the major portion of the gains from the crops of the small farmers.

Though coordination and monitoring activities are important functions of the SFDA, its performance in this regard has been miserable. Coordination between the SFDA and the participating institutions is inadequate. This seems to be one reason for the non-utilisation of the major portion of the money allocated to the SFDA. Since each participating institution (such as co-operative commercial bank) is guided by its parent organisation, its objectives do not conform to the guidelines given by the SFDA. As a result, there is difficulty in implementation of objectives. One important aspect is that the SFDA has been coordinating the new activities with the existing institutions without any structural changes. In this process, the existing agrarian structure has more or less been left untouched. Infrastructural development has been given secondary importance. As a result, even existing institutions cannot function properly.

The present strategy of rural development has hardly helped in bridging the gap between irrigated and non-irrigated areas and between farmers and non-farmers, including labourers. The ongoing programmes have failed to check the migration of small and marginal farmers from non-irrigated to irrigated areas as seasonal labourers. In this situation, without proper implementation of land reforms, provision of flow irrigation and consumption credit on favourable terms to small farmers, the impact of these programmes on the social structure will be marginal. Restructuring of co-operatives is necessary to accommodate the poor. There should be proper evaluation of all major programmes to know the shortcomings of the existing mode of operation and the impact on the beneficiaries. □

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Hungary's Experience

Interaction of Political and Economic Development

REZSO NYERS

SURVEYING the stages that changed the fortunes of Hungarian society progressing along the socialist road, some telling dates spring to mind: 1945, then 1948, and finally 1956-57 mark general political changes of great consequence. The process of change that began in the summer of 1953 might have assumed similar significance had it not bogged down, the country not having done its political homework, not to mention the internal divisions of the Hungarian Working People's Party. As a result the nation was only able to show that it had learnt its lesson after 1957.

How do these stages link up? In my view 1945, for a number of reasons, can be said to be the starting-point of developments which led to contemporary Hungarian society. That was the break with past continuities, and that was when the democratic revolution opened a new path to the future. The nation has undoubtedly left behind most of the political problems of the post-liberation years, but the link between the situation then and the present is continuous on essential questions: the character and institutions of the people's power, the political role of the working class, cultural policy, and working conditions. But during the period 1945-48, the character the future Hungarians were to choose for themselves still appeared as a choice of alternatives in politics, amidst growing excitement and increasingly acute clashes. Will it be merely political democracy within the framework of a bourgeois society, or the building of socialism under the aegis of a more complete democracy? When it comes to the decision on this question, 1945 cannot be regarded as the starting-point.

In 1948, the year of change, the Hungarian working class and its allies — the majority at the time in the political sense of the term — chose the building of socialism, and the greater part of the people, hoping for a better life, accepted and supported this endeavour. This is why 1948 can be said to be the starting-point of the building of socialism.

Therefore, 1948 is a shining year in the rise of the Hungarian people, making history as it did based on a popular consensus with a character all its own. The programmatic declaration of the Hungarian Working People's Party was truly forward-looking, the legislation passed in the year of change was progressive and stood the test of time, the nationalisation of manufacturing industry asserted the public interest, the prestige of the united party of workers was extremely high, yet that party was not in a monopoly position, since the control mechanism of political democracy was still operative. The later distortions were certainly present in the bud in the political thinking of the leadership, yet political public life as a whole guaranteed a favourable start for the building of socialism.

BY 1949, however, the situation had changed. The leadership of the HWPP had liberated itself of all political control by then, and carried out a new, hidden change in the party line as well as in economic policy. From then on, political leadership displayed arbitariness in determining aims, it no longer cultivated social concord, it simply demanded it. The road led straight from there to the crisis of 1953-56. It was obvious that the political elbow-room of the opponents of the socialist line had to be restricted during the period of implementation of revolutionary changes, since the uncertainties and difficulties that accompanied the revolutionary transition offered one-sided advantages to the opposition, to the enemies of socialism concentrating on the given period of time. But it was by no means necessary to make the complete elimination of political democracy the bedfellow of the building of socialism, and that is what happened, for the operation of even the parties of the People's Front became impossible. Perhaps an even more serious mistake was that no attempt was made to give more emphasis to the operation of the socialist system of democratic federations in order to balance the absence of party politics. The trades union lived a shadow-life, and the People's Front was allotted a role that was less than formal. The result of all of that was that the nation started on the construction of socialism using political methods and a mechanism which did not serve, but hindered the great and noble aim, for the leadership of the country was not subjected to control or criticism, nothing could save it from errors and, indeed, certain crimes.

Hindsight allows us to make a fine yet substantial distinction between 1948, the year of change, and the serious distortions that occurred from 1949 onwards. These grave errors and distortions commenced in 1949 in law enforcement as well as in economic policy and other areas. This distinction assumed particular importance during the 1956 crisis, when the question was how far to withdraw after having sailed a wrong course? Imre Nagy and those close to him were pressed to choose 1945 as a starting situation by the leaders of the former coalition parties who had been eliminated as well as by counter-revolutionary forces. The revolutionary

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wing led by Janos Kadar in essence chose 1948 as the starting-point, that is, they returned to the programmatic declaration of the HWPP as a conceptual basis. Considering matters from the position of socialism, it can hardly be doubted that the latter was the sound position, the only one that was correct and feasible.

WHAT does the description of the tragic events of the end of 1956 as a counter-revolution mean? In its December 1956 resolution, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party took careful stock of the factors that triggered the crisis and the political ambitions that manifested themselves in the course of the crisis, and finally traced back the events to the combined effect of four major causes. Looking back with hindsight and as free from bias as humanly possible, the presentation of the four causes side by side cannot be interpreted as a simple compromise, but rather as a realistic assessment of complicated interconnections. The position taken up on the day pointed emphatically to outside imperialist and local Horthyite-reactionary forces, which wished to push the nation off the course of socialism, yet it did not declare such hostile manipulations to be the sole cause. Well aware of the impossibility of accounting for widespread popular disaffection merely by hostile manipulations — as dogmatic Communists did — the Party looked for the real basis, and found it in the grave errors of the politics hallmarked by the names of Rakosi and Gero. In addition the responsibility of the inter-party opposition for the events was stressed for, even though that opposition rightly opposed the deep-rooted sectarian dogmatic policy, it chose the wrong means, political manipulation, to fight dogmatism. It underestimated efforts by those hostile to socialism and, in the course of events, became increasingly dependent on these hostile forces.

When all is said and done, the reason why the 1956 events became counter-revolutionary was that positive efforts directed at a renewal of socialism were relegated to the background, and a tendency to restore conditions antedating socialism gained gradual ascendence. The vast job of renewing Hungarian socialism awaited the HSWP after the counter-revolution had been overcome.

Many writers on politics have pointed out that correct trends accompanied grave errors in the economic policy of the 1949-1956 period, and that the latter increasingly clashed with the former. Potentiated accumulation and the acceleration of industrialisation were really necessary and correct, but their exaggeration did more harm than good, for the conditions of life of the masses deteriorated and as a result difficult-to-restore imbalances were caused in the economy. Even though eventually industrialisation became a great achievement that benefited the nation, it has to be admitted that, had it continued at the same exaggerated and erroneous rate after 1956, it almost certainly would have led to the downfall of socialism in Hungary.

AFTER 1956, the great dilemma of the Hungarian Communist movement was to correctly delineate which of the earlier policies should be continued, and what changes should be carried out in the political line. Where should continuity prevail, and where should a renewal be initiated? It was obvious that socialist objectives and principles had to be maintained while erroneous interpretation as well as wrong practice had to be eliminated. Taking the dilemma by the horns a political renewal was carried out as part of which not only the name of the party was changed, but the essence of policy was also changed, not all at once, but as a gradual process. The policy was, and still is, able to keep up with the long-term requirements of the country, though there have been uncertainties and hesitations from time to time.

The nation has maintained continuity of fundamental socialist aims since 1956, and has approached them steadily, while outlining the picture of a better and clearer socialist future for itself. The nation rid itself of the illusion that this socialist society could become a single, homogeneous community, that a more just, direct exchange of products might largely do away with commodity or money relations, that scientific control of society could increasingly replace politics. Thus the renewal was a step towards realism.

The nation did and does maintain the leading role of the HSWP in order to assert the leading role of the working class; without it the national interest and its realisation would turn into a political will of the wisp. Yet, the interests of the working class are not interpreted narrowly, not as something that by definition and completely expresses the common interest, but neither as something that might deviate from the interest of other people who work in decisive matters. The working-class interest is regarded as being in the focus of an extended policy of alliances which is defined correctly if it is linked with the interests of other sections of the working people. This link is the great, and exciting issue of the country's current domestic policy, and the object of the nation's dilemmas from time to time.

The nation maintains and strengthens the alliance with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, based on a shared interest concerning social engineering and foreign policy. If this alliance is made good use of it can be a real source of strength for socialism as well as for the more direct national interests. We have learned from the fifties, however, that this alliance can also be misused. Hungary no longer interprets the idea of drawing closer of the socialist countries as meaning that economic and political models should be imported from the Soviet Union or other socialist countries. The principled implementation of community policy is now regarded as compatible with the independent determination of the politico-economic strategy and tactics of the nation. The sound determination of this is another important and exciting issue of Hungarian politics. The results of common efforts would manifest themselves more clearly to Hungarian public opinion, were there greater familiarity with, and understanding of, the problem.

THE renewal of economic policy had proceeded in several phases, extended in time, owing partly to the nature of the economy, partly to political reasons. A fundamental renewal has taken place in Hungarian agricultural policy since 1957. This proved all-important, since it led not only to the victory of socialist production relations but also to a long-term boom in production. A process continued successfully to this day was started. As regards investments and industrialisation, the earlier exaggerations and distortions were eliminated after 1957, and the improvement of the living conditions of the masses became one of the major targets. The decisive move as regards economic efficiency and interestedness and democracy on the job was the 1968 economic reform. In my view economic policy became really attuned to the political renewal of 1957 thanks to this reform. The renewal of the economic policy of Hungary has advanced further since 1979-80; the political import of this is partly the more complete realisation of the tasks set in 1968, and partly a better adaptation to the new world economic situation.

The dominance of economic issues in politics, mainly in respect of their social effects and interrelations, but frequently also as regards economic issues in the narrow sense, is common nowadays all over the world. The favourable shaping of economic matters results in political successes, the reverse in political difficulties, in more serious instances outright failures. But not only politics depend on the economy, the reverse is also beyond doubt; numerous — even if not all — conditions of the operation of the economy are functions of political decisions, and if the latter are reasonable, they advance, and do not check economic progress. Mutual inter-dependence is therefore close, politics-free economics do not exist, nor are politics free of economic aspects. But the two spheres nevertheless are delimited from one another both in capitalist and in socialist conditions, their relative independence survives.

In broad outline, the situation is that the state takes up a position outside the economy in capitalist societies, and exerts influence from there, while under socialism, the state is within the economy — true, only with some of its activities — and acts there as the central planner and owner. Yet politics manifest themselves not only within the framework of the bilateral state-enterprise relations, but simultaneously also in the peculiar triangular relationship system of state-enterprise-social organisations. The function of politics is in essence to relay or assert some general social interest addressed to or within the economic sphere. The question is, in fact, what the interest of society is at a given point of time, how far that can be outlined politically, and how it can be asserted.

Experience at home warns that political activity should be concentrated on problems of national scope and importance, that the activities of economic bodies should be regulated, stimulated, and controlled in the interest of such national issues — except for enterprises, since they cannot be centrally managed by way of political decisions or obligatory plans. When all is said and done it is more effective to acknowledge the relative independence of the economy using indirect means, since these can really exert political influence on the totality of enterprises in the social interest, particularly in respect of quality factors, efficiency, production structure, innovations, and market adaptability. In this context, the national plan is more than a forecast, but less than an order, since it requires independent assessment of the situation, and independent action on the part of economic bodies. This way of looking at things relies on people, generally on the human factor, far better than the over-centralised model, and this is precisely what makes it socially reasonable.

THE concerted economic interest in the critical problems of general economic development can be clearly expressed on the political plane, but this needs a political mechanism which is closely related to the economy, which helps to explore and adjust real interests, which assists the intellectual maturation and proper manifestation of alternative possibilities. The development of a socialist political mechanism of this kind is made difficult by the fact that the political institutional system had, for a long time, been developed according to a different concept. This hampers but cannot prevent further progress along the course chosen. One could enumerate at length the difficulties, shortcomings, occasional absurdities of Hungarian economic practice that also arise as political questions, or — calling a spade a spade — are subject to politicking. These are specific problems of various occupations, more or less of various fields, differing in this or that. When the complaints and the recommendations concerning them are passed on ever upwards in the mechanism of politics believing that they could be solved this way, their solution is not promoted, but hindered. The central or district political leadership can do no more in most of such cases than turn back the upward-driven stream of the problems in the direction of the scene of the trouble, accompanied perhaps by some thunder and lightning. Real corrections can only be carried out where the fault originated, therefore political control can also be really effective only in the vicinity of operations. I believe that not only the economic mechanism, but also this sorting out ability of the political mechanism should be improved for two reasons: firstly in order to solve a larger proportion of the concrete problems, and secondly to ensure that political efforts should be concentrated on general subjects of great importance which, from the point of view of the whole of the nation, are key issues concerning a secure future.

I should like to refer to three lines of action of outstanding importance, which are such key issues; from the aspect of the political present as well as the future of Hungary:

— balanced and developing external economic relations, since either development or balance characterised recent years, the two together have not occurred yet;

— increasing economic efficiency faster, in order to obtain substantially more surplus value given the social capital, labour, and material input, thus improving the inner balance of the economy;

— increasing the intensity and effectiveness of personal and community cooperation to ensure smoother operation of the horizontal and vertical social division of labour, thus achieving better economic results and improved political general conditions.

The reason why I call these action-directions is that they do not express direct, strictly delineated tasks that can be carried out (not even on a local scale), but the thinking through and rethinking, planing and organisation, and correction of many-many things to be done. Furthermore, there are action lines not only for the economy, but also for the whole of society, since success can only be realised and sweated out with the concerted labour of society; and the economic sphere by itself could not do that.

EXTERNAL economic cooperation as a general political problem, and not as a specialised issue concerning trade, must be increasingly and permanently focused upon by the whole of Hungarian society. The professional aspects must be left to economists (and they have to be trusted) since interfering with them from the outside, though not dangerous, is risky. But there is a point where the subject becomes of public concern, and since it is impossible to define precisely where that point lies, one could say that sometimes it has to be discovered with the help of the art of politics.

Should Hungary develop her external economic relations slowly, the whole of Hungarian development would also be slow by necessity, consequently living conditions could hardly be improved, or not at all. Hungary has been in such a situation for the third year running now, and .though it is hardly possible to spectacularly and quickly break out of this grip, it is possible to overcome it with a well-considered strategy; and stubborn effort, in spite of the fact that a substantial improvement of external conditions cannot as yet be foreseen.

A long-term feature of the Hungarian national economy is parallel cooperation with the two spheres of the world economy, socialist as well as capitalist world markets; that is, if Hungary wants to progress, she has to produce better results in both. This is already beyond debate. CMEA will continue to be of prime importance, but not in the sense that Hungarian competitiveness on the socialist as well as on the capitalist markets has to be improved above all by reliance on CMEA.

The fundamental change in the economic circumstances of socialist countries has a profound effect on socialist economic cooperation. One of the noteworthy symptoms of the new situation is that the other socialist countries are only slowly switching to the intensive — that is, efficiency-driven — development of their economies, Another fact, of great importance to Hungary, is that the motor of socialist cooperation. the Soviet economy, was thrown into lower gear, aiming at external cooperation of a different structure, and this has a less stimulating effect on the development of the smaller economies. It is likely that this also signals a lasting change, to which Hungary must adjust in the appropriate way. These facts give rise to the stepped-up development of the — unfortunately not sufficiently intensive — relations between the smaller socialist countries, and the vigorous improvement of competitivity in cooperation with the non-socialist world.

HUNGARIANS accept the stress of economic policy on economic efficiency with understanding, following it mostly with sympathy, and in a number of instances actively supporting it. Nevertheless, keeping an eye on the broader spheres of public life, one may also get the impression that a simplified image of the things to be done may be dominant in political public opinion, such as: "Everybody should work better, and in a more disciplined way," "Let us produce more and better for export," "Useful innovations should not be rejected, but introduced," "He who works better should be paid more, the laggards less," "Carelessness should be punished more severely," etc. Every one of these point to correct directions to be followed, but the gist of the matter is the "how," and implementation stands or falls on that. It is precisely this "how" that creates tensions, that often upsets the accustomed rhythm of everyday life, which tests the understanding and the will of people concerning cooperation. It is not rare that the positive main effect of a decision — for instance a production structure that adjusts better to demand — is accompanied, even if only temporarily, by negative side-effects, perhaps by a certain transfer of labour. Can things be done, or should difficulties caused by side-effects mean retreat? Those who recommend the elimination of the side-effects are the same who — as Count Istvan Szechenyi said — hide behind the cloak of doing nothing. The whole of Hungarian public life has to seriously face the problem of efficiency, not only as an economic, but also as a political issue, just as Istvan Szechenyi and his reformist contemporaries faced the economic problems of their own age.

From the standpoint of the stepping up, and quality value of economic achievement, Hungary can in no way abandon the further improvement of the division of tasks between the state and enterprise spheres. The economic management activity of the state and social bodies active on the national level developing the economic environment that surrounds enterprises, and stimulates their activity must really be made more efficient. Central plans and regulations have a dual effect: on the one hand, they prompt or force something, and on the other, they limit the utilisation of the means, and their combination on the enterprise level. The sound proportion of prodding and limiting is the key problem. Without questioning the momentary possibilities in this respect, I should like to point out. as the direction of further development, that increasing the achievement-stimulating power of the economic environment, and decreasing the means-limiting role of regulations are desirable, for this is one of the conditions leading to the actual and vigorous development of enterprise on the part of those who do the actual managing. From the standpoint of the future, this is the question of questions.

If the economic process is examined in the aspect of human activity, a multitude of work-cooperations can be observed: in the phase that is preparatory to production, during the work process in the narrow sense, and in marketing. Similar cooperations characterise the wide field of the service industries. Society has to be able to raise the level of efficiency of this multitude of cooperations in work in order to considerably improve the efficiency of management. This is also a matter of "how". There are some well-proven means, such as the socialist brigade movement, but new ones also have to be found, for a truly fundamental improvement is needed. The "how" is not simple, since the task itself is very complex: technical relationships have to be made smoother, the system of incentives has to be brought closer to smaller collectives, the direct control of the work process must be radically improved, and beyond all these, people themselves, who are in direct relation with one another by way of their activities, must be better attuned to each other. Summing up, I should say: all this requires a better organisation of the economic process, and also more far-reaching democracy on the job.

I think Hungarians will have to continue the drive to develop the concrete democracy of their economic activities on clarified conceptual grounds, gradually coupling their influence on decisions with responsibility. This is possible if the functions of ownership and enterprise are distinguished in the economy, and the relationship of the two is made clearer. In the instance of cooperatives, it seems that the correct settlement of this matter should be arranged on the basis of self-government, taking that to a logical conclusion, and in the case of state enterprises by the notion that the state exercises the rights of ownership — it will be worth examining which organisation does that. As far as enterprises are concerned activities should be regarded as a joint venture of the state and the working collective; therefore both parties should share in the results, or the lack of them, in proportion to their risks. The condition of all this is that profits should increasingly and better express the social usefulness of activities.

The Hungarian working-class movement learnt from the severe political and economic crises of 1956 that a basically mistaken policy cannot be corrected piecemeal, gradually, almost imperceptibly, but a political turn, a profound renewal is necessary to achieve results. The fact that under the banner of the HSWP retreat from an erroneous course was successfully accomplished, and the 1948 programme realised parallel with the observation of the 1945 values, may be regarded as historic good fortune.

I should like to underline as a conclusion that Communist policy, the policy of national unity can never consist of other than the safeguarding and renewal appropriate to the place and time. ☐

Hungary Risks IMF Den

SAM RUSSELL

BANKERS of the Western world are not normally regarded as the godfathers of Socialism and even less as midwives to a Marxist economy, so how does it come about that Hungary's Marxist economists are in agreement with Washington's bankers on the advantages likely to accrue to Hungary from membership of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank?

That is the question that I put to a number of Hungarian economists, bankers and businessmen during my visit, including Prof. Jozef Bognar, director of the Institute of World Economy, Dr. Tamas Bacskai, managing director of the National Bank of Hungary and many others.

It just happened that Hungary's economists were in session at the time and among the papers read to the assembly was one by Ferenc Havasi, a secretary of the central committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and member of its political committee.

"We have recently been admitted to the IMF," he said. "When we submitted our application we clearly stated that a precondition of our membership was that at no time must the sovereignty of the Hungarian economy be called into question."

He also made it clear that among the other conditions that Hungary insisted on was that at no time would the IMF ask for information from Hungary which disclosed data about the other Socialist countries with whom Hungary is allied in the Warsaw Pact and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) which they do not themselves disclose.

"Accepting these conditions," Mr. Havasi added, "the IMF gave a positive response to our application. Our IMF membership is expected to increase our opportunities to obtain credits from the banks of member countries, and as members of the World Bank, too, we will be allowed to participate in tendering for foreign trade contracts which are financed by the World Bank in other countries and to draw credits from the bank to implement other programmes.

"We should never underesti-

This despatch is part of a series on how Hungary is tackling its problems, published in British Communist daily, *Morning Star* (June 30, 1982). Sam Russell is one of the leading Communist correspondents.

mate the tremendous possibilities offered to us by these economic relationships," he said. And, indeed, Hungary recognised these possibilities from 1967, but wanted to obtain a consensus from the CMEA before applying. As one of the bankers whom I interviewed said wryly: "We had to be very patient."

In the end, I was told, the CMEA finance committee agreed that each member country should be able to decide itself whether to join the IMF. Romania joined first, then China, and then Vietnam took over the seat previously occupied by South Vietnam. Since Hungary put in its application, Poland also applied. But because of the present difficult situation, Poland is unlikely to be accepted at the moment.

In a situation in which private bankers are reluctant to lend to Eastern Europe, membership of the IMF means that Hungary has a guarantee that is favourably regarded. As for the information that the IMF insists on having, Hungary was already publishing most of the economic data required such as balance of payments and foreign trade figures, lending and borrowing statistics, and budgetary details which other Socialist countries do not publish.

Even before it became a member of the IMF, Hungary had to change its whole economic policy to reduce its balance of payments deficit, and to build up its reserves to meet interest payments on existing foreign loans. So in this respect IMF rules were already being observed. The country also had to reduce its rate of economic growth for the simple reason that a higher rate of growth meant a higher balance of payments deficit.

In the three years since Hungary imposed these rigorous restrictions on itself, about 1,00,000 people have left industry. I found that nobody was worried about this because it means that productivity has increased. Industry is now producing even more than it was three years ago and with 1,00,000 fewer people.

And simultaneously levels of consumption were being consolidated at 1980 levels, and investment was being reduced, in order to free surpluses for the export trade and to reduce the demand for imports.

But what happened to the 1,00,000? What about the commitment to full employment?

"We want to maintain full employment," I was told, "but not foolish employment. The 1,00,000 found new jobs on their own. Nobody was sacked. What is more, we have to get accustomed to the idea that workers will have to change their jobs and their skills at least two or three times during their working lives.

"The key to the success of our economic reforms has got to be increased productivity, which means increased competitiveness on world markets, which means fewer workers producing more and better, while our internal economy has to reflect changes in world prices."

The new attitude to industrial training this reveals has also resulted in many questions being asked about the country's educational system at all levels. I was told that the whole educational system is being re-organised although I did not have enough time to investigate this important aspect of the changes that are taking place.

In his address to the economists, Mr Havasi said that the implementation of Hungary's new economic policy required talented and also adventurous people "who are also ready to take risks." At the same time, Prof Bognar was telling his audience that they had to be ready "to take political and social risks".

The idea of risk in a Socialist economy is certainly a new concept, quite different from the concept that Socialism somehow automatically assures security and stability in an unstable world situation in which Socialist countries are having to compete. So I asked around to try and discover how the risk factor fits into a planned economy.

Prof. Bognar was quite explicit. The introduction of the planned changes in the country's economic structure would result in political and social changes. Enterprises will have greater powers than in the past and the state less.

As a result many people would be better off and some would be worse off, and so the changes could produce a certain disequilibrium in society. This is where the risk lay.

"Some people will say," said Prof Bognar, "that this sort of risk is too high. But this would be very dangerous. It could result in the country facing bankruptcy as the Poles do at the moment. It would amount to a futile attempt to maintain a phoney stability by ignoring the contradictions that exist in our society and pretending they do not exist.

"It is better to acknowledge that these contradictions do exist, to analyse the situation, and to take resolute steps to try and solve them."

Hungarians at all levels are very conscious of the fact that they are trying to tackle their serious economic problems in the shadow of the events in Poland. They did not mince words in their analysis of the mistakes made by Poland's fallen Communist leader Edward Gierek. Their main criticism is that Polish Communists failed to recognise and study the mistakes made in both Hungary and Poland prior to the 1956 up-

'SAFETY' MATCHES?

Our safety matches are anything but safe ... Gone are the days when during the Second World War people used to split each matchstick into two to economise. Nowadays new matchboxes are appearing in the market, like unwanted babies on the pavement, but almost one half of the sticks in a box are just waste. Even the so-called good brands have dainty boxes but they are full of broken sticks and many of the others are not impregnated. They are likely to burn your fingers and your clothes or even the upholstery in the room. The rate at which our applied science and technology in so far as it concerns the common man is regressing, it probably won't be long before we return to the dark cave and start rubbing stones for making fire and light too.

— From A Ditcher's Diary, *Capital*, August 2, 1982.

heavals.

Why can't the risks involved in joining the IMF and becoming so dependent on the vagaries of the capitalist world market be avoided by relying more on the Socialist countries in CMEA?

The fact is that the whole of the CMEA area is poor in capital in comparison to the capital requirements of the countries in it. At the same time the bilateral barter system which is the main basis of exchange between the member countries is very inflexible.

There is a scarcity of capital, a scarcity of foreign exchange, a declining rate of growth and an inflexible system of trade. So a system of self-reliance inside CMEA is just not on, even if it were politically desirable.

Bankers, economists and party leaders alike are agreed that the new economic reforms constitute a number of calculated risks, but that it is doubtful whether the risks, including those involved in joining the IMF, are greater than those already taken.

"It is paradoxical in a way," one of them said, "that joining the IMF is a means of reducing the risks involved in our trade with the rest of the world, for the IMF provides a sort of insurance policy for us, in the sense that if we run into temporary difficulties we can obtain loans that will tide us over three to five-year periods.

"The risks would be much greater if we carried on as if nothing had changed. Our people have to become accustomed to adjust to a constantly changing economic environment, to change jobs more frequently, to increase labour mobility, to realise that prices on the domestic market have to have a relationship to the prices of those commodities on the world market."

In a situation in which Hungary exports more than Poland, although it has less than a third of Poland's population, the country's economists and industrial leaders know that the agricultural co-operatives have provided a sound basis, not only to ensure adequate supplies for the home market, but also to provide valuable and profitable export surpluses.

The produce of the individual household plots to which each co-operative member is entitled have played a powerful part in providing these surpluses.

Since the beginning of the year, new rules have been introduced to encourage small enterprises and private ventures in trade as well as in the service industries. Encouragement has been given to the formation of new small industrial co-operatives in the shape of tax advantages and loans on favourable terms.

Hungary's co-operative movement has been well-established for many years, but the new rules have given a powerful fillip to the movement and already over 100 new co-ops have been formed of 15 to 100 people each to fill gaps in services to the community that state enterprises have been unable to fill.

The encouragement of this form of private enterprises, hailed in the West as a "return to capitalism," has already stimulated initiatives aimed at providing many services that are badly needed.

The president of the organisation of small industrial co-operatives, Lajos Rev, told me that among the new co-ops that have been formed are ones to repair office machinery, for regular repair and maintenance of lifts, as well as hairdressers and shoe repairers.

Elsewhere, the new co-ops will be able to rent plant in existing enterprises in order to manufacture spare parts and other items which many enterprises do not find it profitable to provide at present. This latest example of the sort of "heretical experiment" that is being tried out in Hungary seems to be catching on.

This is yet another aspect of the flexible application of Socialist economic principles to the specific requirements of the country's economic development in a way which will not only provide people with a more efficient service but will benefit the national economy as a whole. ☐

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Plight of a Bihar Tribe

SACHINDRA NARAYAN

SAURIA PAHARIA are among the more primitive tribes of Bihar. They live in the Santhal Pargana district. The meagre literature available regarding the Sauria Paharia is mainly in the shape of papers, sketchy descriptions in some handbooks, gazetteers, settlement reports and preliminary anthropological essays. L.P. Vidyarthi wrote a book on the Maler of Santhal Pargana explaining Maler in terms of the nature man spirit complex (1963).

Economically they are quite backward and do not have two square meals a day throughout the year. Their population shows a dwindling trend. No medical facility is available and they suffer from various diseases like tuberculosis, leprosy, enlargement of liver, malaria, etc. Many welfare and developmental programmes were launched in the district, but nothing tangible has come out of these.

A pilot survey was undertaken in May 1980 to locate the distribution of Sauria Paharia in Santhal Pargana. Later on, Borio Block was selected because of the predominance of Sauria Paharia population. After the selection of the Block I visited some villages of Borio Block and selected Karam Pahar, Ladoni, Chota Pachrukhi, Bara Pachrukhi and Pachgarh for study. Karam Pahar was exposed to outsiders and the tribals in frequent contact with non-tribals and Santhals; Ladoni served the storage purposes of the Forest Department of the Bihar Government; Chota Pachrukhi and Bara Pachrukhi are not exposed to outsiders; and the Sauria Paharia of Pachgarh are involved by the State's Forest Department in Sabai cultivation.

Though according to census reports Sauria Paharia population has been virtually stagnant at around 58,000 since 1911, a recent field survey undertaken by the author in Sahebganj shows that it is actually declining. According to the 1971 census, the total population of Borio Block is 93,282 (male 46,534 and female 46,748). Scheduled Tribes population in the block is male 30,992 and female 33,026. So far as literacy and educated persons are concerned the figures are male 6043 and female 1272. There are 6552 male and 6561 female Sauria Paharia in Borio Block. If the population of Ladauni village of 1971 is considered, it shows, a decrease from 70 to 65 during a 10-year period (— 4.5 per cent). If it is considered representative it is an indicator of declining population. A look at the total population of Sauria Paharia also suggests that they are the only Scheduled Tribe whose population has consistently been falling from 1931, though the rate of decrease has been slow: — 2.1 per cent in 1931-41 and — 5.1 per cent in 1941-61.

The Sauria Paharia living on hill-tops have the benefit of fresh air and forest products. It is because of this natural factor that despite many health hazards the Paharias are surviving.

Most of the ethnographic reports prepared by anthropologists on Indian tribes refer to the beliefs of the concerned tribes about short and long illness and their traditional methods of curing them, but no one has carried out medical tests on respondents. Here we have taken into account their beliefs associated with illness and a medical check up on the sample population has also been carried out. They believe that if a spirit — maybe of village or of the family — becomes unhappy, one suffers from malaria, T.B., cholera, leprosy, etc. They have their methods of treatment. In most cases they go in for *ojha*, worship, home-made medicine and herbs. They have not availed of allopathic medical facilities extended to them through the Block offices. They have no idea of the Block. None of them, except three persons, could name their block. They complained that no block official has ever visited them. On the question of consulting the qualified medical practitioner of the plains, they said it was difficult for them to think of such treatment when they were not in a position to have even one meal a day round the year.

A medical survey carried out in the sample population revealed that most of them suffer from TB, leprosy and other such diseases. The total population of Chota Pachrukhi is 62 of whom 45 were examined. The majority of them are suffering from tuberculosis, 60 per cent among adult males and 40 per cent among adult females, 18 per cent among male children and 9 per cent among female children. The 45 Paharias examined suffer from diseases like TB, malaria, night blindness, kala-azar, skin diseases including leprosy. It is sad to note that the young ones are also affected by these diseases. The majority of the growing population suffer from night blindness due to malnutrition. Similar is the case with Bara Pachrukhi. The divisional forest office carried out a similar test on 12 Sauria Paharia of Karam Pahar during 1979-80 when ten persons were found to have tuberculosis, one leprosy and one malaria. These facts show the urgent need of attention from administrators, planners and philanthropic institutions.

The family is the most important unit in the Sauria Paharia society. The major economic, social, religious and reproductive activities are centred round the family. A family is usually composed of husband, wife and unmarried children. These constitute an economic unit. The average family size among Sauria Paharia calculated on the basis of five villages comes to 3.5 members per family. The moment the son is married, he builds his own hut in the same village and lives with his wife and

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children. It is considered disgraceful to ask for separation from the family while the father is alive. For economic and social reasons they like to keep their land intact as far as possible. While the father or mother is alive, the youngest son, though married, usually shares the same hut. It is the social obligation of the youngest son to look after his old and at times invalid parents.

When a Paharia marries more than one wife, both wives with their children live in the same hut with the husband. In addition to the cases of polygynous families, other complexities in the Paharia family organisation are brought about by high incidence of divorce and marriage after the death of the first wife. The excessive number of divorces has brought about a great deal of instability in Paharia family life, and the relationship of family members is disturbed from time to time owing to frequent change of spouses in a family. This brings about further insecurity for the children and they learn from the very beginning to depend upon their own labour. As the Paharia family is patrilineal, the husband commands a superior position and his relationship with his wife and other family members is one of super-ordination. Close study of Sauria Paharia husband-wife relationship leads us to infer that the wife is an economic asset, and essentially it is her worry to meet the daily expenses, to take charge of the kitchen, to look after the children and to see that the house is in order. She also extends economic support to the family by selling firewood and other forest products in the bi-weekly market.

The husband-wife relationship among the Paharia is very informal. They may eat together from the same leaf plates and may sit together on the same cot even in the presence of elderly persons. They crack jokes freely.

The pattern of relationship between husband and wife may also be considered in terms of their ritualistic roles. If the wife gives birth to a child, the husband also shares the "pollution" and he also undergoes confinement till the purification or *amcha* ceremony is performed. Before the *amcha* ceremony, that is, up to the fifth day of child-birth, the father of the child, along with the mother, is considered unclean. He is not permitted to go the *khallu* land or enter the houses of his relatives or other villagers. He is not allowed to join any religious ceremony or to attend the meeting of their panchayat. This custom of sharing of impurity by husband and wife perhaps brings about a certain emotional attachment between them. Again, the menstrual period of the wife also brings ritual pollution to the husband. It is strictly taboo for the husband at such times to participate in any ceremony or sacrifice.

In general the relationship between parents and children is very informal. All of them sit together and they may share in drinking *pochai* and at times smoking *chutti*. While the parents expect their son to help them in economic activities as he grows up, they also take care that his life is not endangered in the forest or in the interior *khallu* lands. A Paharia father always sternly warns his son not to go alone into the deep forest, or even in the company of the elder ones. Up to the age of ten the father allows him only to take goats to the outskirts of the forest where there is no danger of coming across wild animals. When he reaches the age of twelve and has gained experience of the forest, he is allowed to take cattle to the interior of the forest. The parents' relationship with the young daughter is also very cordial. They do not make any distinction, nor do they show preference either for a son or a daughter. Birth of son or daughter is equally welcome to the parents. The girl helps her mother in bringing water from the spring and fuel from the forest and in grinding and preparing food; she also looks after her young brothers and sisters. When she is married and goes to live with her husband she fetches a bride price, popularly known as *pawn*, for her parents. Moreover, she also comes to her father's place to help him during the agricultural season. In general, there is no differential treatment between son and daughter.

The natural setting of the Paharia habitat comprises mainly forests and hills. Economically they are primitive and solely depend upon *khallu* (shifting) cultivation. The forest supplements the *khallu* economy of Sauria Paharia in many ways, like royalty for sabai grass and tendu leaves, edible roots and fruits, bamboo, firewood, forest fruits used for commercial purposes, etc.

Being primitive and economically backward, the Sauria Paharia are vulnerable to exploitation. They are exploited by mahajans, police officials, forest officials, block officials, Santhals; by non-tribals in the market; and sometimes by the elite in their own community.

The mahajans play a vital role in their economy. Sauria Paharia are in the habit of taking loans from them. They take loans at the time of clearing the jungle, sowing, harvesting, marriage, death and religious ceremonies. The Paharias say that once they take loan from the mahajan it is difficult to free themselves from debt because the interest goes on multiplying every year. Fifty per cent interest is charged for cash loans while hundred per cent is charged for loans in kind. During the months of November-February — harvesting time in Paharia country — a man on horseback going towards the hills is a common sight. He is the mahajan. After collection the mahajans return from the village with bags full of maize, millet, mustard, etc. They take these grains at current market price measuring them with a wooden measure called *paila* (half seer). The price of grain thus calculated is deducted from the amount of loan given. While returning from the village, they usually inform the Paharia that a certain amount of money still remains to be paid. It is impossible for a Paharia to understand the accounting. In spite of all this the mahajans are popular because they give loans quickly.

The little pieces of land that they still have are cultivated in the majority of cases by Santhal or Hindu mahajans. At Karam village two Sauria Paharia families have given their Bari land to the

(*Continued on page 30*)

WOMEN'S WORLD

Anti-Dowry Backlash

BELA BUTALIA

If the Indian mind is considered deep and unfathomable, that of the Indian male is, by some strange quirk of nature, a black pit full of surprises. While the Capital is buzzing with irate women's organisations, which are trying their best to drill into the people's consciousness that the dowry system is no longer (if ever it was) a prized Indian cultural heritage, but a fast-expanding racket, geared to encourage chauvinism and parasitism, some men seem to have decided that these agitations perhaps aim at restoring dowry given to the daughter if the daughter has died in the house of her husband or in-laws. Such has been the experience of a social work organisation of Delhi, run by a small group of dedicated women.

Perhaps having heard that this organisation is giving guidance to parents who would like to prevent young girls suffering due to dowry demands, some parents thought they could try to stake their claim to dowry given more than seven years ago to a man who had 'suicided' his wife with the usual kerosene stove and nylon saree.

N.S., for example, came and recounted the harrowing tale of the physical and mental torture his daughter went through, soon after getting married, because the husband would threaten her with abandonment each time she refused to ask her parents for further gifts for him. Finally, she was found dead, some eight months after marriage, and her parents claim that they filed a case with the police, alleging foul play, but there was no follow-up action by the police. All this happened seven years ago, but when asked what help he would like, since we felt it would be difficult to reopen the case in the absence of witnesses and evidence, the reply of the father was fatuous. "No, of course we know it is impossible to reopen the case. Besides, the boy is remarried and does not even live in the same locality. But since it is obvious that he married our daughter for dowry, we would like you to help us reclaim what we have lost". No thought about bringing the culprit to book for the sake of a lost child.

Needless to say, the women listening to this had a hard time deciding what was the best course of action — berate him for his own callousness or do something about his erstwhile son-in-law. Finally, the easiest and most prompt method was chosen, that of throwing him out — but did he get the message? He was seen descending the stairs, repeatedly mumbling the sum he had lost as dowry.

In the case of N., father of B.N., cruelly burnt to death three months after her marriage, the accent was different. We had appreciated his presence in our demonstrations protesting over the death of his daughter. So we were grateful to see him come to our office, accompanied by a group of relatives, and we thought he would tell us about the dead girl's experience with her in-laws, as she had recounted it to them. There was respectful silence, in view of his age and the nearness of the tragic event (three days).

"Madam, was the lady standing next to you in the demonstration today the sister-in-law of Manoj Kumar?" he asked. "Who is Manoj Kumar?" enquired the lady addressed. "Manoj Kumar, you know, the famous actor!". Amid the shocked silence, someone answered in the affirmative. He turned to his companions and said, "See, I guessed it".

There was general whispering and buzing within his group, while we tried to persuade him to come to the point and talk about his daughter. He was surprised, because he said he had been advised by some 'authoritative sources' not to talk to women's organisations while the police enquiry was going on. Some few minutes more of formal talk, and then they all left, seemingly satisfied that a relative of a film star, no matter how distant, had been present at a demonstration over their daughter's untimely death.

DNS, on the other hand, took a good three-quarters of an hour describing a film-like pursuit of him by his daughter's in-laws and husband. He had gone to fetch her, in answer to her cry of distress. The girl's in-laws however demanded more money, in addition to what he had paid at the wedding. He recounted the harrowing tale of how first his daughter and then he himself were thrashed by the son-in-law. It was a linear and cold-blooded description of how, when they beat him up, he claimed the dowry and the girl back, and instead got a slap in the face and only the girl back, with the door slammed on both, how he tried to persuade them to keep the girl, how they agreed but tried to beat him again, how he ran to the station, how they caught up with him and beat him yet again, until the train arrived. Once he had boarded the train, he threatened them with dire consequences. The in-laws seemed to take fright at that, and begged him to return and talk it over with them, upon which he got off the train, and once out of the station, they started beating him again. "I can't tell you how I finally managed to escape to

Delhi with my life", he wailed.

We took pity on him, and asked him what help he wanted from us, and when he intended rescuing his daughter from this hell-hole. His classic answer was, "I will be very grateful to you if you could do something so that there is a reconciliation between my daughter and son-in-law!".

In Mayur Vihar, Delhi, a neighbour watching a demonstration against the in-laws of Geeta Malik, confided to one of the women demonstrators, "Why don't you fight for easier divorce regulations, instead of holding anti-dowry agitations? Look at me, I would like to divorce my wife, but it is so difficult and 'shame-bringing' that I am forced to keep her. She is very disobedient, that is the root of the problem, wives are 'being made' very disobedient these days. Mine, she went shopping for trinkets yesterday, when I had explicitly ordered her to stay inside the house in my absence. If one day I get too angry with her, I also will have no alternative except to burn her".

In a normal society, an individual who talks like this would be kept under surveillance by the police day and night. But is our society a normal one?

More complex is the case of SA, a Delhi University teacher, whose wife died of burns a few months ago. He has, ever since he realised that his wife's colleagues suspect him of harassment and mental torture, been making 'self-propaganda' pilgrimages to all and sundry, presenting himself as a victim of women's persecution. Yet, there were strong rumours that he was in love with another woman, and that the cause of bitter fights and wife-beating was the wife having suspected something, while he would categorically deny it claiming that it was a figment of her distorted imagination. When asked by a close friend if these rumours were true, he retaliated, "How can you think such a thing, when here my whole household and life has been ruined?" Reassured, his friend pressed on, "Does this mean that you will not marry in the near future but devote your time to your two small children?" His answer was an incredulous, "How can you say such a thing, yaar, do you mean to say that I should also ruin my whole future by not getting married ever again?" ☐

Plight of a Bihar Tribe

(from page 28)

Hindu mahajans of Borio from whom they had earlier borrowed Rs 10 or Rs 5. Thus the Paharias are gradually losing their Bari land to Santhals and mahajans.

The Sauria Paharia are often exploited by police officials. Mahesh Malto, Chulwa Paharia, Mesa Paharia and others of Karam Pahar said that whenever there is a series of thefts in Sahebganj town or in adjacent places, police officials arrest them without giving any reason. In fact they are never involved in such cases. Many Sauria Paharia people are in Sahebganj and Dumka jails for no reason. As they are poor they do not get any legal aid.

They also feel they are bring exploited by forest officials. Mahesh Malto of Karam Pahar said that the sabai bari land was not being used properly and royalty for sabai grass was also not distributed properly. He added that none of the Block officials had ever visited them. He was critical of the Paharia Welfare Officer who had never visited the cluster of five villages.

There are a few clever ones among the Sauria Paharia themselves who exploit their brethren by lending cash or foodgrains etc,, for which they charge interest like the regular money-lenders.

The Paharias take some forest produce for sale in the Sahebganj market every day, but there they are exploited by clever businessmen and get low prices for what they sell. Ten kilos of unripe mangoes are sold for Rs 2/- and six jackfruits of large size weighing not less than 15 kg are sold for Rs 8 to 10. The same is the case with the sale of bamboo and sal-wood. The prices are fixed by the traders, and they are paid in small coins which the sellers find it difficult to count. There is thus double-cheating — low price and under payment.

Some non-tribals have taken the land of the Paharia on lease for mining purposes. This destroys the sabai cultivation area. The businessmen are thus cheating the Paharias whom they pay a paltry amount for the mining lease. Some non-tribals and Santhals frequently go to the Paharia villages either to steal their fruits or to cut the bamboo plantations or other trees of which the Sauria Paharias are the rightful owners. When Paharias complain, they are harassed by the police, and it is reported that some of them died as undertrial prisoners.

After selling their products, the Sauria Paharias go to local traders to purchase salt, matchboxes, rice, kerosene, etc. Here again they are exploited. Local traders were observed charging 40 paise for a matchbox which was sold to others for 18 paise. The Sauria Paharia have become used to it. Attending the weekly markets (*hatia*) is a great feature in Paharia life. It is both a source of entertainment and livelihood. Therein lies the tragedy of it all.

Apart from these, there are some forms of felt exploitation. Sauria Paharia like Mahesh Malto, Chulwa Paharia, Rupa Paharia and others realise they are being exploited by mahajans, officials, non-tribals, etc, but they are helpless because of their very poor economic condition and illiteracy. Ninety per cent of the Sauria Paharias of the surveyed villages have taken loans from mahajans, banias, etc.

Though the Sauria Paharias know that they are being exploited, in the absence of any credit agency they have allowed themselves to be so exploited. There is need for careful consideration before any developmental measures are chalked out. Redemption on paper will not do. ☐

Discussion

(*from page 6*)

THERE is however an entirely different framework in which the concept of a patriotic front is worth considering. The present state of politics in our country is, by all accounts, an index of the serious corrosion of values in our national life.

We talk glibly — without even a show of anger — about lavish spending of money in the elections, making an utter mockery of the legal limits to it.

After three decades and a half of independence, we have not only failed to obliterate caste prejudices but have given a fresh lease of life to them by letting caste loyalties dominate our electioneering. Casteism and communalism, parochialism and regionalism have been unleashed in full fury.

Poverty far from being eliminated has come to stay with us as a permanent guest and we talk with clinical precision about so many millions being below the so-called poverty line.

Economic disparities have grown in a manner unthinkable at the time of independence, and the rich and the super-rich have lost all sense of shame in flaunting their riches. Black money operator has become a big shot operator, not the one who is black-balled in good society.

The ranks of the unemployed are getting longer by millions every year. The fruits of our development programmes are largely cornered by the affluent top with very little trickling down to the underprivileged.

Even in intellectual life, deception reigns supreme as can be seen in the petty intrigues and corruption in the management of universities, while admission to schools and colleges has become a matter of expensive outlay, often in black money. Medical profession has ceased to be a mission but a field of brisk commercialisation, while hospitals are left in a state of total neglect.

Parliament and legislatures seldom see serious consideration of urgent national issues, but are

Delhi's Small Industries: Big Contribution

Delhi has emerged after independence as one of the important centres of modern small scale industries in the country. It has today about 45,000 industries (investment Rs 867 crores) which produce a large variety of sophisticated goods worth Rs 2196 crores annually and provide employment to about 4.5 lakh workers. The manufacturing sector contributes about 17.12 per cent to the State income.

Industrial Development Programme: Some Highlights

Sixth Plan outlay — Rs 2161.77 lakhs; expenditure in 1980-81 — Rs 545.85 lakhs; outlay for 1982-83 — Rs 598 lakhs.

70 industrial plots developed at the functional Industrial Estate for Electronics; building of Testing and Development centre for Electronics also completed. The big industrial complex, comprising of 600 flatted factories, coming up fast at Rani Jhansi Road, will be ready next year for allotment, when completed will generate employment for about 13,500 persons.

Nine functional industrial Estates being developed in 160 acres at Patpar ganj, also to be ready by next year; on completion employment potential — 25000 persons; plan to extend the area by another 100 acres.

Construction of six Group Flatted Factories (cost about Rs 200 lakhs) starts soon at Jhilmil Tahirpur; land already acquired, plans ready.

Allotment of over 1000 plots developed at Narela through DSIDC to be made shortly; employment potential about 15000.

Allotment process for 6 new work sheds for handlooms at Nand Nagari almost complete.

Cheaper Loans

Rs 18 lakhs provided this year at nominal rate of 4 per cent interest for tiny and household industries.

Subsidy to engineer entrepreneurs, reducing interest on loans to an effective rate of 7 per cent only.

Issued by **The Directorate of Information and Publicity: Delhi Administration**

DIP/PLAN-8/82

a forum for tub-thumping and angry exchanges in which the Treasury and the Opposition benches engage themselves in equal measure.

The old crusading zeal for social reforms is gone: instead has surfaced the most gruesome practice of extracting dowries and then killing off the hapless bride. The toiling Kisan has often to face the wrath of the landlord: his hut gutted, his womenfolk raped and he himself shot down. Not a rare occurence, but almost becoming a feature of rural life. In a country where the respect for humanity was long a part of the national heritage, dehumanised society has emerged in all its enormity.

Political parties have become part of this ugly syndrome. Instead of fighting unconcealed degeneration in many walks of life, political parties have themselves been wallowing in the dirt. The dedication to the cause of the country's independence that kept them going for nearly two decades after independence, has totally disappeared, and no new objective has been set before them. Instead, they mouth shibboleths to hide their intellectual or ideological bankruptcy.

Having become virtual prisoners of the parliamentary form of governance, the tradition of mass movements — so rich and rewarding in the days of struggle against foreign rule — has been all but forgotten by the political parties: the only time when a national political campaign can be discerned is at the time of the elections. Outside the precincts of parliamentary politics, there is hardly any sign or urge for a nationwide mass campaign on any burning issue on the part of the political parties.

Most of them run their sectional organisations of workers, peasants, youth and women; but these are steeped heavily in economism or potter about with peripheral issues. The trade unions of the working class and the white-collared employees, no matter which party runs them, are today concerned solely with issues of wages and not with the quality of work, productivity or even the elementary service to the public. There is an active and powerful movement of railway workers in which most of the political parties are involved, and yet there is no effort at eliminating wastage or corruption or large-scale pilferage. Giant public-sector units, the backbone of our industrialisation, are mismanaged or badly maintained, incurring huge losses; with poorly utilised capacities and huge wastage. Bankmen have got powerful unions, but they do not bother to keep an eye on the irregularities and depredations of big business nor are they involved in checking black-money operations. While the service to the public has been going down, corruption both petty and large in the staff is noticeable.

In the running of the party organisation, degeneration is equally noticeable. In the last few years, the most conspicuous features of party functioning in India are the splits and new combinations on one side, and total lack of any commitment to policies and principles on the other. Within the party, scramble for loaves and fishes of office, tension between the favoured few who may have got into legislatures and those left out, all these have come out into the open. Bossdom is challenged not by the power of a dynamic mass movement, but by factional in-fighting. The devaluation of the parties has been going on at a fast pace. Revulsion of the masses at this sorry stage of political parties has set in, though admittedly it is not yet complete.

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It is worth while making some observations about how this disarray has come about in the system of political parties. With its split in 1969, the Congress virtually gave up the party system; instead, it took to the leadership principle. This was reinforced by the spectacular electoral victories achieved by it in 1971-72 under Indira Gandhi's charisma. It was the absence of a well-knit party organisation that failed the Congress in meeting the challenge of mass unrest organised by political elements opposed to it, in Gujarat and Bihar. And this failure of the Congress Party, in turn, frightened its leadership into clamping down Emergency in 1975-77. The gag on political activities lulled the Congress leadership into a false sense of complacency which resulted in their spectacular defeat at the 1977 poll.

During its period of hibernation, 1977-1979, the Congress leadership did not care to build their party organisation and Indira Gandhi was left to herself to rebuild her personal charisma while actively and effectively intervening to widen the rift among the squabbling parties which had earlier overthrown her. By 1980, Indira Gandhi staged a dramatic comeback to power again on the strength of the leadership principle: this time she openly organised her following on that principle alone. Today, she does not lead a party but a huge rabble of a flock as unorganised as the Opposition, held together by the sheer magnet of personal loyalty to the leader.

The motley that overthrew Indira Gandhi from power in 1977 was never a political party. It came to power because of the failings of the Emergency regime, and it lost power because of its own failures. Internecine intrigues and in-fights made the Janata Raj worse than any coalition; and after a year, it was becoming evident it would not be able to hold its own.

After its ouster in 1980 election, the parties that consitituted the Janata went their own way. Since then, several permutations and combinations have taken place — both in the Congress that was left out in the cold and more farcically, in the Opposition — the Janata breaking into BJP and the Lok Dal, with a rump holding out as the Janata Party. Minor actors walked out to start their own outfits — the DSP of Bahuguna and the Janabadi Party of Chandrajit Yadav. And now has come the inevitable break-up of the Lok Dal.

In all these convulsions, no programme or policy issue was involved. Ocasionally, some outbursts on some issues could be heard, but these were often drowned in the scramble for office or electoral ganging up. Most of the parties made their own deals as they wanted, sometimes individual candidates of one party would, overtly or covertly, strike bargains with parties or groups which were supposed to be their acknowledged adversaries. Principles were invoked when it came to parting of ways; electoral convenience almost invariably brought them together.

Only two political entities tried to keep their distinct identities: the Communists and the Jana Sangh. The two Communist establishments, CPI and CPI-M, after fifteen-years of non-stop mudslinging have effected a mutual cease-fire but have yet to generate mutual trust. The Jana Sangh, at the time of the Janata crack-up, did not put up their old signboard but took a new one, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the hope of emerging as the national alternative to the Congress, and make a bid for power after Indira Gandhi. Wedded to a status-quo ideology, it relies for its organisational strength on the RSS.

Despite their respective well-knit identities, neither the Communists nor the BJP have bothered about any scruples to join hands with their adversaries. At the beginning of their newly-appointed role as Opposition parties, they took up the slogan of a crusade against Indira authoritarianism. This reached its bizarre climax in the Presidential election and protests against the scandal of Haryana ministry-making.

After these midsummer misadventures, it is doubtful if they can again get all the Opposition together on the same platform. Rumblings in the rank and file against such blatantly unscrupulous combinations are getting too serious for the leaders of both the Left and the Right. Meanwhile, issues in which they have to take divergent stands are forcing the Right and the Left to keep apart.

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IN this period of political disequilibrium, the Communists have come out with the call for the unity of Left and Democratic forces. This slogan, on the face of it, sounds valid. But in its application it comes up against almost insurmountable difficulties unless it chooses to land into absurdity.

For one thing, the democratic forces envisaged in this slogan are largely undefined. At one stage, all those ranged against Indira Gandhi's party, are called democratic, since they are ready to join the crusade against authoritarianism. Obviously this has created embarrassment for both the Communist establishments, and both have resorted to sophistry in defending the content of the slogan. The difficulty for them arises in dealing with the BJP. By Communist understanding, they find it difficult to call it democratic, and yet they have been eager to join hands with it to fight Indira Gandhi.

Secondly, some of the other components of the Opposition, such as Charan Singh or Morarji Desai can hardly be regarded as democratic by the same Communist yardstick. But how could the Lok Dal and the Janata Party be left out of the Left and-Democratic Front, when the purpose of such a front is to fight Indira Gandhi?

Thirdly, in the prevailing instability when these parties are particularly fluid in their composition, it becomes rather comic to find the democrats of today becoming anti-democratic tomorrow, or vice-versa. When some of the Congress groups or individuals walked over to the Congress-I they ceased to be democrats though in their views, attitudes and approaches they may not have deviated. Conversely, when an individual or a group comes out of the Congress-I for purely personal aggrandisement, should one welcome such elements with garlands of democratic testimonials?

Lastly, it looks strange when this concept of Left and Democratic unity excludes from its ambit the entire following of Indira Gandhi. For whatever reason, millions follow her, whether one likes it or not. How can these be left out of the count of democratic forces in the country? If the Communist leaders shed a bit of subjectivism, they would have no difficulty in realising — as many of their camp-followers have been feeling — that by this definition of Left and Democratic Unity contraposed to the

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Congress-I, they have landed themselves in an absurd anomaly. Neither class approach nor a national approach justifies it.

What the Communist leaders have so far been unable to evolve is a perspective by which the undesirable and reactionary elements of different parties could be isolated and the mass of democratic ranks in different camps could be brought together.

But this cannot done so long as they are preoccupied with considerations of electoral politics. When one confines one's tactics and perspective to the elections as they are held in this country, it is but natural for one to think of alliances and adjustments that would enable one's candidates to win the maximum number of seats. For that purpose, a Communist establishment has to invest all its electoral bed-fellows with the respectability of being democratic, even if they confine the appellation 'Left' to parties and groups claiming to be Left, some of whose records in terms of probity and political stability are far from what is generally understood to be forward-looking.

The way out of this absurd situation lies through a determined effort at building powerful mass movements and to seek principled allies for such mass movements. With such allies steeled in mass actions — ranging over the entire political spectrum from the so-called Naxalites to a good chunk of Indira followers, with serious-minded Socialists and other unlabelled progressives thrown in — can a Patriotic Front be built.

How, with whom and with what perspective such a Patriotic Front could be built, is discussed in the remaining section of this article, to be published next week. (*To be Continued*)

US AND ISRAEL (*Continued from page 9*)

1,210 per cent in the cost of living in the last four years, and an external debt of $ 20 billion, Israel is able to make budgetary provisions equalling its GNP with military expenditure rising at a rate higher than the rate of increase in the GNP, only because it receives military and economic aid from the US and tax-free donations from the American Jewish community which, if distributed equally among the four million Israelis, would come to $ 1,200 per head. The Israeli economy would collapse if the US withdrew just the tax exemption — and Reagan can do it because, firstly, he does not owe his election to the Jewish lobby in the US and, secondly, he says he does not intend to run for a second term. But then, according to the *New York Times* news-analyst, he is "fearful of a Begin backlash."

It is not surprising that after all these histrionics, the US representative in the Security Council vetoed the resolution calling for an arms embargo on Israel (on August 6, 1982). □

Punjab's Anguish

(*Continued from page 14*)

would not only integrate politics and social life of the State, it would also enhance the productive capacities of our people. Secularism, in its positive sense, means only this.

In this background, when, to repeat, a minority feels alienated, grievances and complaints soon lead to radicalisation. Absence of a common Punjabi platform encourages divisive and irresponsible politics which soon yields ground to extremism. And that has been happening in Punjab. Moderate Akalis — both in the legislature and outside — are feeling helpless even when they see some extremist elements acting against the very basic tenets of Punjabi and Sikh culture.

The Hindus in Punjab now bear witness to a situation when their life and property is not adequately protected by a weak administration. Governments, these days, are made and unmade in Delhi. Nominated leaders lack both the vision and the capacity to unify Punjabi politics or to rule firmly.

I, like millions in Punjab, believe that the fundamental unity of Punjabi culture is firm and the social relationship amongst the Hindus and the Sikhs has fortunately not been distorted. To restore normalcy and to bring the State back on rails, we need both short-term and long-term remedies.

Foremost, of course, is the need for a firm administration which fairly and fearlessly administers. This, of course, needs a leadership which commands respect and confidence of the people and the bureaucracy. Nominated Chief Ministers, even when they have merit, forfeit credibility from the word 'go'. If some sections of the police and the law-enforcing authorities have been 'polluted' by the virus of sectional outlook, then fairer elements have to be injected even from outside the State for a brief period at least.

It is logical that extremists should be isolated from a large body of Sikhs, and this can be done by leaderships of both communities realising that the common Punjabi causes concern all of them equally. Our common heritage has to find expression in our day-to-day political and economic activity.

While some leading sections of Hindus like the BJP, the Congress and the Arya Samaj will have to rejuvenate the 'dying cells' of shared values and induce a positive Punjabi outlook, the responsibility of the Akali politicians — of all hues — is far more. They have to take initiatives to 'Punjabise' their demands and grievances. Only a broad joint platform can ensure their return to power and effective assertion to get the State's due from the Centre. Divisiveness, beyond a point, contradicts their political interests too. It is time the saner sections asserted themselves.

Of course, it is easy to prescribe the obvious, but the process of reversing the present divisive trends needs reorientation and gigantic effort.

This effort has particularly to be made by 'in-power' and 'out-of-power' political leaderships in Delhi. There is a crying need for an honest national consensus regarding Punjab. We are just now witnessing a horrible sight of seriously disturbed minds in most of our border States including Punjab. It is time we shook ourselves up!

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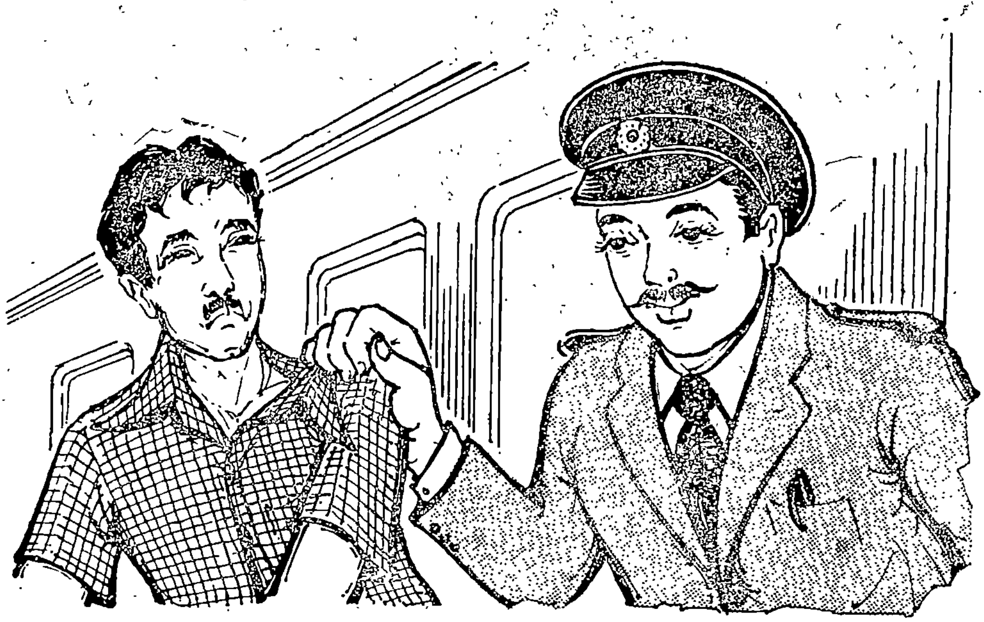

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Egypt, Arab Disunity and PLO

Mainstream

VOL XX NO 51 SATURDAY AUGUST 21, 1982 Re 1

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Behind Homilies and Histrionics

AUGUST is the month when normally the nation is treated to a sumptuous fare of exhortations. This comes in the form of the President's broadcast to the nation on the eve of the Independence Day and of the Prime Minister's address from the ramparts of the Red Fort on the day itself. This year marks no deviation from this practice.

The newly-elected President made his maiden oration—if it could at all be called a feat of oratory — warning against the dangers posed by the forces of casteism, communalism and regionalism. Next morning, the Prime Minister herself reiterated the same warning with greater emphasis. At a time when these forces have been menacingly raising their heads in different parts of the country as also among different segments of our fragmented society, it is important to stress the need for national integration, the cultivation of the consciousness of belonging to one great nation, whatever may be the regional or sectoral urges.

Overshadowing these urges towards unified national understanding came the marathon Lok Sabha debate on August 16, the last day of Parliament's monsoon session. Once again was underscored with vehemence the great divide between the Government and the Opposition. By standards of parliamentary histrionics, the performance on both sides of the House was impressive. Big guns — rather ancient models — were brought into action while new missiles were also fired. There was tension and excitement. At the end, both sides went home, fatigued but self-satisfied.

The entire exercise had an air of unreality. The Treasury Benches were of course satisfied that they had shot down a vote of no-confidence. The Opposition was equally happy that it could put up a united front recently forged during the Presidential poll.

What was disconcerting was the element of personalised politics displayed all round. Indira Gandhi turned the entire debate into a vote of confidence on her personality. She and her senior Ministers did rattle off statistics to rebut the Opposition charge of non-governance: throughout, the

in this issue

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case was sought to be made out that whether in the matter of rising prices or mounting violence, the trend was more serious during the Janata days than it is under Indira Raj. Nowhere could one get an inkling about what the Government proposes to do to fight the disturbing developments, nor could one hear any impassioned appeal for cooperation from all quarters.

As for the Opposition, it was primarily a magnificent premiere for Bahuguna in his latest re-incarnation as a Democratic Socialist. If wishes were horses, and if by any freak of history, the Opposition can defeat Indira Gandhi, then by his latest round of parliamentary performance, Bahuguna should claim to have graduated with honours for the bid to be the next Prime Minister of India. What was in doubt — and one can legitimately question it—was the wisdom of Bahuguna and the Left joining hands with the parties and elements of the Right whose record in office would make them guilty of most of the major charges raised from the standpoint of the Left.

This is precisely the reason that such parliamentary heroics, however exciting they might sound, would have little validity when applied to the arena of mass politics. It would no doubt be thrilling to watch within the precincts of Parliament, the crossing of swords between Indira Gandhi and her lieutenants on one side, and the Opposition with its disparate politics on the other. But when it comes to mass action, can the Left expect to go with the Right in furtherance of its own policies and programme? In no branch, whether domestic or foreign policy, can there possibly be principled unity between such totally contradictory elements.

In fact, many of the issues on which Bahuguna and the Left attacked Indira Gandhi's Government — such as concessions to monopolies and multinationals, or undermining the objective of self-reliance — are acknowledgedly the confirmed policy projection of a section of the Opposition who are today masquerading as the ally of the Left in fighting the Indira Raj.

Both the Left and the Right know what each of them stands for, but each of them is calculating that with the demolition of the Indira Congress Government, it will have an edge over the other in the struggle for power. As History has shown, in such an arrangement of convenience, the Right almost invariably comes on top.

This brings out the make-believe scenario of Indian politics today. Indira Gandhi's personalised political stance is short-sighted: it will only help to provide her confirmed opponents with the opportunity to confuse a large section of well-meaning, forward-looking elements into walking into the parlour of the Right, and thereby invest it with a respectability which it can never hope to attain on its own.

By endowing the Right with the badge of respectability by joining hands with it, the Left is helping to strengthen the hands of its real enemy: this way, a good section of honest elements who should be regarded as the natural allies of the Left, are inexorably alienated from it as they would any day prefer Indira Gandhi to the Right. The upshot of this bizarre game is that Indira Gandhi and her Raj may be exposed but the ultimate gainer will be the Right, and the Left would be left high and dry.

Even if it may have its own reasons for keeping clear of the Congress Raj, must the Left join the company of the Right and thereby help it to extend its influence and consolidate its strength? Can't the Left chart out an independent line of its own?

Meanwhile, the writing on the wall is beginning to appear. The police revolt in Bombay — preceded by recent demonstrations of unrest in the police forces in Haryana, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar — is no ordinary matter: it is an indicator of how unstable the situation is. If it is a grim reminder for Indira Gandhi that she cannot afford to play with fire by putting buffoons and sycophants like Bhosales and Jagannath Mishras to run affairs of state, it is as much a warning to forward-looking elements that dark, lowering clouds are gathering in many parts of the country.

Beyond homilies and histrionics, what can our politicians offer to face the mounting turbulence in which millions are engulfed?

August 18 *N.C.*

COMMENTARY

Left Front: Time to Ponder

THE needlessly protracted squabble over bifurcation and reallocation of portfolios among members of West Bengal's Left Front Ministry has at last come to an end, and many of its well-wishers can now heave a sigh of relief.

But the sorry episode should make the Left Front partners — both the dominant CPI(M) and the junior partners — ponder over the implications of the dispute for the future and long-term interests of the people of the State. The events of the last few weeks have not enhanced the prestige of the Left Front. It is necessary then for all parties concerned, and particularly the CPI(M) which is not only the biggest component of the Front but has a comfortable majority in the Assembly on its own, to consider how a Left Front should function, how best the purpose for which it was organised can be served.

It was no ordinary achievement that the Left Front emerged a strong, unchallenged force after two consecutive elections. It is unprecedented in the annals of parliamentary democracy that a Communist-led Front Government is in the process of being in office for ten years continuously. The Left Front Government in West Bengal has just begun its second five-year term after completing the first five years. The mandate has been decisive, even if the voting pattern in the urban and rural areas might have undergone significant changes that are explained by a number of factors which too cannot be ignored.

While the Left Front Government has many achievements to its credit, no one can say its performance has been uniformly good on all fronts. In fact, it is recognised by the saner elements in the Front that there have been failings, and even the prevalence of corruption has been conceded though it is sought by some to attribute this almost entirely to the bureaucracy, which is hardly fair. The handling of the power crisis and the way transport services have been neglected are examples of failure which has alienated a substantial part of the urban community. On the other hand, there has been conscious, planned effort to help the rural areas come up economically — Operation Barga providing a good example — and this explains the new strength of the Front in the rural areas. It would be folly not to correct the mistakes on the one hand and consolidate the gains on the other.

When the question of bifurcation and reallocation of portfolios first came up in May this year, it was thought by well-wishers of the Front to be a welcome move to streamline the administration in order to improve performance, by which in the ultimate analysis the people will judge the Ministry as well as the constituent parties. Unfortunately the whole exercise soon degenerated into a squabble between the minor partners of the Front and their Big Brother, the CPI (M). If the RSP and the Forward Bloc protested strongly and their Ministers submitted their resignations last month, and if even the CPI sulked, the reason was the position taken by the CPI (M) leadership that the Left Front Government has to fulfil the needs and aspirations of the people and that this could be done only by the CPI (M) handling and supervising every department of the administration.

Promode Dasgupta said at one stage, "We as the biggest partner in the Front should have a say about the Health and Agriculture portfolios which are directly linked to the day-to-day life of the people." And Chief Minister Jyoti Basu is reported to have stated, "We want these portfolios bifurcated for effective functioning and that would not be possible if we do not take charge of the new offices." Now, this is hardly the tone to adopt when the proclaimed intention is to keep the Left Front intact, which is possible only when even the juniormost partner feels a sense of full and effective participation, not of being there on someone else's sufferance. The clashes in Cooch-Behar earlier and again on August 17, in which a total of six Forward Bloc supporters were killed, and the CPI-CPI(M) clashes in Midnapore even earlier, have only underscored the tensions beneath the surface. In both cases the CPI(M) was accused of infiltrating the established bases of the CPI and the Forward Bloc. Even junior partners cannot be expected to accept what smacks of hegemonism. While this is what was happening at the grass roots level in some places, at the top the feeling was growing among the junior partners in the Front that the CPI(M)'s attitude was something more than that of Big Brother—it was trying to behave like the grandfather towards grandchildren.

While the efficiency and competence of the Left Front Ministry in several spheres has rightly been questioned, it is strange to find certain CPI(M) leaders talking as though shortcomings of the Front Government were to be placed at the door of the junior partners and their own party is entirely above blame. Three Ministries — Home, Labour and Land Revenue — functioned well, certainly, but what of Power or Education? Reports are appearing of 24 tribals rotting in Midnapore Central Jail for several years after their long sentences expired; and of persons who have been "undertrials" for 5 to 8 years.

It was rather absurd to claim that only the CPI(M)-handled departments functioned well, while those dealt with by the others were mishandled. On what basis does the CPI (M) claim that it alone can deliver the goods? In any case, is that the kind of attitude to be adopted by the dominant partner in a Left Front that has been consciously and purposefully forged with certain common interests in view?

"Scientific bifurcation" about which the CPI(M) leadership talked is one thing, and to try to devalue the smaller Front partners in the name of bifurcation is quite another.

Neither the CPI (M) nor the junior partners can afford to promote even indirectly a break-up of the Front. Of course no one imagines that the Congress-I and its friends can step into the breach. Even so, the long-term implications of any disruption of the Front from within must be clearly understood. This applies not only to the CPI (M), but also to the junior partners who can only find themselves in the wilderness if the Front is allowed to crack up.

Now that the portfolio tangle has been resolved to the satisfaction of all concerned — at the time of writing the resignations of the three RSP Ministers and the three Forward Bloc Ministers are yet to be officially withdrawn and the Front leadership is yet to announce the settlement officially — there is no point in going into such matters as Promode Dasgupta's overbearing hauteur, giving the impression that he is the Left Front's Lord Almighty, or Jyoti Basu's positive efforts to resolve the crisis despite his echoing of Dasgupta's claim about who can deliver the goods. It was the CPI (M) Politbureau's intervention that enabled Jyoti Basu to work out an acceptable formula for settlement. Dasgupta, one hopes, will realise that comparisons are being made between his attitude and that of one-time Congress State boss Atulya Ghosh. Not very flattering that, surely?

While all this petty squabbling was going on, the State's administration has suffered. Officials took advantage of the uncertainty to ignore those Ministers who they thought were holding certain portfolios temporarily. In sum, it is a sorry state of affairs that all this squabbling over trifles should have taken place in the open at a time when the State's finances are in bad shape, the record of revenue raising has been poor, when drought has gripped a number of districts, when the state-owned industries are in a mess. It is nobody's case that the minor parties in the Front or their representatives in the Ministry are without blemish. The record of some of them has not been edifying. The point is that the United Front itself should have sorted out the problems smoothly with quiet efficiency, instead of publicising differences every day and making it appear that Promode Dasgupta is the ultimate arbiter in all matters and the presiding deity on Judgement Day. A Front has to function on the basis of collective leadership and constant consultation, with no partner throwing its weight about over others, whatever its strength in the Assembly.

It will be expected, now that the storm in the tea-cup has blown over, that the Left Front partners will function as a team, and apply the lessons of the first five-year term in office to the Ministry's functioning in its second term. The people do not expect merely that the Government will be kept going somehow; with the Left in the saddle, they expect noticeable change in their daily lives. And that does not depend merely on who holds which portfolio but on how purposefully the whole Ministry functions.

Democratic forces all over the country are watching West Bengal. The Left Front is under the full glare of the spotlight. Let them not let themselves down, or those who look hopefully towards them.

August 18 *C.N. Chitta Ranjan*

FOCUS

Indira's US Visit: Some Reflections

OBSERVER

Now that the initial euphoria over the results of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's visit to the United States of America is slowly yielding ground to a sense of realism, some basic questions may be worth raising.

Is there a change in US appraisal of India and India's role in international affairs? Indeed US attitude to India and to Indira Gandhi has changed from the severely cold and often overbearing posture of Nixon-Kissinger era. A new warmth and friendliness characterised the reception the Prime Minister got at President Reagan's hands. What has brought this about? Is it merely cosmetics? Answers to these questions will in part be speculative but their understanding is essential for our policies and responses to remain wholly principled and effective in protecting and advancing our enlightened national interests and goals of international peace and cooperation.

This contribution from a senior Indian journalist who prefers to remain anonymous, supplements the article on the same subject by NC published in Mainstream *(August 7, 1982).*

A Delhi newspaper suggested in the headline it gave to a report of the External Affairs Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's statement to Parliament last week on the Prime Minister's visit that the US recognises India's role in Asia. Nothing can be more misleading. Narasimha Rao himself has made no such claim. The operative part of the statement on which the headline is based reads, "In a world of great diversities, it is obvious that tolerance of differing viewpoints and understanding of each other's perceptions could alone constitute the broad basis for amicable relations and cooperation among nations. As the Prime Minister pointed out during her visit, the development of our friendship with one state does not and ought not to exclude or be at the expense of friendly relations with any other. This policy of ours has been clearly enunciated time and again. We judge each issue on its merits taking into account the interests of our nation and of world peace. *There were several indications during the visit that this is being recognised, along with India's role as a factor of stability and moderation not only in our region but also in the broader international context.* We hope that Indo-US relations will be informed by this new spirit hereafter."

Recognition of India as a factor of stability and moderation is very different from recognising India's role in Asia, by which is obviously meant a leadership role. Jawaharlal Nehru had declared time and again that India did not seek leadership of Asia nor claim to be spokesman for Asia even though the positions that India took on international issues invariably corresponded to the interests of peace and progress of peoples of Asia. There has been no change in this approach and nothing that Indira Gandhi said or did in US is suggestive of a change. In any event India has not sought the patronage or recognition of US of its role as spokesman for Asia.

In the celebrated Shanghai communique signed by President Nixon with Premier Chou En-lai in 1972, US had impliedly accepted Chinese primacy in Asia and China's right to have a say in the problems of Asia. That was how Kashmir came to figure in that communique. Notwithstanding irritants in US-China relations, the basic US assumption of China's primacy in Asia has not undergone any change. What has changed since 1972 is the international environment as it affects US policies in Asia, Africa, Latin America and in Europe.

After Falklands, the US role as protector is not accepted without reservation even by the pro-US dictatorships of Latin America. In Western Europe, the US attempt to freeze supply of oil pipes to the Soviet Union and the use of trade as a weapon in the cold war have back-fired. Under pressure from the farmers, the US Administration itself is having to revise its rigidity in regard to grain sales to the Soviet Union.

Japan and China in Asia are incensed over US policies for different reasons but the erosion of US influence is causing concern to the White House. Iran-Iraq war, the unbridled Israeli adventurism in Lebanon and the 'civil war' in Afghanistan which remains a non-starter despite all the proddings, have not helped the US image. In Africa, US support to the racialist regime of Pretoria is not winning friends.

In this setting the US priorities obviously are to check the decline in its influence, to bolster US image as a friend and benefactor of the Third World, and finally and most importantly to ensure that the predicaments of US policies do not yield comfort or advantage to the Soviet Union. Pursuit of these goals would dictate a reappraisal of relations, not for a fundamental realignment for which little scope exists but to overcome past insensitivities of US policies to local and regional developments affecting political and military balances.

It is highly probable that the US policy-makers are taking a fresh look at India as part of this exercise. Despite the gigantic problems of growth it faces, India remains a stable democracy. It offers a choice and a model to Third World countries. India's capacity to influence perceptions of Third World countries is considerable. This could in part explain the initiative US took in inviting Indira Gandhi and in finding on its own a solution to the Tarapur issue which had soured relations and which is doing little credit to US as a contractual partner.

For an assessment of whether US is happy with the results of Indira Gandhi's visit, it is necessary to examine what in practical terms were the US expectations. Has Indira Gandhi's visit provided any encouragement to US in its calculations?

On the Indian side it must be said that Indira Gandhi and her advisers were careful from the outset not to rouse any expectations from the visit. Opening of a door for communication was all that was sought for a clearer understanding of each other's concerns and perceptions.

Indira Gandhi spared no opportunity in US to highlight (1) that India is nobody's camp-follower; (2) that India has its own interests, views and policies shaped by its history, traditions and priorities; (3) that Indo-Soviet relations are valued by India and these do not come in the way of friendship with US, China, Pakistan or anyone else; and (4) that threat to stability and security of the region comes from Cold War rivalry and induction of arms beyond defence needs of the countries concerned.

There was no attempt during the visit to underplay or gloss over differences in perception that persist in Indo-US relations. The Indo-Soviet Treaty, Afghanistan, the Iran-Iraq conflict, Lebanon, Indian Ocean, arms supply to Pakistan and the question of Kampuchea, apart from issues of developmental assistance to Third World countries, figured prominently and repeatedly in Indira Gandhi's press and television appearances in US. Her response to these questions were sharp and her handling did India proud. The message unmistakably was that there is no change in the direction and content of India's policies, which made the healthy change in the atmosphere in the US and in the quality and extent of media notice during the visit surprising.

Judged by the questions discussed in the media and those raised directly with the Prime Minister during the visit, an expectation on the US side was to discover some crack in the Indo-Soviet relations. In the absence of any, US wanted to be reassured that India is not a Soviet-client state. The praise showered on India's recent economic performance clearly shows keenness of US to encourage new trends of liberalisation and its hope that these trends could induce similar development in the Third World — a plus point in the battle of the isms for free-market orientation.

By inviting Indira Gandhi and making friendly gestures, US has made a move in the chess-board of international power game. Without weakening its relationships with China and Pakistan, US has seemed to want to mend fences with India, at the very least, to reopen options. What results will follow remain to be seen.

The climate in US of willingness to listen, of readiness to accept that existence of differences should not deter building of mutually beneficial relations and cooperation are welcome to India. These are the very tenets of Panchsheel, and therefore a vindication of all that India had striven for from the early years of its independence, Whether the signs of change are ephemeral or they foreshadow a process of readjustment in relations, time alone can tell. ●

DISCUSSION

This contribution is meant to initiate a discussion on the present political perspective before India. The first instalment of this article appeared in last week's *Mainstream* (August 14, 1982).

Concept of a Patriotic Front—II

N.C.

INDIA today is a country which cannot go forward with the obsolete tools of yesterday while it has yet to forge the new tools for tomorrow. Not only the political structure and the instruments of political will but even the thought-processes behind them have become outmoded and ineffective. Whether it is in the matter of large-scale corruption in the political set-up, or norms of conduct in a modern economic entity, or the entire value system behind the socio-economic functioning of the community, the homilies, exhortations and moral compunctions of the earlier period are found to be no longer effective today. If prison-going, for instance, was a badge of patriotic sacrifice for the earlier generation, it hardly creates a ripple in our present-day society. Even a corrupt businessman or politician does not get blacklisted if he can stay out of prison; rather he may be getting sneaking appreciation for his smart work.

Why has this sorry state of affairs gripped this nation of seven hundred million people with a rich and continuous history, with an economy that works and an educated elite that few nations can boast of? Many explanations may be ventured by sociologists and political scientists. They however boil down to one basic issue: the India since independence has not yet been unified under a single-point objective which can rally the millions. The political leadership of the freedom movement, particularly with the advent of Gandhi, could mobilise the entire nation with the single-point programme that the alien rule must end. As the national movement advanced from stage to stage, it discarded old slogans one by one — Responsible Government, Dominion Status, Federation — and ended up with the final battle-cry of Quit India. In its sweep and in its intensity, the movement gained momentum as it advanced.

The concept of patriotism that was assiduously inculcated in the freedom struggle concentrated on only one point: the liquidation of foreign rule. Men and women with divergent socio-economic and cultural background, with conflicting perspectives for the future, were brought together by the force of one common demand: the British rule must end. Whoever subscribed to that demand was a patriot, and whoever did not, was outside the pale of patriotism.

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SINCE independence, the nation has never been galvanised by any such compulsive demand. There has been significant advance in many fields since independence: the economic infrastructure of a modern state has been built based on a programme of industrialisation; an indigenous defence industry has saved us from dependence on any power for our security; our foreign policy has charted out for the country an independent status in the comity of nations.

What is acknowledged on all hands is that after thirty-five years of independence we have not been able to make significant advance towards elimination of poverty. While the wealth of the nation has increased, it has not been distributed equitably; rather the disparity between the affluent few at the top and the millions of common people has not only been left unchecked but is actually growing, while the army of jobless is growing by legions every year. Whoever has come to power has been complaining that there has been no appreciable rise in internal resources—which in popular terms means that those who are wealthy have not been made to contribute adequately to the common good, while the purchasing power of the vast majority of our population could not be raised. This is what is largely responsible for our having to incur heavy external borrowing and brings India down to the third place from the bottom in the developing world, in terms of per-capita income. This disequilibrium weakens the foundations of our economy and undermines the strength of our independence.

Our politicians have been talking about socialism or socialistic pattern of society. The Communists hold out the prospect of achieving people's democracy (CPM) or national democracy (CPI). But these have been reduced to mere rituals and have ceased to enthuse the masses. That is why even the election results show no appreciable variation in the vote-catching capacity of any of the existing parties.

Stagnation is writ large in economy as well as politics of this country today. With all the best intentions in the world, no party has been making any significant headway. The Congress Party has been depending on neither a programme nor a party organisation, but on the charisma that Indira Gandhi commands: leaving aside the flotsam and jetsam of the motley that was once Janata, one finds the BJP trying to refurbish its image to be nationally acceptable; cosmetics no doubt help but cannot take it far, because its socio-economic programme can hardly conceal its bias for the powerful vested interests.

(*Continued on page 33*)

Kenya 'Coup': Who Benefits?

VIJAY GUPTA

A new pattern is emerging on the African political scene. The scenario includes growth of Left-wing forces, students' and workers' agitations and consequent repression by the rulers. When normal repression fails, the rulers eliminate opposition in the name of subversive conspiracies. Since there are no subversive conspiracies, they organise fake coups which naturally fail but which give the rulers licence to arrest and kill anyone they want to, without inviting any criticism. Precautions for this new institution are mainly two. One, the President has to be away from the seat of power and in case of emergency, foreign troops should be available to quell the 'coup' in case some soldiers take it seriously and join the ranks of real rebels. The first successful trial of this method was in Gambia. The President was away in UK and Senegalese troops were standing in readiness and were actually used to 'crush the coup'. In Kenya on August 1, 1982, President Moi was away in Nakuru and 3,000 Israeli air force troops (stationed in Kenya to defend Israeli airlines) were standing in readiness, but were not needed.

BEFORE getting into the background which led to the 'coup' of August 1, let us look at what really happened on August 1. It is reported that at 3.30 a.m. at the Embakasi air base, near Nairobi, some men of Air Force Cadu Squadron stormed into a *disco* at the KAF base, blazing with their guns at the revellers. The men looked drunk and started shouting and shooting. Two air force privates immediately informed the police station. When the police came "they found the shooting (from the airmen) too heavy to cope with and retreated. In the meanwhile some KAF men are reported to have seized Jomo Kenyatta International Airport Control Tower. Others spread further inland ... to seize Wilson Airport, General Post Office, Voice of Kenya (VOK) transmission station on Ngong Road. Some other KAF personnel moved to the city centre, stationing themselves on the roads into and out of the city. They moved on foot, in land-rovers and commandeered vehicles. They told the civilians that 'they were in power.'"

Three hours later, the 'rebels' put out an announcement on the VOK saying that "the constitutionally-elected government (mark the words constitutionally elected) of President Daniel Arap Moi had been overthrown and replaced by a national Redemption Council". The announcer said in a shaky and unsure voice that the Government was corrupt and dictatorial. He also condemned the decision to set up a one-party state and charged that the economy of the country was in disarray. He announced the release of detainees. After a few more announcements warning people about the curfew, came the popular voice of broadcaster Leonard Mambo Mbotela in Swahili repeating the warning about the curfew. Mbotela was followed by a regular lady announcer who repeated the earlier announcements and added that the Government had been taken over by the armed forces and the detainees *should* be released immediately. One of the announcements was said to have been made by a student on behalf of the Kenyan students — no name was mentioned.

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Let us analyse the 'coup'. According to famous VOK announcer Raphael Tuju, there were only a dozen armed air force men. No names of the leader or leaders of the coup were announced. No troops were placed near VOK to guard it from loyal forces. The President's Palace or other Ministers' houses were not entered or 'guarded.' No barricades were set up on the roads. There were no KAF men at the prison and no one was released. According to a Western diplomat, "the KAF men did not have enough of their own vehicles to move about. They also appeared to have no sense of direction at all. They were totally disorganised. They appeared not to have any arms with which they could resist assault from the loyal army or even the mechanised units of the police". No precaution was taken by the rebels to contain 3000 Israeli air force troops within the barracks. It is reported instead that Israeli soldiers were kept in readiness lest some KAF men get funny ideas and stage a real coup. President Moi was away at Nakuru — a safe enough place for a President. No attempt was made to kill any Minister or leader. It is reported that an integral part of the 'coup' was looting of shops, mainly of Asians causing losses totalling $ 500 million. The KAF men themselves took part in the looting. Although students had been charged with participating in the loot, no evidence has yet been found despite thorough searches.

THE above facts make one ponder over the nature of 'coup' and whom this 'coup' benefits. To understand this we have to go into the background and examine recent political developments in Kenya. Kenya's ruling party, the Kenya African National Union (KANU), which ushered in independence in 1962, has degenerated into a group of rich and influential men representing the interests of the indigenous bourgeoisie. The KANU after 1966, when the Kenya People's Union, a party led by Left-wing leader Oginga Odinga, was banned, stopped having any meaningful political debates at its meetings. Meetings of KANU at village, city, district or national level were held only to confirm the decisions of the top leadership. KANU stopped publishing its political programmes or election manifestos. Since only KANU men could contest elections, individual rather than party programme became the issue of differentiation. As only life members of KANU, paying Rs 1000, could be candidates in any election, young and poor elements with differing views were kept out of politics.

Oginga Odinga, Achiang Oneko and many other veteran leaders were not only debarred from contesting elections but were even arrested and detained. Anyone who differed with the top leaders on the system (capitalist) was put behind bars, character-assassinated, arrested. There have been numerous unexplained deaths in 'accidents' or murders by unknown assassins. Pio Gama Pinto, Tom Mboya, Roland Ngala, James Kariuki, Njiri Muthiora are a few names out of many who died like this.

When Daniel Arap Moi came to power and became President, he put an end to the system of accidental deaths and avoided detaining his political opponents. Within a year Moi felt shaky. Various alliances and agreements which he entered into with KANU Right-wing leaders gave him a sense of security, but the problem came when inflation, nepotism, corruption became the order of the day and the number of unemployed rose to alarming heights. With the Right-wingers he could share economic and political power but in the case of Left-wingers who demanded proper distribution of wealth, breaking of dependency ties — economic and political — with the imperialists, he had no solution in his 'democracy'.

The fact that a few owned most of the industries, estates, plantations, hotels, casinos, and had a sizable share in the multinational companies and non-African 'investments' and the majority lived at subsistence level, caused widespread discontent. In the absence of political forums which were banned, most of the opposition remained underground and was often unorganized. Quite often the opposition expressed itself by exposing corruption in high places and demanding redress for the poor. As long as the charges of corruption did not implicate the top few, they were ignored and corrupt practices were condemned, but if anyone pointed a finger at the top men, the accuser was given 'appropriate treatment', which included anything from arrest to unexplained death. Most often arrests were made on false charges of minor offences like wrong parking, non-payment of taxes or filing incorrect TA bills, etc. The media aroused people's feelings against the arrested persons for their 'unethical' behaviour.

Besides this opposition, there were people who believed in changing the set of rulers and bringing in people like Oginga Odinga who has a Left image. Odinga demands land to landless tillers, control over foreign capital, reduction in the gap between the rich and the poor and an end to exploitation of the common masses. He demands closure of the US bases at Mombasa, Kitale and Nauyuki. He wants British and Israeli troops to be sent out. For these demands he is often labelled by the rulers as Communist, red, socialist or Leftist. The Marxists regard Odinga as a radical among Kenyan leaders and pin hopes on him for a democratic alternative.

Since 1966, the Leftist elements in Kenya, though unorganized and thus unidentified, have been trying to induct Odinga into Parliamentary politics but without success. The ruling clique has been adopting all sorts of methods to keep him out of Parliament. These methods include banning his party, Kenya People's Union, detaining him, arresting him, disallowing him from rejoining KANU, etc. Ultimately, when Odinga was allowed to join the party the — KANU he was not permitted to contest elections.

The opposition elements have, despite extreme repression, been expressing themselves through strikes, demonstratrations, marches, posters, leaflets and speeches to small groups. The most active among them are students. Though the students' strikes are not as effective as strikes by workers, they do leave an impact on town dwellers. Since, the majority of students come from rich and influential families, repression on them is limited and they can afford to keep themselves in the mainstream of opposition.

Since the students are legally debarred from taking part in politics, they take up minor non-political issues — for example, mess billing system, quality of meat supplied to hostelers — and use these occasions to unite themselves. In the recent past, they have openly raised their voice against arrest of student leaders and university teachers. They have demanded that Odinga be allowed to contest parliamentary election, and have condemned *dejure* imposition of one party system.

The rebel students are identified as Leftist and supporters of Oginga Odinga. Militancy among the students is ascribed to the influence of Marxist teachers.

The recent trouble had its origin in the murder in 1975 of Kariuki who had pointed to corruption in high places. He was brutally murdered. The murder was traced to bodyguards of Kenyatta: All the MPs who investigated the murder and criticised the Government met with 'accidental deaths'. The brutal murder of Kariuki (he was no Leftist) led to a huge demonstration by students of Nairobi University. The students for the first time made statements challenging the Kenyatta government. Police cars were burnt and shop windows were shatterred by enraged students vowing revenge against the murderers of Kariuki — the list included Kenyatta and his Home Minister D. Arap Moi. Kenyatta closed the University for five months after a clamp-down on the campus. The innocent and the involved, all were severely beaten up.

The anniversary of the Kariuki murder henceforth became the day for student rebellion. On this day the students hit out at Government policies and condemn the leaders for the economic crisis. As the years wore on after the Kariuki murder, the ideological content of the observance of the occasion became more and more conspicuous. The students, especially their leaders, did not hide their Marxist leanings. Their attacks on the policies of the Government included the whole capitalist economy on the national and international scale. The USA became the capitalist ogre devastating countries like Kenya, and the students praised the achievements of revolutionary movements and the socialist system. The students got their inspiration from some lecturers who condemned capitalism and praised socialism. James Ngugi, Lecturer in English Literature and famous playwright and novelist, was imprisoned for his novel *Petals of Blood*. His arrest shocked the students and they decided to unite and organise the anti-Government forces and present their point of view from time to time.

On the eve of the OAU Summit in July 1980, students of the University of Nairobi demonstrated in the streets of the capital saying that they were expressing solidarity with the medical students who had expressed support for the strike of the medicos for non-practising allowance and who had been ordered to go to their homes. The Government arrested the student leaders and closed the University just two months after the students had returned after the earlier closure which had been ordered because students demanded permission for Odinga to contest election.

The pre-Summit students' demonstrations were seen by the Government as having been instigated by a number of teachers. In addition to restricting students to their home areas, the Government issued restrictive travel conditions to lecturers and impounded the passports of some of them. President Daniel Arap Moi and Njonje, the Minister for Constitutional Affairs, put the blame squarely on the Marxist lecturers. Speaking at Naburu (a farming centre), Moi accused some lecturers of using rich campus kids to wreak havoc at the University.

Moi has since then made it known on various occasions that the University of Nairobi was a nest of rebels. Some of them, he alleged, had the backing of foreign powers. On one occasion, Moi accused the University community of acquiring arms for subversive purposes. No arms were, however, discovered.

THE Moi regime lost its nerve when Oginga Odinga gave the impression of organising the people in another party — the Democratic Socialist Party. The fright was so great that they expelled Odinga from KANU and declared Kenya a one-party state, amending the 'democratic' Constitution. De facto, Kenya was a one-party state, but the unpopular leaders, afraid of losing power, legalised the system. The amended Constitution says that "there shall be in Kenya only one political party, the Kenya African National Union". The new changes state that "every candidate for the President shall be a member of the Kenya African National Union and shall be nominated by that Party..." Debarring even independents contesting for Parliament, the amended Constitution states that a candidate for membership of Parliament has to be a member of KANU and has to be nominated by KANU. It adds that an MP ceases to be one if he either resigns from or is expelled from KANU.

The arguments given for amendments reveal the dictatorial steps which the Moi Government has taken to suppress the people's attempts to find an alternative to the prevalent authoritarianism, pro-imperialism and capitalism.

Those who want an alternative to the present Government were described by Vice-President Mwai Kibaki as "certain confusing agents who were bent on creating chaos in the country by preaching Marxism, even though this ideology had proved unsuccessful in most Communist countries". He added that by amending the Constitution his supporters were rejecting the 'Marxist theories'.

THE young students at Nairobi University defended the right of Kenyans to form another political party. They said, "We call upon our leaders to respect the Kenya Constitution", which permits the formation of other political parties. Similarly, the Kenya Law Students' Society, quoting extensively from the Kenyan Constitution, defended the multiparty system. Mukaru Nganga, a lecturer, warned that closing all avenues of legitimate dissent could lead to underground manifestations of opposition. George Anyona, former M.P. (denied ticket in the last elections), was more emphatic in his support for the multi-party system. He said, "In order to avoid slippage into disastrous one-party tyrannies...Kenya must return to its constitutional position by the formation of second party". Anyona added that "through the formation of another political party, the people of Kenya will decide, by free and democratic elections, who their leaders shall be".

These statements were followed by the detention of Anyona and initial refusal of any law firm to take up his case. All the lawyers were afraid of the tyrannical rulers. And when a young lawyer, Khaminwa, agreed to take up the case, the police served him with detention orders and arrested him.

This coincided with Moi accusing some of the Nairobi students and lecturers of plotting to use students and trade unions to cause chaos and political unrest in the country. He linked students' demonstrations held in support of retaining the democratic character of the Kenyan Constitution with this 'plot'. Six lecturers were specially mentioned for involving themselves in the conspiracy. Following the President's speech, four lecturers, Mainawa Kinyatti, Dr George Katama, Kamoji K. Wachiira and Amin Mazrui, were placed in police custody. Their houses were searched. They were charged with being Marxist agents — serving the interests of foreigners. Dr Katama, when asked by the police about his beliefs, said he believed that "every Kenyan should have freedom and provision to enjoy basic human rights like food, clothing, shelter and health, and also to enjoy human rights". All lawyers were so frightened that no one agreed to represent the lecturers.

THE Kenyan rulers have been trying all possible ways to crush the growing opposition among the workers. They disallowed the formation of more than one trade union in any one unit, then they provided for Government-appointed trade union leaders. They banned elected students' unions, debarred students from taking part in politics. When students took up social and administrative issues, they arrested their leaders and closed the University, accusing them of being Marxist, anti-national and receiving arms from outside. Through constitutional amendment, they debarred independents and non-KANU men from entering politics. The constitutional amendment (imposing one-party rule) was followed by detaining teachers, students, journalists and lawyers. These acts were widely criticised and even friends of the Kenyan rulers condemned them for violation of human rights and crushing democracy.

The 'coup' was staged in these circumstances. Immediately after the 'coup', President Moi, in two nation-wide broadcasts, chastised Nairobi University students whom he blamed for actively going in for looting. "The Wannanchi", he said, "can see that the damage caused by these criminals was excessive". He added, "I am saddened at the loss of property by Kenyans. Those who had participated in the widespread looting were Nairobi University students...." Moi has again closed the University. No doubt there is also mention of changing the entire Air Force personnel. Some Air Force officers who landed at Dar-es-Salaam have been repatriated and detained.

From President Moi's statements and his action in closing the University, it is clear that he is trying primarily to blame the students. If Moi implicates the students he gets a free hand to crush them. The 'abortive coup' gives him licence to arrest and punish anyone he likes. Because of this the very people who had criticised the imposing of one-party rule and detention of teachers and others, have to keep mum. Some of them will not only tolerate but even appreciate the mass arrests and severe punishment of "collaborators with the coup plotters".

This is a new technique to eliminate opposition. If the first crackdown, under which on August 12, 1982 two prominent Kenyan MPs and two student leaders were arrested, is any indication, then the next few weeks will witness the most repressive era in Kenya. (*August 16*)

WOMEN'S WORLD

When Transfer Means Trouble

ANJALI DESHPANDE

ARE marriage and motherhood a disability in 'women's fulfilling their full role in the task of development'? Kiran Parwanda and Ranjan Uboveja have asked the Chairman of the Syndicate Bank, in a representation made to him regarding the transfer of their husbands outside Delhi. Both Kiran Parwanda and Ranjan Uboveja are science teachers in schools run by the Delhi Administration. Kiran Parwanda is the mother of an only son and Ranjan Uboveja has two kids to look after, a son and a daughter.

Both of them are married to officers of the Syndicate Bank, who have been recently transferred outside Delhi on being promoted to Middle Management Grade II of the Bank. Neither Kiran nor Ranjan can be posted outside Delhi. Stating the difficulties they would encounter on being thus compelled to live alone, the two young working women have asked the management to consider the case and have requested that their husbands not be posted at stations from where the two wives will not be in a position to pursue their employment.

The representation has again raised some wider issues regarding the status of working women married to persons in transferable jobs. In cases where the husband is transferred to a place where the wife cannot be posted, what options are left to her? She will have to resign or live by herself, a frightful prospect for young women today, at least in a city like Delhi. Living alone is synonymous with making oneself the target of prying eyes, snide remarks, rumour-mongers and all sorts of undesirable elements. In extreme cases sexual assaults too cannot be ruled out.

Setting up two households in two different places entails increased financial liabilities, a consideration not to be overlooked in middle class families. It means she has to move to another apartment, cheaper and naturally a little more cramped. She cannot get into a working women's hostel, for her child wouldn't be allowed to stay with her and the husband would not be able to spend his vacation with her. An apartment must be found which in itself is a tough job, houses are not easily let to unescorted women. Areas that are considered safer are so expensive as to be beyond the reach of the less privileged.

Besides, there is the question of the children's development. They are supposed to be the primary responsibility of the mother. Any slim chance of the husband sharing in their upbringing is ruled out by such transfers. The mother is left with a full-time job, care of the children, house-work plus the anxiety of being alone with defenceless children.

To avoid all these troubles the woman resigns from her job, follows her husband wherever he goes and leads the life of a docile housewife. She may land a job once in a while. But the satisfaction of a permanent job, and the feeling of independence that comes from it, is to be denied to her, for that is the prescribed status of woman — second to man. Her job, her self-fulfilment, the extension of her personality are all conditioned by the husband's situation. With prices soaring, today most husbands would not want their wives to opt for this alternative. The husband resigning his job to remain with the wife is inconceivable even in families where *his* salary may have the status of supplementary income.

On the other hand, transfers are an instrument of development of people. They expose people to different environments, help broaden their outlook and lessen the xenophobia that many people suffer from. In a diversified country like India, they are all the more necessary for breeding a sense of oneness among different regional groups. But the transfer policy of any organisation should also take into account the well-being of the basic unit of society — the family.

It should not hamper the progress of female citizens. Policies of organisations should be so framed as to contribute to the creation of a broad-based open-minded family and not be a source of disarray. In the present case, both Uboveja and Parwanda are being promoted and transferred. It is however not necessary that they be posted so far away from their families that they feel uprooted. They can be placed in branches near Delhi — say Ghaziabad or Faridabad or Gurgaon — so that their wives can get themselves transferred to some village in Delhi area and the family can remain together. Thanks to central schools, the education of children is no longer a headache for transferable employees, who do not want to or cannot afford to send their wards to hostels.

However, the chairman in his reply to the representation has rejected this arrangement suggested by Kiran Parwanda and Ranjan Uboveja, while admitting that several officers find themselves in a similar predicament. All the more reason why this should be given serious thought.

It is painful that this should happen in an organisation that has shown initiative in encouraging women's employment. The credit for opening all-women branches goes to the Syndicate Bank. However, its transfer policy shows a bias against women. The Bank adopted a policy on August 14, 1981, which came into force with immediate effect, that "lady officers on marriage will be given transfers to the places where their husbands are stationed, provided that their requests are first request after marriage." Further, "In case the husband is working in our Bank and there is only one branch at the place both husband and wife may be posted to another place where we have two branches or more". There is no such provision for cases where the wife may be likewise employed in the Bank. It is clear that the wife will be transferred to where the husband is posted. Always it is the woman who has to pack up and leave for the husband's destination. (*August 16*)

(Also see Communication on page 27)

Whither Egypt?

M.S. AGWANI

UNTIL June 6, when the Israelis launched an unprovoked aggression on Lebanon many Egyptians were inclined to concede that Camp David was both necessary and unavoidable. Considering the endless divisions, discords and dissimulations that afflicted the Arab camp, Egypt had perhaps no choice but to make a separate peace with Israel. As a noted Egyptian writer put it: "If Sadat had not existed we would have invented one to do the job". His assassination left the Egyptians unmoved not because of Camp David. It was mainly due to Sadat's unconcealed contempt for the common man which the latter reciprocated in kind. However, in the wake of the Israeli invasion there is a qualitative change in the Egyptian assessment of the recent past as this writer noticed during a short visit to Cairo last month.

The signs of change are unmistakable. For one thing, the Israeli invasion has seriously upset President Hosni Mubarak's plans to regain for Egypt the leadership of the Arab moderates. Until the blitzkrieg, he had been hoping to forge a semblance of Arab unity. Mubarak had ordered the official media to stop all criticism of the "rejectionist" Arab regimes, expressed anxiety over Iran's militant postures in the Persian Gulf, and even transferred Soviet-made military equipment worth 300 million dollars to Iraq. He was moreover willing to let Saudi Arabia dovetail its Fahd plan for a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace with the virtually defunct Camp David process. What really kept the moderate Arab rulers from hugging Mubarak's Egypt was the awkward fact of Cairo's diplomatic ties with Tel Aviv. But that too was not an insuperable obstacle. After all, both sides could do business if they so desired without bothering about diplomatic formalities.

But the Israeli armed action in Lebanon was a clear enough indication that Tel Aviv was bent upon exposing the political and military impotence of the Arab moderates to such an extent that they would lose all credibility in the eyes of their own people. As one Egyptian bitterly put it, the Israelis have stripped the Arab moderates naked and are parading them in the streets of their respective capitals day after day for everyone to see.

More importantly, public opinion at home began to question the durability of Egypt's separate peace with Israel. *Newsweek* reported from Cairo that the Israeli attack on Lebanon was "causing important, and politically dangerous repercussions in Egypt". Within days of the invasion there was a protest rally outside Al-Azhar mosque despite official ban on public demonstrations. The angry crowd shouted "Down with Camp David" and later delivered a memorandum to Mubarak demanding the breaking off of diplomatic ties with Israel. Public reactions in general were extremely critical not only of Israel and America — which most Egyptians believe gave the green signal for the Israeli invasion — but of Egyptian leadership as well.

Mubarak responded by relaxing the restrictions on criticism of Israel and America by the public media. Butros Ghali, the Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs who had only recently put up a stout defence of the Camp David process in the American Journal *Foreign Affairs*, admitted failure of the policy. "The invasion", he observed, "shows the will for a wider peace does not exist now. The Israeli invasion was aggression against the whole peace process...There will be no Palestinian participation now. The Israelis may have attacked just to avoid even talking to the PLO."

Another indicator of change is the nagging anxiety about Egypt's status as an independent actor in regional and international affairs. Way back in 1979, General Shazli had warned that in the attempt to recover Sinai through Camp David the Egyptians were running the risk of losing the whole of Egypt. (Shazli, it may be recalled, had led the Egyptian crossing of the Suez Canal in October 1973).

This perception is more widely shared in Cairo in the wake of Israeli invasion. The point is best illustrated by a story that was doing the rounds in Cairo last month: when Mubarak issued a strong statement deploring Israel's invasion of Labanon and asking America to review its policy towards Israel, Begin sent a blunt message to Mubarak telling him to shut up, or else...The story goes that Mubarak promptly changed his tone.

The consequent marginalisation of Egypt is manifested in many ways. In the economic field, it is symbolised by the "open door" policy which the Americans imposed on Egypt as part of the *quid pro quo* for nudging Israel into relinquishing the Sinai Peninsula. Sadat in turn sold it to the Egyptians as a means to attract Western capital. In reality, it flooded the country with imported luxury goods and almost overnight produced a new class of hustlers, speculators and blackmarketeers which together came to constitute the sole civilian prop of the regime. As Essam Eldin Galal, a veteran nationalist, put it, Egypt has turned its back on self-reliance. What it has now is an "extension economy".

At the same time, America has acquired a firm grip on Egyptian economy. Having forfeited aid from the Gulf states in the wake of Camp David, Egypt now leans heavily on American grants and food supplies. In regard to the latter, America is keeping Egypt on a very short leash indeed. Its cur-

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rent food reserves would not last more than a fortnight and are replenished by America from week to week.

More importantly, the peace treaty with Israel has put Egypt in a politico-military straitjacket. Ever since Camp David America has pumped so much money and military hardware into Israel that the latter has attained unquestioned superiority over any probable combination of its Arab neighbours. As against this Egypt has no military clout worth the name. It has opted out of the Soviet weapons market; and American supplies are available to it in extremely measured doses.

All this tends to place Israel in a position to dictate Egypt's regional and international policies. At any rate, Begin has publicly stated that any deviation on Egypt's part from the letter and spirit of Camp David accords would result in re-occupation of Sinai by Israel.

In plain terms, this amounts to Egypt being reduced to the status of a client state. And this is what hurts the Egyptian national pride most. Many Egyptians feel that their country's climb-down from being a premier state in the region to a marginal one defies all logic and is quite unacceptable. It is not only a matter of national self-respect in which the Egyptians are second to none; it is also a question of size, resources, education, technical skills and intellectual creativity — all of which militate against Egypt being reconciled to a marginal status.

As for the Palestine problem, the mood in Cairo is decidedly pro-PLO. Some Egyptians even regard the PLO as the Arab world's first line of defence against the wider designs of Israeli militarists. PLO's standing with the Egyptian people is best illustrated by the Ibrashi episode. Dr. Ibrashi is a leading dentist in Cairo. Some time last year an Israeli diplomat based in Egypt went to him for treatment. Ibrashi diagnosed the ailment and prescribed a line of treatment costing a small fortune. The Israeli embassy in Cairo agreed to foot the bill and the treatment was duly carried out. When the time came for payment Ibrashi insisted on being paid by cheque, adding further that the cheque must be drawn in favour of the PLO. The Israeli embassy of course refused to comply. But Sadat was furious and he had Ibrashi arrested in the September 1981 crackdown as a political dissident. Ibrashi is free again besides being widely acclaimed as a national hero.

Mention must also be made here of some Egyptian perceptions of the omissions and commissions of the super-powers in regard to the Lebanese crisis. During the first days of Israeli invasion the Government-controlled media indulged in taunting the "rejectionists" for not heeding the Egyptian call for joining the Camp David process. However, as the enormity of the Israeli carnage began to unfold, this propaganda line was drowned in an outburst of nationwide indignation. The Government then tried to contain the tide by permitting the official media to air Egyptian feelings about the outrage. For the first time since the Camp David accords were signed in 1978, the media made a frontal attack on the US, holding Washington responsible for the bloodshed in Lebanon.

With the expansion of the Israeli war aims and American acquiescence in them, anti-American sentiment became rampant. The Egyptians were indeed aghast at the bizarre spectacle of American diplomacy frantically trying to cash in on the "opportunities" created by the Israeli war-machine.

The Soviet Union, on the other hand, was blamed for what many critics described as abdication of responsibility. Even official Cairo felt jittery, albeit for different reasons, about Soviet passivity. For the past several years the Egyptian Government had been crying wolf over what was described as imminent Soviet threat to West Asia and had almost allied with the Americans to chase the Soviets out of the region. But the Israeli invasion of Lebanon demonstrated to the whole world that the threat emanated from America itself.

The common man had his own reasons to feel utterly disappointed with Soviet behaviour. To

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begin with, Moscow greeted the Israeli invasion of Lebanon with deafening silence. A few days later the then American Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, patronizingly described the Soviet response as "encouragingly cautious". In the meantime, the Israeli invaders had reduced the Lebanese towns of Tyre, Sidon and Damur to rubble, killing thousands of civilians in the process. At this point Moscow apparently realised that it was too much to let Haig act as Soviet spokesman. Hence the strong statement saying that the Soviet Union will stand by the victims of aggression in Lebanon not only "in words but in deeds". Thereafter a pall of silence fell on Moscow once again. Nor were Soviet deeds in sight anywhere. Weeks later, Reagan hinted at the possibility of American marines landing at Beirut to "assist" the evacuation of Palestinian fighters from West Beirut. Moscow was quick to take exception to the suggested American move but did so in sufficiently ambiguous terms to retain the option of doing nothing at all: Brezhnev told Washington that the proposed American intervention in Beirut would compel the Soviet Union to "build its policy with due consideration of this fact".

Even those in Cairo who are known to be friendly towards the Soviet Union feel perplexed at Moscow's inertia. This is not to say that anyone expected Moscow to land its divisions in Lebanon to repulse the aggressor. But there were many who felt that the Soviet Union could certainly take some credible initiatives consistent with its global status.

People I met in Cairo came forward with different theories on the Soviet stance. One such theory explained Soviet indifference in terms of the fact that most Arab regimes regarded Washington as their saviour against the supposed Soviet threat to the West Asian region. In the circumstances, Moscow had no option but to let the Arabs learn the hard away as to who the real adversary was. A corollary to this theory stipulated that thanks to its transparent backing to Israeli aggressiveness Washington was unwittingly digging the graves of all the Arab moderates ranging from Mubarak to Fahd. Hence the best course for Moscow was to wait and watch.

But other Egyptian perceptions are hardly complimentary to Moscow. Some Egyptian observers ascribe Soviet inaction to its pressing need for restoration of *detente* with America. When *detente* was first sanctified at the Nixon-Brezhnev summit in 1972 — so the theory goes — Moscow had conceded a free hand to Washington in West Asia. The arrangement worked quite satisfactorily for America until the Soviet troops moved into Afghanistan. The Americans then retaliated by giving harrowing moments to Moscow in Poland. According to this theory, the two sides are now once again involved in delicate negotiations; and the Soviets do not want to spoil the chances of reaching an understanding with the Americans on a host of issues including strategic arms limitation.

Yet another theory cites American insistence on "linkages" — a euphemism for binding the Soviet Union to "good behaviour" in areas of vital interest to America — as proof of its strong bargaining position *vis-a-vis* Moscow. Finally, there are those who aver that the Soviet system itself has lost resilience and the capacity for self-renewal it so badly needs.

Egyptians are equally frank about themselves and their fellow Arabs. According to one view, the momentous phase of Arab history which began with the Egyptian revolution in 1952 ended in an anticlimax this year when the entire Arab world watched helplessly the Zionist blitzkrieg in Lebanon. In other words, all Arab regimes, regardless of the labels they might wear, stand discredited in the eyes of their own people.

In the fifties, Nasser's revolution had blazed a new trail not only in Egypt but in the wider Arab world stretching from Iraq to the Atlantic coast of Morocco. Nasser rode the Arab stage like a colossus giving the ordinary Arab a sence of self-respect and pride which he had practically lost under four centuries of Turkish rule followed by Western dominance.

Some Egyptians think that the use of the oil weapon by the late King Faisal in 1973 only served to conjure up illusions of power. In reality, oil wealth has only induced impotence. How did it happen? My attention was drawn to a report in the London *Economist* that Saudi Arabia's wealth abroad jumped from $ 2.3 billion in 1972 to about $ 150 billion by the middle of 1981. "That alone is enough to buy all of the fifty biggest banks in the world. Yet none of these fifty banks is Arab". In the process, Saudi Arabia has placed itself at the mercy of America where the bulk of its petro-dollars is locked up.

Again, Saudi Arabia's outlay on defence rose from $ 380 million in 1970 to $ 28 billion in 1981-82 — which, incidentally, is about nine times the annual defence budget of India. And yet, Saudi Arabia's military capability is virtually zero. Riyadh, for instance, was blissfully unaware of the Israeli F-16 planes having overflown Saudi territory to strike at the Iraqi nuclear reactor in June last year.

In Egypt itself the outlook is bleak and uncertain. Small Nasserist groups are still active in public life despite Sadat's persistent attempts to discredit Nasser and all he stood for. The Communist Left too is weak and fragmented. The Muslim Brothers have also lost ground because of their dependence on Saudi money. Besides, their Supreme Guide Telemcani is known to have made compromises with the late President Sadat. The ageing organisation is overtaken by a mushroom growth of Islamic groups whose following is rapidly growing. A Cairo University don surmised that these groups are the best organised political force in Egypt today, and they have evolved an effective mechanism for instant mass mobilisation.

The large crowds at the mosques suggest a striking parallel to Iran in the period shortly before the fall of the Shah. An Egyptian political scientist hinted that the syndrome of religious mobilisation to combat injustice at home and abroad might spread to other Arab countries. The Americans provoked a mass upsurge in Iran thanks to their unqualified support to the Shah; their current championship of Israel against the Arabs might produce similar results in the Arab world.

A top expert of the *Al-Ahram* Strategic Centre assessed the potentialities of mass mobilisation from a military angle. Under the present military balance, he argued, no Arab country could feel secure *vis-a-vis* Israel. Israel's wanton carnage in Lebanon has driven home the lesson that the Arabs could never hope to contain the Israelis with the help of regular armies alone. For, behind the invader stands the full military might of America. The Arabs must, therefore, confront the enemy in ways other than the conventional ones. Another expert added that the Iranian model might provide the answer. He was of course referring to the human waves tactics used by the Iranians along with the regular armed foces in the Iran-Iraq war. The Israelis, he observed, have the will to kill, but they don't possess the will to die. Their soldiers march behind sophisticated American weaponry, making sure that human losses are minimised. But once they begin to face heavy casualties their morale will slump. (*August 9*)

Bitter Fruit of Arab Disunity

S.N. ANTIA Major-General (Retd)

LET us dip our flag in salute to the brave and indomitable fighters of the PLO who are waging an unequal but epic struggle in Lebanon. The struggle is not only for their own survival, precarious as it is, but also for the survival of the just and legitimate cause of a homeland for the Palestinians who for four decades have been refugees in different lands of West Asia.

The current diplomatic, political and military situation in Lebanon is so fluid that at this moment its final outcome cannot be predicted with any degree of certainty. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the PLO has so far been successful beyond measure in combating the military might of Israel. Five thousand PLO fighters are bravely facing the wanton military onslaught by ten well-trained and well-equipped Israeli combat divisions fully supported by the Israeli air force and navy. Yet with all its military might, and diplomatic, political, military and material support from the USA and other Western nations, the vaunted myth of Israeli military invincibility has been rudely exposed by a band of highly motivated men under the inspiring leadership of Yasser Arafat. Paradoxically, while it is the PLO that has borne the brunt of Israeli aggression, it is the innocent and defenceless civilian population of Lebanon that has borne unprecedented brutality and barbarity by one nation against another. We salute them also.

The situation in Lebanon is reminiscent of Hitler's ominous shadow over Europe in the thirties, culminating in the Second World War. It is an irony of history that in Premier Begin another magniloquent, bigoted and maniacal personality should emerge for the second time in this century to perpetrate horrible crimes against humanity, at a time when the echoes of the extermination of millions of Jews by Hitler and his coterie have not been muted. While Israel remains unrepentant and arrogant as it has always been since its inception, its chief mentor and benefactor, the USA, must hang its head in shame at the current situation in Lebanon. This is the USA, the self-proclaimed champion of liberty and freedom, and upholder of human rights which witnesses the massacre of innocent civilians in Lebanon with the armaments it has supplied in abundance to Israel for its "self-defence". This is the USA, which raised such a hue and cry, and continues to do so, in regard to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan which in comparison to the events in Lebanon seems utterly innocuous.

Reagan and his administration have done everything possible to prevent Israel from being branded an aggressor and a criminal in the UN and other world forums. While Lebanon is being destroyed and thousands of civilians have been killed, US public opinion and the media as well as the US Congress remain unconcerned. Reagan's latest ploy in issuing the so-called ultimatum to Israel to honour the umpteen cease-fire agreements in Lebanon has been summarily rejected by Begin and his military hawks. Perhaps some day in the future realisation will dawn on the USA that the Frankenstein it has created and nurtured in the shape of Israel in West Asia, may be in a position to maul its own creator.

The current crisis in Lebanon reflects the agony, tragedy and shame of the entire Arab world. The situation is of their own making. Except for a brief period of visions of glory and unity demonstrated in the mid-seventies when it was a power to reckon with, its total lack of world comprehension in general and in relation to West Asia in particular has resulted in its miserable failure to grasp the opportunities which it has dissipated through disunity.

The Arab world has been in disarray before and its prestige was at its lowest after the 1967 Egypt-Israel war. They were considered incompetent, cowardly and incapable of taking effective concerted action. Yet during the 1973 Yom Kippur war and its aftermath the Arab world was miraculously regenerated and catapulted as a world power to reckon with. The combined Egyptian-Syrian military attack, though only partially successful, shattered American and Israeli assumptions regarding West Asia strategy. The military venture was effectively backed up by the oil-producing Arab countries with their coordinated production cuts, combined with the embargo on sales to the USA and some European nations bringing the West's economic and industrial activity to a virtual halt and enabling the OPEC to quadruple the price of oil. It seemed that never again would the world speak of the Arabs in derisive terms. Prima facie, the Arab world then was in a strong and decisive position to reach an honourable settlement of the Palestine problem which had tormented and shamed it for three decades and to build for itself a prosperous future dealing on terms of equality with the industrial oil-consuming powers. But this was only a brief period of glory — a shimmering mirage on the desert sands of West Asia which was soon replaced by the reality of the age-old tradition of disunity, self-preservation and greed for more wealth from oil resources. Today more than ever the Arab leaders are sorely divided, each for himself, and in consequence not only has the PLO cause suffered politically and militarily but Lebanon has also been brought to the brink of extinction.

Today the Arab leaders are trembling under the ferocious blows of two non-Arab powers, namely, Iran and Israel. Lebanon, once the cultural and commercial centre of the Arab world, has been torn asunder, firstly by its weak, fragile and inept domestic political system and civil strife between the two main ethnic groups of the population; secondly, it has been sucked in by the cross-currents of external political and military ambitions and pressures, particularly from Syria and the PLO; thirdly, the treachery of the Phalangists in actively aiding and assisting Israel to destroy if not eliminate these influences. Unfortunately, Lebanon has never been master of its own destiny; it has allowed itself to be used by other Arab nations for their own selfish ends while safeguarding their own national interests, the result being the dire consequences it now faces.

Egypt, the most powerful and populous nation in the Arab world, has betrayed the Arab cause and unity by Sadat's acceptance of the Camp David agreement and conclusion of a peace treaty with Israel without settlement of the Palestinian problem. The Egypt-Israel peace traaty may have restored to the former its lost territories in the Sinai, but it has been weaned away from the Arab fold. It is now under the firm grip of US and Western influence and serves the cause of US strategic policy in West Asia. The feeble efforts of Hosni Mubarak to get Egypt back into the Arab fold are unlikely to yield any tangible results because of Egypt's close connections with both Israel and the USA. Its peace treaty with Israel will in no way help the PLO cause in spite of Mubarak's gesture of acceptance of a thousand PLO men in Egypt. They will in fact be just another enclave of Palestinian refugees as they will be denied the right to engage in political and military activity.

Jordan's role and influence in the Arab world has been on the wane for some years now. To Jordan goes the discredit for initially ousting the PLO from its territories for fear of reprisals by Israel. King Hussain's support to Iraq in the Gulf War has not only proved to be a gross miscalculation but has further accentuated Arab disunity. Militarily Jordan is highly vulnerable to any Israeli aggression. Overtures for a peace treaty have already been made by Menachem Begin. Hussain is well aware of Israel's ability to use the flimsiest pretexts for its aggressive designs, and it would not be surprising if some day in the future, once the Lebanon crisis is over, like Egypt, Jordan also succumbs to pressures for concluding a treaty rather than go the way of Lebanon.

Syria, the self-proclaimed but little loved protector of the Palestinians, is too busy with its own confrontation with Israel particularly along the Golan Heights. It has the choice of abandoning the PLO or risking a full-scale war with Israel which it has no chance of winning. Yet it must be said to the credit of Syria that it did provide some limited military help to the PLO in Lebanon during the present crisis, but as a result of heavy losses suffered in air battles it had to agree to a cease-fire.

The country where all the Arab points of strength overlap is Iraq. It has oil and the resultant wealth, population and a proud history. But is has squandered all these assets in the senseless war with Iran for a puny cause that could have been negotiated with Iran in the larger interests of Arab unity. The Arab nations would perhaps have rejoiced if an Iraqi military victory could have been made possible. Now with Iraq's acceptance of Iranian terms and conditions, it is beyond political and military comprehension why such an abortive venture was undertaken at all. Political upheaval in Iraq is not far off — even civil war cannot be ruled out. Viewing the Iraq-Iran war in retrospect, what a significant difference it would have made if the Iraqi military potential had been available to be used in

For the Palestinian Martyrs

FAIZ AHMED FAIZ

Wherever I go,
My beloved land,
The pain of your humiliation burns my heart.
But there are compensations
Your dignity enhances mine
Your love walks with me
The fragrance of your citrus groves
Breathes through my mouth
All those friends whom I have never seen
Keep me company
Their hands which I have never clasped
Make mine invincible
Far away on the indifferent highways
Of foreign lands or on the unfamiliar streets
Of alien cities,
Wherever I unfurl the banner of my blood
There flutters the flag of Palestine
One Palestine has been destroyed by my enemies
But my agony has given birth to innumerable Palestines.

—Translated by Daud Kamal

Lebanon — but wisdom generally comes to the Arabs only when it is too late. The termination of war by Iraq is another nail in the coffin of Arab unity. And Iran's success will generate apprehensions and fears in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states with the inevitable spread of the Irani brand of political, religious and nationalist fervour in these countries.

Saudi Arabia's role in the Arab world affairs has been one of ambivalence throughout. With one foot in the Western camp and the other in the Arab world, it has so far survived the balancing act. While its financial munificence to the Arab world and the PLO cause has been beyond compare, this has not been matched by sagacious and pragmatic diplomatic efforts, as its role as moderator has been less than successful. All the military resources at its disposal and the billions of dollars worth of the most modern and sophisticated armaments and equipment in its possession have never been committed so far in any Arab-Israeli conflict. The Gulf kingdoms too present no better image, preoccupied as they are with their own internal stability and with many of them having aligned themselves singly or collectively with Western nations for protection after the events in Iran and Afghanistan. The western Arab world, from Libya to Morocco, is preoccupied with intra-African squabbles and is in no state to render any assistance to its eastern brethren and the PLO.

This then is the sombre scenario in the Arab world today, whose consequences have left the PLO isolated and out on a limb. Is it any wonder that with this dismal picture of Arab disunity and incompetence, Israel with impunity and in total disregard of world opinion is unashamedly able to exercise its political and military will and dominance over the Arab world, and that too, ironically, with its armour rolling over the dead bodies of Lebanese civilians on the ground and incineration of towns from the air with the help of fuel which has come from the oilfields of the Arab nations?

Look at the military picture of the Arab world. The Arab nations have been recipients of billions of dollars of military hardware from the two superpower blocs. While the Saudis have to resort to hiring Pakistani mercenaries to ensure their internal security, other Gulf states have security pacts with either of the super-powers. When one considers the totality of Arab military potential, it is beyond comprehension why the Arabs as a united force could not render effective military support to the [redacted] and to put Arab unity, solidarity and power above their petty chauvinistic interests. The need is the emergence of a strong leader of Nasser's calibre and stature, to lead them out of the present morass. It is not beyond the genius and capability of the Arab world to unite and reorganise itself as a powerful cohesive force. This it achieved during and after the 1973 war and it is capable of refurbishing the Arabs' tarnished image. Let them use the potent and powerful oil weapon to bring the West to terms. Finally, let them here and now take a solemn pledge that any aggression against any Arab nation will be deemed to be aggression on the Arab world as a single entity and in doing so refashion their entire military organisation and strategy.

Rise, Arabs! You have wallowed too long in your squabbles. Your wealth and affluence cannot save you from Western exploitation or from agression by the West's surrogate in West Asia. Once their needs are fulfilled you will be thrown on the dung-heap of forgotten nations so far as they are concerned. It is better to be poor and maintain your pride than to have all the oil and the resultant wealth and yet be branded cowards.

The PLO shall live irrespective of the fact that they are about to be thrown out of Lebanon. They will continue their struggle as they had done in the past from different lands with renewed vigour, and some day, *Inshallah*, they will be masters in their own homeland. No nation has yet built an edifice on the bones of innocent and defenceless civilian masses, and Israel can be no exception. Out of the ashes of the dead in Lebanon will rise the nation of Palestine.

Let us once again salute the brave men of the PLO and the thousands of civilians who have perished at the hands of that maniac Menachem Begin and his war machine. Let the Israelis read the Old Testament once again — a nation which once rejected and crucified its own Messiah cannot escape divine wrath. Israel lives by the sword — and it will perish by the sword. This latter sword must be designed, cast and tempered in the fire of Arab unity and solidarity. (*August 13*)

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Contours of Fiji's Politics

J.P. CHATURVEDI

FIJI Islands, numbering about 844 — hundred of them inhabited — and comprising an area of 7055 square miles and a population of about 6,25,000, are in the news. There were general elections in Fiji on July 8, 1982, and it took about three weeks for our media to announce the results of elections in a country where 51 per cent of the population is described as Indian even in the Fiji Constitution. They are the backbone of that country's economy, which is based on the sugar industry; sugarcane is mostly cultivated by Indians. Surprisingly, the Indian press was quick to pick up the remarks of the Prime Minister of Fiji, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, made to an Australian newspaper and later repeated in Fiji, accusing the former Indian High Commissioner, Sonu Kochar, of interfering in the elections, while she was in fact in Delhi.

Fiji's international airport, Nadi, is four hours' flight by Jumbo Jet from Sydney or Brisbane (1700 miles to the north-east). Ratu Sir Kamisese Kapaiwai Tuimacilai Mara (62) was the first Fijian to get an M.A. degree from Oxford; he was nominated member of the Governor's Executive Council in 1964; resigned in 1967 from the civil service, and was elected to the Legislative Council the same year. He became Minister and later, on October 10, 1970, Prime Minister of Fiji. He has been Prime Minister since then, through three successive elections in 1972, 1977 and 1982. Mara's Alliance Party got 28 seats out of 52, while the National Federation Party got 22, the maximum that a purely Indian party can get under the Fijian Constitution.

Yet Mara has alleged that Russian money flowed in to being about his ouster from power. This is evidently meant only to defame the Indian community specially in Australia and New Zealand where it is being backed by the Opposition Labour Party.' It must be noted that there was no Sonu Kochar in Fiji and there were no Russian ships around Suva in 1977, when the National Federation Party secured 26 seats, and the Alliance Party of Prime Minister Mara got only 24; one went to his Fijian opponent and one to an independent. If the NFP could have elected its leader quickly and not got into a tie over the election of Sadiq Mohamed Koya for two days, ultimately electing him by 14 to 12, a nominee of the NFP would have succeeded Mara. Disenchantment among the people with the feudal and pro-imperialist policies of the Alliance Party was noticeable even in September 1980, when Senator Chandra Bidesi, NFP nominee, was elected to the Suva City Council from Tamavua ward in the Capital, defeating his Fiji (Kaiwiti) rival Moses Waqaniika in a Fijian constituency which had always returned a Fijian; thus the NFP got a majority in the Capital's City Council. The daily *Sun* of September 20, 1980, reported, "Upset! NFP Victorious!" The *Sunday Times* of September 20 gave the news under the caption "Milestone Win for NFP".

It will be worthwhile to go into the constitutional history of Fiji. After the end of the Second World War there was a demand for greater constitutional rights, and a European member, H.B. Gibson, moved a resolution in the Legislative Council "that the Council be expanded to a membership of 28, by adding 18 elected members, six from each of the races which are represented on this Council". This was not accepted. In 1959 Madhawan moved in the Legislative Council "that there has been no constitutional change of any significance since 1937, that is for over 20 years, and because the rest of the Colonial Empire has made great strides forward in Constitutional reform, this Council is of the opinion that the time is at hand for a change in our Constitution and that this progressive step shall consist of: (a) elimination on the unofficial side of all non-official members nominated by the Governor; (b) unofficial side to consist of equal members, say six of each of the three races that form the population of this colony, elected by secret ballot..." Even this proposal was not accepted on the plea that it would give an opportunity to one race to dominate over the other two.

Since 1929, Indians have been given three seats in the Legislative Council on communal franchise, and that very year one of the Indian members had moved that 'political rights and status granted to Indian settlers on racial lines are not acceptable to them and Indians in Fiji should be granted common franchise along with other British subjects resident in the Colony.' That was supposed to be the common Indian line and the issue used to be raised till 1934. Madhawan's resolution was thus a climb-down on the part of the Indian population. Yet it was not accepted. This resolution was supported by all Indian members (except one Muslim member who wanted separate electorate for Muslims) and a European member, but still failed.

It was only after the unanimous resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1963 proposing complete independence for Fiji that the British Government moved to bring about constitutional change. The Constitution of 1963 increased the number of elected members to 12, four from each of the Fijian, Indian and European groups, chosen again on a communal basis. The Governor also nominated two members from each of these communities. All these members were authorised to select two each from their respective categories for the Executive Council.

The Indians formed the National Federation

The author visited Fiji in 1980 to write a 'History of Indian Migration to Fiji', and has studied the Fijian political scene, apart from studying the condition of indentured immigrants from India; he remains a close observer of developments in Fiji.

Party as a result of the 1960 strike. In 1965, members of the Legislative Council were called to London for consultation on Fiji's constitutional status. Although the Indians wanted independence and a common franchise which the Fijians and the Europeans did not like, a Constitution was accepted under which out of 25 seats, nine were given to Fijians, nine to Indians and seven to general electors. Elections were held on this basis in 1966. Before the elections, on March 12, 1966 the Alliance Party was formed, consisting of representatives of the Fijian Association, the Suva Rotuman Association, the National Congress of Fiji, the General Electors' Association, the Fiji Minority Party, the Rotuman Convention and the Tongan Organization. The Alliance got 23 seats and had the support of Kisan Sangh or Indian Farmers' Union which was active in Western Fiji under the leadership of a European lawyer, N.S. Chalmers. Later on, the two independents and two members of the Council of Fijian Chiefs, selected by the Council, also joined the Alliance. The Federation Party got all the nine Indian seats, securing 65.26 per cent of Indian votes, while the Alliance got 67.26 per cent votes for the nine Fijian seats. The nine Indian members resigned, and there was a byelection in August 1968 and the Federation Party again won all the nine seats with 78.55 per cent of the Indian votes cast.

The Alliance Party later announced that it was prepared to accept Dominion Status for Fiji. The Federation Party offered to shelve the demand for a common roll, hoping that once the British departed, Indians and Fijians could iron out details of the type of electoral system required. Discussions on the Constitution concluded in London in May 1970, and the result was that the (elected) House of Representatives would have 22 seats each for Fijians and Indians, 12 on communal franchise and 10 on national franchise. There was a category of general electors consisting of those who were neither Fijians nor Indians, and they were given eight seats, three on communal and five on national franchise. The Upper House or Senate was to be a nominated body, eight members to be chosen by the Council of Chiefs, seven by the Prime Minister, six by the Leader of the Opposition and one by the Council of Rotuma. Matters affecting Fijian customs and land could not be decided by either House unless supported by six out of eight of the Council of Chiefs' nominees.

This Constitution had entrenched clauses affecting the political and economic interests of Indians, which were introduced in the name of safeguarding Fijian interests as the Fijians had not sufficiently progressed to compete with Indians or Europeans. The National Federation Party accepted this plan in the hope that the Royal Commission which was to be appointed within five years of Independence would make recommendations on the most appropriate method of electing members of the House of Representatives. But when the Commission made its recommendations in 1975, these were not accepted by the Fiji Parliament. Indians who were party to the London Conference thought that the Royal Commission was a sort of arbitration tribunal whose findings were binding on the participants at the London talks. The Prime Minister did not agree.

As has been pointed out, some Indians had been supporting the Alliance from the beginning. There was one Indian Minister, M.T. Khan, who was dismissed on charges of corruption. But the court did not find him guilty. Yet he was not reinstated. His case was fought by Sadiq Mohamed Koya, Leader of the Opposition. Later on Sir Vijay Singh, the first Fiji-born Indian knight and a lawyer, was not given the Alliance ticket.

If the Indian representatives could have resolved the differences of opinion between Koya and Irene Narayan, the President of the Party, Fijian politics might have been different from what it is today.

As far as the question of Indian High Commissioner is concerned, the Fijian attitude is a legacy of British rule. When in 1948 there was an Indian Commissioner in Suva appointed by the Government of India, the Governor in welcoming the High Commissioner said in the Council, "We continue to hope that his presence in our midst will promote a genuine spirit of cooperation and that nothing will be said or done by the Commissioner or his associates which will have the effect, directly or indirectly, of diverting the Indian population of Fiji from that undivided loyalty towards the Colony of their adoption which forms the only possible basis for their future happiness and prosparity".

The bureaucracy and the European element in Fiji had been suspicious of the motives of Indian nationalists for a long time — for, as early as 1912 and 1916, under their pressure the system of indentured immigration was ended. They also continued to propagate the myth that Indians were dominating the economic scene in Fiji at the cost of Fijians. This was disproved by the Royal Commission which noted in 1975, "The ordinary man, seeing the extent to which shops and other commercial activities are in Indian hands, believes the economic power of the Indian population as a whole is very great. In fact, it is not so significant compared with the international companies in Fiji." Although 80 per cent of the cane farmers are Indians and the entire growth of the sugar industry has been due to their labour and skill, Indians own only 2 per cent of freehold land, agricultural or residential, in Fiji. The bulk of the population is living on leased land, and lease periods do not exceed 30 years. Farmers are not sure about their lands or about their houses; due to this reason the houses are built of wood.

When I was there, I saw an MP and Vice-President of the Fijian Association Obisai Torah sentenced to a year's term in jail for destroying the houses of two Indian labourers with the help of a group of his own workers. And he was not sorry for what he had done. The Indians learnt the lesson and in this election they supported a Fijian party called Western United Front led by Ratu Osaiyya Gavidi who opposed the feudal system prevailing among Fijians, locally known as Kaivitis. They snatched two seats from the Alliance, and this prospect of Indian-Fijian cooperation at the common man's level has enraged the Prime Minister. □

Vietnam's New Thesis on Economic Development

BAREN RAY

THE Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam held last April was reported very briefly by the media in India and that too only in respect of some political and foreign policy questions. The main Political Report presented to and adopted by the Congress, however, contained an economic section which can be said to present a new thesis on the country's path of development, which will be of interest and relevance to many Third World countries. Not that an altogether new line was presented for the first time at the Congress; as we shall see, the line had been in practice at least since 1978, but the Congress presented it in a coherent analytical frame which took off from the policy already put into action.

Vietnam, which has been a full CMEA member since 1978, is the most populous (after the USSR) and the poorest member of the Community. The population of the unified country reached 60 million in 1980 whereas its 1975 GNP was estimated to be 85 billion dollars, thus leaving a per capita annual income of about 140 dollars. After the liberation of the South in 1975, the resources of the South (which was and, it seems, still is, richer than the North) were tapped while there was faster development in the North.

The value of exports in 1976 increased by 70 per cent over 1975, while the 1977 increase over 1976 was 42 per cent. Concerning foreign trade Vice-Premier Le Thanh Nghi made an important policy pronouncement in April 1978: that Vietnam would focus on the export of products such as coffee, rubber, timber, shrimp, ink frozen pineapple, objects d'art and clothes, whilst international aid and credits would be used to import equipment and machinery, raw materials, fuel and fertiliser. Further, to the extent that a commodity was highly priced on the world market and domestic requirements were limited, that commodity should be exported *regardless of its sector of origin* (emphasis added). The Vice-Premier stressed the importance of state monopoly of foreign trade and remarked upon the generous assistance provided by the Socialist countries. He argued that the failure of exports to keep up with imports was an organisational rather than an economic problem. Increased levels of exports would be forthcoming if markets were created and their existence was made known to all products. In line with this generally open outlook, Vietnam had joined the IMF and the World Bank in 1977 (the only CMEA member in the latter), signed contracts on oil exploration with West European companies and even introduced quite liberal foreign investment laws.

Another major economic policy statement was by Dang Viet Chau, Minister of Foreign Trade, in October 1978: "*It is Necessary on the Basis of the Experiences that have been Gained, to Perform Good Foreign Trade Work in the New Stage of the Revolution.*" Giving a brief history of North Vietnam's foreign trade, he said that in 1964 the value of exports was two to three times what it had been in 1957, while the volume of import had risen 1.5 times during the same period. During the period of US aggression, 1965-75, export declined seriously while import requirements rose considerably. After the war, exports rose again, the value being 30 per cent higher than it had been in 1964. Unification led to further increases in exports and Vietnam came to have economic relations with 60 countries; its trade with non-Socialist countries was facilitated through various international economic and financial organisations.

According to Dang, there were four lessons for the future:

1. *State Monopoly of Foreign Trade Must Be Maintained and Strengthened.* During the war against France (1946-54), private merchants had been used to open the flow of goods between the liberated and other areas. For a certain time after the complete liberation of the North, private merchants were still used for trade with Hong Kong. But later this led to "excessive consumer goods imports competing with domestic production," traders demanding gold in payment for their goods, and artificially high prices. Consequent to this experience, a foreign trade monopoly was established in the South immediately after liberation. Foreign trade monopoly, of course, is a law of socialist economy, but the specific form in a particular economy is determined by historical circumstances. In Vietnam, the organisation of foreign trade is determined by the fact that a significant proportion of goods for exports are currently produced by private farmers and artisans. Under these circumstances, it is necessary to centralise foreign trade decision-making within the Ministry of Foreign Trade. On the other hand, for those commodities produced within the state sector of the economy, notably rubber, shrimp and frozen squid, it is more efficient to allow a measure of decentralisation, so that individual producers are permitted direct communication with foreign markets via the Ministry, which provides unified management for foreign trade activities in line with Party policy.

2. *Production Must Be Developed in Such a Way that Many Sources of High-Value Export Goods Are Available Within the Country.* Dang argued for the creation of centralised, large-scale, readily-mobilised sources of exports. He asserted that in moving from small-scale to large-scale methods of production, exports serve the function of stimulating production, raising its technical level, redistributing social labour and creating conditions for the expansion of imports. Further, the structure of export industries must be based on Vietnam's natural

resources endowments, and produce goods which satisfy the requirements of the world market, while yielding a high return. It should be noted that in this strategy of export-led development, exports are accorded a positive function, more than just the quantum of current exports necessary to pay for those imports which are not provided as grants or as long-term credit.

3. *Import Policy Must Be Closely Linked to the Economic Construction Line of the Party as Expressed in Annual and Five-Year Plans.* Dang argued that since the economy is under-developed, it is necessary to use the strength of foreign economies to develop that of Vietnam by importing machines, raw materials, technical supplies and other instruments of production. Development implies not only rapid industrialisation but also the growth of the agricultural sector. Thus, specially in view of the poverty of Vietnam, apart from the rapid growth of the industrial sector, growth and modernisation of the agricultural sector is given great importance. Dang notes the importance of external credit for financing imports but warns against the possible adverse consequences of too great a debt. With respect to the structure of imports, the importation of complete equipment sets is regarded as an important priority. As to the ranking of imports, Dang suggested that a cost-benefit analysis should be used whenever possible.

4. *Implementation of the Party's Economic Construction and Foreign Affairs Policies Requires that Trade and other Economic Relations with Foreign Countries Be Expanded.* Dang formulated the correct policy as being: "The strengthening of our relationship with the Fraternal Socialist countries on the basis of socialist internationalism while developing economic relations with other countries on the basis of maintaining our independence and sovereignty and benefiting both sides." Dang was optimistic regarding the potential for rapid expansion of foreign trade and consequent growth. He suggested that the Socialist states are gaining in economic strength and that "nationalistic" states of the Third World have developed their independence. These factors have led to a relative weakening of the capitalist world, imposing on it the need to find new foreign markets, make overseas investments and grant loans. For these reasons, Dang maintained Vietnam is in a position to secure, at low cost, the imports necessary for development. On the other hand, he argued, the crisis of capitalism means that capitalist economies must increase the level of imports, was here again Vietnam is in a position to gain from an aggressive export policy. He hoped that within seven or eight years (from 1978), Vietnam would have balanced trade. Dang also stressed the importance of expanding the tourist industty as a source of foreign currency.

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IT IS against this background that the Fifth Congress, on the basis of a critical reassessment of the ongoing economic practice, formulated the new Programme. We shall briefly review the various points of the new economic thesis which purports to map out a socio-economic strategy for the first stage of socialist industrialisation. Proceeding from the actual state of the national economy, it defines the overall economic and social objectives of the eighties as follows:

1. To meet the most pressing and essential requirements of the population in food, clothing, study, medical care, housing, transport, child-care, and other essential consumption needs.

2. To carry on the building of the material-technological basis of socialism, with a view mainly to boosting agriculture, consumer goods production and exports, at the same time to increase the technical equipment for the other economic branches, and to make preparations for a more vigorous development of heavy industry in the next stage.

3 & 4. To unify and fully integrate the economies of the South and the North, to consolidate the socialist relations of production in the whole country, and to meet its defence requirements.

The above four overall objectives require some fundamental changes in the actual state of the economy. *First*, to make the national product progress from inability to ability to meet the social consumption demands and ensure accumulation from within the economy. *Second*, to make the Gross National Product progress from being too low in volume and structure and too disproportionate to the requirements of the economy and country, to ability to meet an important part of the needs, including through the import of articles unavailable or in insufficient supply at home, with the proceeds of exports. In order to bring about a fundamental change in the actual state of the economy, we must manage to create a new productive force and higher social labour productivity, *even in the absence of* a relatively developed big industry (emphasis added). To this end, we must correctly work out major economic and social policies. The first and most decisive factor is a correct combination of industry and agriculture.

Our most valuable asset is *labour*: the biggest potentiality which can be brought into play in the first place, and which is also an object of labour capable of attracting the largest work-force, is the *land* (including the forests and the sea); a very big capacity lies in *branches and trades* (including side-line occupations in the countryside, handicrafts, small industries, and installations of consumer goods industry) which are in a position to undergo a strong development and to *employ numerous labour* (emphasis added). Our biggest motive force is *the socialist collective mastery system* which makes it possible to combine labour with land, to ensure a vigorous expansion of branches and trades, and to create at an early date a new productive force.

Therefore, what is most important, what can and must be done first, *is to achieve collective mastery for the sake of a rational and effective use of labour and land, and a vigorous expansion of branches and trades* at every establishment, in every locality, and in the whole country; the purpose is to provide jobs for all working people, to exploit all lands, to develop all branches and trades both in width and depth, to achieve a higher social labour productivity, a greater value of Gross National Product, and a wider variety of products. To this end, we must concentrate our forces on a vigorous development of agriculture, *take it a step towards socialist large-scale production* in structure closely and correctly combining agriculture, consumer goods industries, and heavy industry.

For agriculture to carry out the above, it must fulfil three tasks: ensure food supplies for the whole society, supply agricultural produce as raw materials for consumer goods industries, and create an important source of export items. The use of labour and land must be geared toward intensive cultivation, crop specialisation and compound business operations with a view to developing crop growing, livestock breeding, food processing, and other branches and trades in the countryside, with increasing application of science to agriculture and animal husbandry, with a view to putting to use within three five-year plans all the ten million hectares of agricultural land and fifteen million hectares of forest lands, and to grow on an average two crops a year on arable lands.

Simultaneous stepping up of water conservancy projects, both for irrigation and drainage, application of biological achievements to crop growing and livestock breeding, use of chemicals as well as organic fertilisers, combination of modern and mechanized means together with all available traditional or manual means, etc., to maximise output, and at the same time accelerate and complete the process of socialist transformation — that is the objective. In this, along with consolidation of state farms to fulfil their role as examples in production and management, the Thesis lays great stress on completing the cooperativisation of agriculture.

For carrying out most of the above tasks, the Thesis lays stress on taking the district as the basic territorial unit in which the grasss-roots units of cooperatives, agricultural production collectives, small industrial enterprises, state farms, afforestation yards, and production units of other kinds must all cooridinate; that is to say, to take the district as the ground for division of labour and reorganisation of production. The building of the district will be inseparably linked with the building of the cooperative farms and agricultural production collectives and other production units, aiming to meet the requirements of its population on the basis of the policy providing for "joint efforts of the state and the people."

While reiterating the principle that the development of agriculture must be combined with that of consumer goods industries, both in width and depth, from food processing and fight industries small industries and handicraft branches in town and country, the Thesis says: To boost consumer goods production is an extremely important orientation to meet the material and cultural needs of society, broaden the domestic market, create an important source of exports, and expand the market outside the country. To boost consumer goods production is to increase the value of agricultural produce, provide the state with commodities for exchanges with the peasants, stimulate agriculture production, broaden the division of labour, create more jobs, develop the economy, increase social labour productivity, the national product and national income in the present stage. Further, it stresses: small industry and handicrafts in our country have a great potential, they are an important part of consumer goods industry, they have been and are being transformed and reorganized into a component of the socialist economy, they hold an important position in the national economy during a long period, especially in this first stage.

While development of agriculture and consumer goods industries will lay the foundation for the development of heavy industries, maximum use must be made of the available industrial capabilities including the heavy industry existing or now being built, to accelerate the former. At the same time, the economy should actively carry out all necessary preparations, with the utmost importance being attached to more intensive geological surveys, so that when favourable conditions obtain, the country can start the construction of a number of key heavy industrial projects, especially in engineering and steel, never forgetting that the only material-technological basis of socialism is a mechanised big industry capable of transforming agriculture and providing new technical equipment to the whole national economy.

To summarise, in the five years 1981-85 and in the eighties as a whole, the Plan envisages concentrating forces on a vigorous development of agriculture, regarding it as a primary front, taking it a step further to socialist large-scale production, striving to boost consumer goods production and carrying on the building of a number of important branches of heavy industry; combining agriculture, consumer goods industry and heavy industry in a rational industrial-agricultural structure. The Thesis says: That is precisely *giving priority to the rational development of heavy industry on the basis of developing agriculture and light industry*, create a new productive force in this first stage; and, at the same time, prepare conditions and forces for stepping up in subsequent years, socialist industrialisation whose main content will be the building of a modern industrial-agricultural structure with a comparatively developed heavy industrial network as the core.

The Thesis further underlines the need of struggle to eliminate bureaucratic centralisation and the need of devolution of local initiative in the building of the economy. It deals at length with the transformation and building of Hanoi, the political centre of the whole country; and Ho Chi Minh City into big economic, cultural, scientific, technological and external-trading centres. In another section, the document takes up the question of the mountain provinces and districts with the twin problems of their special natural resources and the various minority ethnic groups inhabiting them. It calls for thoroughly carrying out the handling of forests and forest lands to the districts for management, and to the cooperatives for exploitations, according to the state programmes. It specially calls for doing away with the economic self-sufficiency (and thereforc isolation due to economic backwardness) of the ethnic groups, expanding economic relations between the highlands and the planes, boosting export-import trade, etc. This development orientation will limit, and eventually put an end to, forest destruction, and bring about conditions to really achieve sedentary abode and farming for these peoples.

The programme calls for constantly and closely combining the transformation of the relations of production with the reorganisation and development of production. In this two points stand out, specially in the immediate context. First, to carry on land readjustments so that *all* working peasants can have land to till; in those places not yet marked for transformation, such readjustments are to be conducted at once with a view to creating preconditions for cooperativisation. Second, with regard to private capitalist industry, we must work out good policies and organisations to use and transform it in the form of joint state-private enterprises or other forms. The capitalist element is to be *radically eliminated in trade* (emphasis added). With regard to small industry, handicrafts and service branches, the economy shall resort to collective forms of operation or maintain the individual form, depending on the particular features of each trade. Small traders unnecessary in circulation must be shifted gradually to production and other service activities. During the present phase, there are *three* economic components in the North (state-run, collective and individual), and *five* in the South (state-run-collective, joint, state-private, individual and private capitalist).

In regard to the strategy of export-led development, the Thesis says: In all our economic activities, a task of strategic significance for our entire party and people is to strive to *increase exports for purposes of imports*. We must promote export to 'import with its proceeds technologies, equipment, machinery, spare parts, and materials for the sake of scientific-technological revolution and socialist industrialisation ... We must try by every means to use our abundant work-force and exploit all possibilities regarding land, forest, sea low, we should clearly realise that we are consuming beyond what we can produce. This is unacceptable. *We must live in accordance with results of our own labour, and refrain from consuming beyond the limits permitted by production.*

For accelerating the growth of the productivity of labour, the programme calls for setting in motion an *ebullient mass movement to master science and technology*, quickly apply scientific achievements and technological progress, observe technical processes, procedures, standards and norms, introduce technical innovations and improvements, and raise professional knowledge and skills. At the same time, regarding management and planning it says: Progressing from small production to socialism, we must ensure without fail that all management levels — central, local, grass-roots — are really masters of the plans, that is, each level must actually work out, balance, defend and carry into effect its plans; planning must be carried out from the grass-roots; the plans must embody the principle of *cost accounting and socialist business operations*. This conforms to the system of collective mastery, and represents one of its important contents, that is, to bring into play the strength of the community acting as master in combination with that of the individual acting as master in the framework of the community's mastery and in keeping with it and to correctly achieve the unity of the three interests, ensuring those of the whole society, and the collectivity, and paying due attention to the personal interests of the working man. To do so is to hold firmly to use-value while attaching greater importance to value and the law of value.

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AFTER presenting this brief summary of some of the salient features of the economic Thesis, we can perhaps venture to make some comment. It is evident above all that the Vietnamese approach to the problems of economic development is remarkably concrete and specific, one may say pragmatic and even eclectic, in the better senses of both terms.

extended to them. They never overestimated it but they never underestimated it either. It is because of this background that they were able to deal with many West European, Japanese and other companies with confidence and prudence in the post-war years. The same goes for their dealings with a number of international finance and relief organisations which have continued to render some assistance over a number of years. Also there are no great security fears regarding opening country to tourism.

Similarly, the Report speaks highly of Vietnam's scientists and intellectuals who have contributed towards a scientific as well as creative understanding of the history and the nature of the society of Vietnam and are striving to provide cadres in physical and biological sciences too to meet the many problems facing the country. In many senses, Vietnam's is a unique and a highly specific case to which the people guided by the Party have responded in a remarkably adequate way. But the Party in Vietnam has at no time displayed any sense of false pride or megalomania. This too is greatly to the credit of the leadership.

Lastly, Vietnamese economic planners see the rapid growth of exports as an essential part of their development strategy, not only because it may provide scarce foreign currency and thus allow import of capital goods, but also because the "discipline" of producing commodities for an export market is considered to have beneficial spin-offs for the domestic economy as a whole. Among the Socialist countries, Vietnam is certainly the first to lay such a proportionate stress on exports. This is concrete evolution of a strategy in view of the specifics of the situation (including that of the poverty and backwardness of the country and the moral and political strength of the people). Vietnam is known to be receiving fraternal aid from the Socialist member states of the CMEA on a very large scale accounting for a substantial proportion of its net national income; nevertheless in its everyday economy it wishes to maintain a rough balance of trade.☐

VATICAN FINANCIAL SCANDAL

God's Bankers, Devil's Handy Men

BELA BUTALIA

WHEN one's financial assets begin to swell, it is natural to want to multiply them. For this one needs a bank; and a banker. This holds true whether one is a capitalist, a communist or God. Or even the Pope, God's next best on earth.

A historical revolution of no mean proportions is under way in Italy, where the powerful Vatican, seat of the Roman Catholic Church and the spiritual Mecca for millions of Catholics all over the globe, is under scrutiny for matters which have little or nothing to do with the salvation of the soul. The Italian state has accused the Vatican, and particularly its powerful bank, the IOR (Institute for Works of Religion), of taking part in murky free-wheeling deals which have served as a shield for destabilising activities in the country over the last decade. On July 2, Nino Andreatta, Italian Minister for Treasury, unrolled a 34-page statement of complex tales of crimes, mysteries and unsolved investigations better suited to detective agencies than to the world of finance.

Though investigations have been in course for the last two years, investigation authorities had encountered stiff political opposition. In 1978, the Bank of Italy first became suspicious of the Ambrosiano Bank's activities during a general crackdown on bank frauds. Roberto Calvi, president of the Ambrosiano Bank, Italy's largest group of private banks, was found dead this June, hanging from a bridge behind London's rich financial district. Paulo Baffi, Governor of the Bank of Italy, was immediately arrested for ordering the investigations and eased out of his job, while his aide and chief bank regulator, Mario Sarcinelli, had to spend three months in prison on trumped-up charges, while behind the scenes consultations took place to substitute the bank's beheaded management with the politicians' candidates.

Calvi, 61 when he died, clerk turned powerful bank operator, was under scrutiny not only for his financial operations, but also for his membership in a secret Masonic lodge, "Propaganda 2" whose members are said to have plotted the establishment of an authoritarian regime in Italy, and engaged in bribery, tax evasion and shady currency and stock deals. When in 1981 a list including Cabinet Ministers, politicians, judges, journalists, police and military men and Calvi's name, was found in a suitcase at the country villa of the lodge's 'self-styled' grand-master, Licio Gelli, the scandal brought down the Government of Premier Arnaldo Forlani. Forlani and his son, along with the Director-General of the Foreign Affairs Ministry, Francesco Malfatti di Montetretto, were included in the list. Other prominent members of this secret lodge were discovered to be Michele Sindona, president of the Finabank and Banca Privata, now serving a 27-year sentence in the United States for bringing about the collapse of the Franklin National Bank, and for bank fraud; Rev. Paul Marcinkus, an American national of Carthagenian origin, one-time personal guard to the Pope, and presently president of the Vatican's bank IOR. Apart from having discredited the Vatican's name, Paul Marcinkus has, in Pope John Paul's words, uttered last February 1981 when he learnt that Marcinkus was a mason, made a "pact with the devil". Soon after, on March 1, 1981, Pope John Paul was to declare that the traditional canonic-measures and sanctions against the masonry were to be considered still effective. All the same, these three personalities have given golden service to the Church, in financial speculations, and are commonly known as God's bankers in Italy.

Though Calvi came under public scrutiny mainly for ambiguous financial transactions in 1980 and 1981, when he was sentenced to four years imprisonment for exporting 27 million dollars illegally to Switzerland, Calvi managed to let himself out of jail by promising exposures involving the leadership of the Socialist Party; once out of jail, he denied having made any such promise. This year the investigators caught him again, and he was asked to account for 1.4 billion dollars in debt and interest charges incurred by four subsidiaries placed in Latin America and Luxembourg, as well as a deficit of 790 million dollars in Ambrosiano Bank's accounts. The Panamanian companies which had received the loans from Calvi, known as Bellatrix, Manic and Astrolfine, are thought to have no more than mailing addresses. Calvi claimed that he had only 'lent' these funds after receiving what bankers call 'letters of comfort' from the Vatican's banker, Paul Marcinkus. This would automatically make the Vatican responsible for the losses, but Archbishop Marcinkus claims that he also received last August what is known as a 'counter letter' signed by Calvi, absolving the Vatican bank of all legal and financial responsibility for the loans.

The fact that the actual owner of most of these overseas companies was Calvi himself (the Panamanian companies own 20 per cent of the Ambrosiano's shares) and that the money was being recycled into Italy, has given further cause for suspicion. One had to wait till the end of 1981 to discover that Calvi, also a 40 per cent shareholder in the Rizzoli printing and publishing empire, which owns the nation's largest selling newspaper, *Il Corriere della Sera* was using these re-cycled funds as a mask behind which he himself was trying to buy a second packet of 40 per cent shares in the newspaper, floated a short while before. This would have made him virtual master of the some of the leading mass media, with resultant control over information.

For the Italian authorities, the double dealing of issuing letters of comfort or patronage to attest the financial credentials of a borrower, and the secret letter of Calvi absolving Marcinkus and the IOR of responsibility for the Panamian companies' debts, might constitute a fraud in itself.

This is the second time in eight years that the Vatican is involved in scandals involving bank frauds and illegal export of capital outside the country. Till 1974, it was Michele Sindona who served as God's banker. He had to escape from Italy, for fraud and causing the collapse of the Banca Privata, but he was caught in the United States and sentenced to 27 years' imprisonment for a similar fraud involving the Franklin National Bank. This 'imprisonment' did not prevent Sindona from faking a 'kidnapping' by the Red Brigade terrorists, and landing up surreptitiously in Sicily, in order to organise a 'separatist' coup, which failed due to the massive presence of the Italian police everywhere, searching for him and his kidnappers. Rev Paul Marcinkus is reported to have lost 30 million dollars of the IOR in the Finabank collapse.

Marcinkus, once a personal guard to the Pope and later one of the diplomats working under the Vatican's Secretary of State, was nominated President of the IOR, the controversial Vatican bank, because of his enterprising nature and important contacts with the financial lobbies in the United States. Marcinkus had been a close friend of a certain David Kennedy, a faithful Nixonian, and influential member of the Continental Illinois Bank of Chicago, as well as a known figure in Latin American financial circles. David Kennedy was, from 1971 to 1973, in Brussels as US ambassador to the NATO. Kennedy has been an important go-between for Sindona and Marcinkus. Both Kennedy and Marcinkus are believed to be very close to the two ex-presidential advisers Muskie and Brzezinski, as well as important spokesmen for the vast community of Polish emigrants settled in America. All the figures mentioned above have in common an inflexible hatred for Communism, and this is what brought them together and enabled them to overlook the traditional clash between Masons and Catholics.

One may legitimately ask why the Vatican bank took into confidence Masons and discredited men like Calvi or Sindona. Why did it play into the hands of a man like Sindona, reputed to belong to the Italo-American mafia and to the most retrograde Masonry. It is obvious that Sindona was heavily recommended to the Vatican by powerful men like another Vatican banker, Massimo Spada, and Marcinkus, who could vouch for Sindona's overseas contacts, which were necessary to make international dealings. In Italy, Sindona seems to have had the 'placet' of leading Italian politicians like Fanfani, Andreotti and the ex-general of the Masonic Lodge P2, Umberto Ortolani. Sindona also enjoyed notorious contacts, and was friend of a certain ex-priest called Phillip Guarino, whom he had met when he was still an unknown lawyer in Italy. Phillip Guarino is notorious for his links with the secret services of the Pentagon and to the Cosa Nostra mafia. Through Guarino, Sindona meet David Kennedy and Marcinkus, who introduced him into Vatican circles.

Sindona, the first God's banker to become notorious, has rendered priceless service to the Vatican. His exceptionality lay in his capacity to revitalise 'sick' and failing enterprises, by unscrupulously palming them off either on the Italian state (made possible due to his high contacts in the government), or on some unsuspecting buyer. He is supposed to have paid back the help given to him from government quarters with handsome funds for party campaigns and gifts to his 'friends'.

The special job that Sindona did for the Vatican was to sell off two dried up 'gold mines', the Immobiliare and the Condotte d'Acqua, to the Italian state-run IRI (Institute for Industrial Reconstruction). Way back in 1929, after the signing of the Concordat and the Laterans pacts, the Italian state had given huge sums of money to the Vatican. This money was invested in buying the major shares in the Immobiliare (the real-estate company) and the Condotte d'Acqua, an engineering institution which had earned fame because of its sophisticated installation of water conduits all over Italy. The Immobiliare is supposed to have been responsible for the sack of the major cities in Italy, including Rome, where massive illegal constructions have been authorised, in open defiance of the city's urban city development plans. This has also made the Vatican one-third owner of the real estate in Rome. By the late sixties, the Immobiliare was like a squeezed-out lemon, and it was given to Sindona to give it the 'cure'. Sindona managed rapidly to increase the capital, and make further speculations, with the help of Hambro's, British bankers of Jewish origin, who brought off 40 per cent of the derelict company. Today the Immobiliare is again in the hands of the Vatican constructors, revitalised and on its feet again, with a mysteriously acquired capital of nearly 100 billion lire. The Condotte d'Acqua, though in the hands of the state-run IRI, has two of Sindona's personal P2 men in the board of trustees, providing for the eventuality of a revival of the enterprise.

Friendship with the Masonry was nothing new for the Roman Catholic Church, despite canonic sanctions against it. When Pius XI, in 1929, found himself with huge sums of money and no bank (the Vatican has only a major say in the Banco di Roma, Banco di Santo Spirito and Monte dei Paschi di Siena), he created the IOR in 1942, and asked none other than a Mason and internationally reputed financer, Bernardino Nogara, to be the manager. What is new is the involvement with a secret lobby of Masons, who are no better than racketeers, whose main aim in pushing themselves into the financial ranks of the country was not solely profit, but the 'containment' of Communism in Italy. Sindona's friendship with Marcinkus was the result of a common understanding between them to do something to stem the alarming rise of the Left in Italy. With the policy of the Trilateral Commission of President Carter (which is still alive despite Carter's defeat), which witnessed Americans, Europeans and Japanese united in an economic front, there was a bilateral accord in Italy between the reactionary Masons, financiers and Jewish bankers to invite the Vatican block to collaborate with them in order to anticipate and prevent the efforts of the Trilateral Commission. This game has been unearthed, and now the more democratic Masonry is determined to make short shrift of these racketeers, who have not only frustrated all social struggles, but also been mediators between terrorist gangs.

The present Governor of the Bank of Italy, Carlo Ciampi, is responsible for having followed the scandal through to its end. There is great pressure on Carol Woytyla to insist on transparencies in the Vatican's dealings, as well as to tighten control on the bank, the IOR. The three top managers of the IOR have been indicted by the Italian authorities, along with Marcinkus, Luigi Mennini, and Pelligrino de Stroebel. The Pope has also appointed a lay commission to look into the IOR's accounts. The lay commission comprises Joseph Brennan, former chairman of the Emigrant Savings Bank of New York; Phillipe de Wech, a former president of Switzerland's Union Bank, and Carlo Cirutti, an Italian civil servant with strong ties to the Vatican. The commission, all the same, is considered to be ineffective, with the exception of Phillipe de Wech.

Meanwhile, seven leading bankers, socialists in political leanings, have offered to underwrite the losses of the Banco Ambrosiano. They have also withdrawn their party's support to the coalition Government of Premier Giovanni Spadolini, thus provoking a political crisis and the possibility of elections in autumn. □

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BOOK REVIEW

Timely Reflections

MOHIT SEN

Reflections on Our Times: by P.N. Haksar, Lancer Publishers, New Delhi, 1982; pp 119; Rs. 60.

THE book under review grew out of the three Sarojini Naidu Memorial Lectures which P.N. Haksar delivered in January 1981. It is an important work both because the author has played an important role at a crucial moment in our country's very recent history and because he continues to signal to all who care for India danger along with promise on the basis of rich experience recalled in anxiety.

The book has already created a controversy in the columns of the *Times of India* where Sham Lal (July 17) expressed his petulance that the "sour smell of the thirties hangs over" the analysis of the author since he refuses to put the crisis of the USA on the same level of social existence as the problems of Soviet development. To this Haksar sent off a stinging reply (July 26) where, admitting that the USSR had serious obstacles to overcome (which is also bluntly stated in the book itself), particularly in the sphere of the production and distribution of consumer goods, he went on to write that the Soviet economy is one which "assures to its citizens full employment, increasing distribution of income, health, education and transport at a reasonable and stable price". And as for smells, he rightly added that the fragrance of Adib is lost in the cynicism of Sham Lal! To which Shyam Lal attempted a rejoinder which turned out to be a diatribe.

The reason for the distress of the former editor of the *Times of India* about the book is precisely because the author refuses to be "Time's harlot" though he is becoming overfond of describing himself as such. Starkness of analysis has not led him to commit the treason of loss of hope. After all it was and is the hope of scientific faith and historic achievement despite all the mess and the meanderings. If only Haksar would join the Sham Lals in denying his past and refusing mankind a future he would become respectable. But then he would also be a burnt-out case. He remains, however, an indefatigable seeker and worker illumining and encouraging by his example, integrity and incisiveness. That is why this book has to be and will be read and will influence. It will not be ephemeral because it will be part of the debate and action of preserving and changing India.

The book has a purpose. It is meant to inform, to set India in the world-historic context and to stimulate thought and action. As he puts it in his preface: "If the post-Independence generation in India could somehow come round to having a vision of India as a whole and relate it to a comprehensive view of the interrelationship between politics, economics, social structure, cultural pattern and value system, the clouds would begin to disperse. Without such an effort, we can have no future of which we could be proud. India is too large to be moved by short-cuts and over simplifications".

He sees the world as "caught up in all the contradictions of a period of profound change. And the main direction of that change is to create social, political and economic structures and value systems in consonance with a humane society capable of subordinating selfishness, greed and predatory instincts to the urgent need for enlarging social solidarity and promoting altruism as the dominant ethos of our society". It is to assist India to be a part of and to play a part in the making of such a society that the book has been written.

The historical background to this endeavour is the disintegration of empires in this century. The two decisively important causes of this are, in the author's view: the explosion of consciousness among the peoples leading to the assertion of their national identities and the loss of legitimacy of various imperial systems in the eyes of the peoples they dominated. Underlying as well as expressing both these processes is the increasing strength of what Haksar calls the moral universe. And this universe is becoming increasingly secularised. The moral universe is a system of bedrock truths, a generalisation of basic human experience. "If the balance between the negative and positive elements in human nature had not been tilted in favour of reason, altruism, tolerance and cooperation, human beings could not possibly have survived. ...

"If one examines the evolution of the moral universe, one discovers the causal connection between the concepts of right and wrong on the one hand and the need for social solidarity on the other".

What is the concrete character of that social solidarity in our times and for our country?

"Any concept of right or wrong based merely on caste solidarity would be non-functional in our contemporary times. There can be solidarity based on class, Karl Marx exhorted the workers all over the world to unite. And yet we know from actual experience that a sense of solidarity is not a disembodied thing. It operates within the framework of a given national tradition and national consciousness. How to ensure that there is no contradiction between a solidarity effected on the basis of class and national identity? We must explicitly recognise that for a long time to come in human history, the social and political systems cannot overcome historically determined consciousness which goes by the name of national identities".

A misunderstanding could be caused here. The above quoted passage could be taken to mean that at the present stage of human evolution, national identity is the highest possible form of solidarity. This would not seem to be correct. It is precisely in our time that we witness an unprecedented interpenetration of the national and the international. The revolutionary triple-streamed process becomes increasingly integrated. Taking the reality of national identities into account is obviously essential for any revolutionary undertaking. But to make it the starting point leads to even grosser errors than does the ignoring of it — the debacle of the Maoist experiment is an outstanding example. Besides, in India today any ignoring of the reality of social differentiation would be harmful quite as much as if this reality were to cloud one's vision of national identity. Perhaps one could learn from *The Communist Manifesto* where the aphorism that workers have no fatherland was combined with the other one that the workers must become the nation.

In any event the author cannot be accused of in any way belittling the international factor in his analysis. A good third of the book is devoted to outlining the consequences of the explosion in science and technology in the first eight decades of this century. In many ways the best part of the book is the concrete and comprehensive analysis made both of the peril posed by the militarisation of science and technology and of the new ethical possibilities inherent in the scientific-technological revolution. It is in this context that the author dwells on the contrasts of the two opposed social systems and the basic differences in the nature of their difficulties. "The crisis in the developmental planning in the Soviet Union is qualitatively different from the depressive crisis obtaining in the capitalist system. The difference is in the management of a decaying system and a growing system which, for a variety of reasons, got distorted". One can argue about different aspects of this statement but one cannot but admire the clear-sighted courage of the basic conclusion which is drawn and which drew the ire of Sham Lal.

The penultimate theme of the book is the consideration of the overwhelmingly important problem of world war and peace. A due tribute is paid to Nehru's perception of the indispensability and value of non-alignment. He makes it clear that this was not the conceptualisation of equidistance since the Soviet Union and the USA were not and are not similar power entities.

"The Soviet foreign policy respected nationalism and accepted change. The United States foreign policy not only over-whelmingly supported the status quo but was monochromatic....

"If in quest of asserting its omnipotence USA imposes upon itself the obligation to sustain a rearmament programme, it will have one predictable effect: it would lead to

(Continued on page 34)

COMMUNICATION

Dangerous Superficialities

IN *Mainstream* (August 7, 1982) has been published an article by Bela Butalia, "Real Issues and Wrong Emphasis". It is an article which reflects a dangerous kind of confusion in the writer's mind. Dangerous, because it will only serve to strengthen the existing prejudices and ignorance about the women's movement without raising questions in a clear perspective.

Butalia has written that "women's demonstrations, where ladies' clubs and organisations vie with one another in exhortations to the younger elements to be more vociferous in their slogans, are quite a sight!" She goes on to say that the "issues taken up are just a springboard for publicity."

My experience has been quite different. Each small demonstration that we as women have organised has been a difficult task. And every time more and more women have been persuaded to come out of their seclusion and march with other women. This has been a common experience for women in slums, working women and housewives. Demonstrations have built up our self-confidence and helped us develop a feeling of sisterhood. Demonstrations have served as a way in which women can exchange experiences, learn to organize and speak in public. And our strength has grown — we can feel it in our bloodstreams.

As for publicity. Of course we want it. We want as much publicity as we can gain to focus on the issues we take up. It is with a certain amount of pride that I say that the women's organisations built up a most effective campaign to focus on the problem of rape. Today everyone talks about Mathura, Rameeza Bee and Maya Tyagi. No other names appeared in the press. Scrupulously, the organisations avoided the temptation of self-publicity. Their slogans, songs and speeches have made a nationwide impact but the organisers themselves have remained anonymous. The only "personal capital" women have made is their own growing awareness and confidence about facing the tasks ahead of them.

Bela Butalia goes on to raise a serious question about the lack of a "substantial theoretical study of a strategy to be adopted for bringing about changes in women's status". This indeed is the crux of the problem and needs to be discussed in depth. But Butalia has not posed the problem in a serious manner. She has just stated superficialities. She asks: "Do the women who have pushed themselves to the avant garde position in the movement ever do any self-analysis or introspection of their own attitudes to their husbands, their sons and daughters? Do they pay attention to the attitude of men in general, and to that of other women?"

The essence of the women's movement here and in the world has been self-analysis and introspection. It is only through that process that they began to understand the causes of their own inner feelings. The process has been a very painful and tortuous one for every one of us. It has meant we have to question all the basic assumptions upon which we were brought up — and in the process have to fight against the attitudes of people close to us. This too has been a common experience for women in *bastis* and middle class women.

Bela Butalia states that "condemning existing customs without giving an alternative social value will be of little help." This is putting the cart before the horse. Every oppressed people who have fought against their oppressors and exploiters have done so by first organising and attacking the concrete enemy. No one in the world has begun to struggle with a clear blueprint of the future society which they dream of.

But the alternative is beginning to emerge. More and more women have begun to realise that they can get real justice only in socialist society — but a kind of socialism that will give equal emphasis to the struggle against class oppression and the struggle against sexual exploitation.

New Delhi — *Nandita Haksar*

Newspapers and Readers

THE question of ratio of advertisements to the news and views published in a newspaper is more important from the readers' point of view, which is found wanting in Dr H.K. Paranjape's article (*Mainstream*, July 31). Advertisers in this modern age often adopt Goebbels' technique to promote their products. This compels readers to tolerate the same stereotyped advertisements again and again, without ever practically experiencing the quality or efficacy of the products advertised! Even the language newspapers publish more advertisements than readable news and views. Does this not deprive readers of their freedom to get as much information as possible for which they pay? Obviously, revenue from these advertisements adds to owners' profits rather than being utilised for the welfare of the staff or to improve the quality and standard of the paper.

Seen from this angle of right of the readers, the proposal for fixing a ratio of advertisements to reading material in a newspaper does not seem to be as frightening as made out in the article.

Nobody is under the illusion that an advertiser, howsoever important or big he may be, can influence the policy of a newspaper, whose owner is bigger than the advertiser. As for the 'smaller' newspapers, they hardly get any advertisements from important people or large houses. They mostly depend on smaller advertisers. In this case, relationship between a newspaper and advertisers is reciprocal and equal. In fact, often the tilt may go in favour of the newspapers.

Pune — (*Dr*) *Ratnakar Mahajan*

Sanjiva Reddy

I found C.N. Chitta Ranjan's commentary (*Mainstream*, July 31) on Sanjiva Reddy excessively critical and unnecessarily 'apprehensive'. Though Sanjiva Reddy's comments on post-Emergency developments involving the Janata Party cannot be said to reflect good taste, it is the ruling trend — in consonance with the inclination of the mass media and the expectations of the general public — that elder statesmen occasionally spout ideological rhetoric, criticising at the same time the prevailing conditions in national life, showing, as it were, that the nation is not completely bereft of public men who still believe in the "civilised conduct of human relations and affairs". (In this context, it would be interesting to know Reddy's personal views on capital punishment!)

That Reddy was indiscreet enough to mouth statements about Andhra Pradesh politics is regrettable. Nevertheless, his exercises, as far as I can see, were merely in the nature of an over-fed ox nosing, disinterestedly, into the remnants of hay in its manger. This is not sufficient basis to expect his re-entry into the political arena.

Bangalore — *D. Guha Roy*

DOCUMENT

Development Crisis and International Environment

UNCTAD Survey

UNCTAD brings out an annual survey, *Trade and Development Report* which, according to its Secretary-General, Gamani Corea, "seeks to provide an integrated view of world development and its impact on the trade and development of developing countries. It undertakes to examine in greater depth the longer-term forces which have led to the acute difficulties being experienced by developing countries and the world economy at large." The Report for 1982, which is in three parts (published on July 31, 1982) points to "the serious deepening of the crisis in development that has occurred since 1981, and to the further deterioration in the international economic environment, and examines certain aspects of the dynamic inter-relation between the two." The importance of this latest analysis of development prospects by the UNCTAD Secretariat lies in that it constitutes a major element in preparations for UNCTAD IV scheduled to be held in June 1983 in Belgrade, which will be the largest conference yet held on North-South economic issues. The first part of *Trade and Development Report 1982* containing the overview is reproduced here. —*Editor*

A

THE DEEPENING DEVELOPMENT CRISIS

THE developing world is facing its gravest economic crisis since the Great Depression. As in that earlier period, the crisis is the product of the malfunctioning of the economies of developed market-economy countries, and has been intensified by the growing disarray of the trade and financing systems.

The current crisis has many dimensions, all of which have contributed to the poor growth performance that currently characterises most developing countries. Net oil-importing developing countries recorded a rate of growth of GDP of 1.5 per cent in 1981, as compared with 4.9 per cent in 1980. The least developed countries, whose growth rate was declining in the late 1970s, recorded a 2.8 per cent rate of growth in 1981, the same as in 1980. Continuation for two years running of such an unsatisfactory growth performance represents a serious setback to efforts to improve living standards in these countries. The fast-growing exporters of manufactures experienced a sharp setback in their economies, with output falling by 1.5 per cent, in contrast to growth of 6.7 per cent in 1980. The remaining oil-importing developing countries also experienced an overall slowdown in growth in 1981.

In most countries poor growth performance was the result of intensified pressures on external payments. The current-account deficit of deficit developing countries (Excluding major oil exporters) grew from $ 76 billion in 1980 to $ 92 billion in 1981. This reflected mainly price movements: the terms of trade of oil-importing developing countries, which had fallen sharply in 1980, deteriorated further in 1981, reflecting in large part the collapse of commodity prices. The larger deficit also reflected higher outflows on account of interest payments and profit remittances, which grew by about one quarter in 1981, due primarily to higher interest rates. As a result, despite good performance as regards the volume of exports, the volume of imports fell in 1981 for the second consecutive year, thus seriously impairing growth.

This severe compression of imports also occurred despite substantial borrowing from abroad: medium and long-term debt outstanding rose by more than $ 60 billion in 1981, and stood at $ 400 billion at year end. Some categories of financial flow failed to provide any new resources to developing countries: new private bank loans were more than offset by repayments and interest due on former loans.

Debt servicing has become extremely difficult for many developing countries, and a growing number of them have sought debt reorganisation. The majority of these were poorer developing countries, all of which were obliged in the context of debt reorganisation exercises to introduce strongly deflationary policies, or to pledge to do so, in order to reduce their current-account deficits and resume debt service payments.

The sharp deceleration of growth in developing countries occurred despite performance in the agricultural sector that was better than average. The impact of the slowdown thus appears to have been concentrated in urban areas and in the more modern sectors of the economy that are usually more susceptible to changes in the external environment. 1981 has already witnessed an increase in open urban unemployment in a number of countries, including some in which employment in the non-agricultural sector actually declined, and an aggravation of social tension and instability can be expected if these trends continue.

Growth in the industrial sector is central to the process of structural adjustment, and to the capacity to generate and capture additional savings for investment. A faltering of investment, which appears to be underway in many developing countries, would diminish their ability to re-orient their structures of production and to make the necessary adaptations in critical sectors such as energy and food output. The current situation is thus progressively depriving developing countries of the capacity to undertake the kind of adjustment required and is instead characterised by a process that enforces the containment of external imbalances through sharply reduced economic growth.

Moreover, this is occurring at a time when considerable adjustment of the economies of developing countries has already occurred. Policies put in place since the mid-1970s to improve the external accounts while fostering growth have borne fruit in many countries. Except for the least developed countries, the result of these efforts, which was often obtained at high cost in terms of compressed consumption, a deterioration in income distribution, and mounting external indebtedness, was an acceleration of export volumes and a higher rate of savings. Instead of reduced external deficits and higher growth, however, this performance was accompanied by ever-widening external deficits and a progressive slowing down of growth. In effect, the favourable results of the policies of developing countries were negated by the adverse impact of external events. The costs of the policies remain, however, and will greatly constrain the range of policy options open to developing countries in the 1980s.

The virtual standstill in the development process has thus occurred not as a result of any diminished effort on the part of developing countries, but because of the sharp deterioration in the external economic environment facing them.

B

DETERIORATION IN INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

THE international economic environment is characterised by two central features: slower growth in the developed countries and the acceleration of price inflation in the world economy.

Developed market-economy countries recorded a rate of growth of 1.3 per cent in 1981, which was virtually unchanged from the preceding year. The outlook for 1982 is for a significant deceleration in the growth of output. There was some abatement of inflation in 1981, but this was achieved at the cost of worsening rates of unemployment. The number of unemployed workers in developed market-economy countries is estimated to have reached 25 million people in 1981.

The socialist countries of Eastern Europe have been obliged to reduce the planned rates of growth of their economies. The average planned rate of growth of net material product (NMP) for 1981 was set at the historically low figure of 3.2 per cent. Due mainly to events in Poland, but also as a result of growth rates markedly lower than planned in Czechoslovakia and Romania, NMP advanced by only 1.9 per cent in 1981 for the socialist countries of Eastern Europe as a whole. This reflected in part difficulties in increasing agricultural output and the consequences of certain adjustments being undertaken in these economies. The trade balances of most these countries were adversely affected by changes in international prices, and their payments position was influenced by the widening of restrictive trade policies by certain developed market-economy countries and a reduction in the extension of external credits.

The slowdown in growth in the developed market economy countries has, to date, defied satisfactory explanation. A central feature has been decline in labour productivity. Among the reasons often put forward in explanation of this phenomenon are changing attitudes to work, the proliferation of government regulations, existing tax structures, accelerated inflation, shifts in relative prices, changes in the quality of the labour force, lack of adequate innovation and inadequate research and development. However, attempts to measure empirically the impact of such factors have proved inconclusive, and even the most meticulous statistical investigations into the sources of growth fail to explain why it has been slowing down persistently.

The key to growth performance in developed market-economy countries in the 1970s would seem to reside in the management of aggregate demand. This, in turn, was influenced in the beginning of the decade, and came to be dominated towards the end of the decade and the early 1980s, by the need to combat inflation.

The acceleration of price inflation began in some developed market-economy countries in the latter half of the 1960s. In the early 1970s, however, it took on added impetus in the wake of important demand-pull forces fostered by the synchronised boom of 1972-1973. These demand-pull forces were quickly supplemented by rises in commodity prices and the steep rise in the price of petroleum. The sharp reduction in levels of activity in 1975 eliminated excess demand as a factor influencing price behaviour, but cost-push factors continued to operate as various social groups attempted to maintain their real income growth against the background of declining aggregate income brought about by lower growth in output and a sharp deterioration in the terms of trade.

In the mid-1970s, the management of aggregate demand in most developed market-economy countries was balanced between the need to contain inflation and sustain growth. It was recognised that the deflationary impact on expenditure of the large current-account surpluses of oil-exporting countries would need to be offset at least in part by appropriate policy actions. It was also recognised that the impact of higher energy prices and lower growth on the external accounts would have to be dealt with in a way which protected the system as a whole from the cumulative effects of either inflation or deflation.

The concrete manifestations of these perceptions were the creation of the Oil Facility in the IMF and the multilateral negotiation of patterns of demand stimulus that would provide buoyancy to the world economy with the least danger to price levels and external accounts.

With the shift in the nature of inflation from demand-pull to cost-push, however, cautious demand management failed to make a significant impact on inflation rates and the concern of policy-makers was increasingly focussed on resolving this problem, particularly as inflation came to be associated in the minds of electorates with declines in their real income.

The sharp increase in energy prices in 1979-1980 and the significant slowdown in growth in the developed market economy countries, which paralleled closely the events of 1974-1975, were thus met with a very different policy stance. The objective of containing and reducing inflation was given emphasis to the virtual exclusion of other policy objectives and the deflationary impact on expenditure of the large current-account surplus of oil-exporting countries was allowed to make its full force felt in almost all the developed market-economy countries, with policies geared not towards offsetting the effects on expenditure, but towards additional demand contraction. The use of demand contraction to deal with cost-push inflation has proved costly to the developed market-economy countries themselves, and has also slowed the growth of exports to them from developing countries.

Moreover the change in the character of monetary policy of the United States, with the resulting abrupt rise in interest rates, has been translated directly into higher costs of borrowing in international capital markets. This was particularly onerous for developing countries whose annual interest payments are estimated to increase by as much as 52 billion dollars for every percentage point rise in interest rates in the Eurocurrency markets.

1. *Transmission of Lower Growth*

Slower growth of output and consumption in the developed countries has influenced economic activity in the developing countries in several ways. Declining growth of output in the various industrial branches has directly affected imports from developing countries and this effect was magnified where stocks were run down. But lower growth, particularly when accompanied by price inflation, has been associated with changes in the structure of both output and consumption which have further reduced the import demand for the products of developing countries.

This reduction is most clearly illustrated in the case of primary commodities, where both *per capita* consumption of foods and beverages and the input of raw materials per unit of output declined. Within these broad categories there were also shifts in the pattern of demand that were unfavourable to developing countries. Because of this, the effect of lower growth in depressing demand for primary commodities was magnified, and the volume of imports of primary commodities by developed market-economy countries stagnated during the second half of the 1970s. The cumulative effects of these unfavourable shifts, together with the impact on inventories of higher interest rates, help to explain why the recession of 1980-1982 has affected commodity prices much more severely than the recession of 1974-1975.

A slower pace of structural change in the manufacturing sector of developed market-economy countries has also had serious consequences for developing countries. During the 1960s, structural change in these countries had been away from manufacturing activities in which developing countries were particularly competitive. Such change continued in the 1970s, but the slower pace meant that the capacity to accommodate exports from developing countries was expanding less rapidly. Although developing countries were nevertheless able to increase their share in the imports of such products by developed market-economy countries during much of the 1970s, this no longer appears to be the case for many such products.

These changes were directly related to the rising tide of protectionism. In recent years the world trading system has come increasingly to rely on non-tariff regulation of trade, often through means negotiated outside the appropriate institutions and on conditions imposed unilaterally on trading partners. There has been an increased reliance on export restriction and market-sharing arrangements designed to protect traditional markets without conforming to multilaterally agreed safeguard procedures. Whereas tariff barriers allow the relative competitiveness of exporters to be reflected in trade flows, the governments of many developed market-economy countries appear to have an increasing preference for controlling the volume of imports or their prices. The most prominent example of measures to this end is the Arrangement Regarding International Trade in Textiles (the Multifibre Arrangement or MFA). The MFA covers almost one-third of the exports of developing countries of manufactured goods. While these products are at present exported on a large-scale by a relatively small number of developing countries, it is clear that, given the special role that trade in textiles and clothing has played in the historical process of economic development, any arrangement regulating trade in these products is of potential importance to virtually all developing countries.

2. *Role of International Prices*

In addition to the markedly slower growth of output in the developed market-economy countries, the other notable feature of the international economic environment during the 1970s and early 1980s has been the role of prices in international trade.

The 1970s were characterised by an acceleration in global inflation and changes in relative prices of traded commodities, which were very sharp in the case of petroleum. The unit value of world exports grew at an average annual rate of only 0.5 per cent during the period 1955-1970. The corresponding figure for the period 1970-1979 was 13 per cent, while for fuels it was more than 25 per cent.

These price changes affected in the first instance the balance of payments. The terms of trade of oil-importing developing countries have deteriorated since the mid-1970s and in 1981 stood roughly 30 per cent below their level of a decade earlier. The effect of price inflation and deterioration in the terms of trade was to intensify sharply pressures on the external accounts: the negative effect of price changes during the period 1971-1981 as a whole amounted to more than $ 60 billion, by far the larger part of the change occurring from 1979 onwards. These pressures, together with the need to allow for some rise in import volumes, were met by increasing both export volumes and external financing.

Although the expansion of export volumes helped to promote adjustment with growth, and was by far preferable to a reduction in import volumes, it meant that countries were giving up through trade more of their domestic resources per unit of imports than had previously been the case. This suggests that the gains to these countries from participating in international trade have been reduced — a conclusion that is borne out in the case of countries exporting mainly primary commodities (other than minerals) by detailed analysis of trade prices and volumes and labour productivity and employment in the trade sector.

In addition to these negative effects on the external accounts and the gains from trade, price changes in world trade have had a direct influence on the domestic economies of developing countries. During the 1970s the rise in import prices accounted for much of the acceleration in domestic price inflation. In many developing countries, export proceeds play an important role, either directly or indirectly, in generating budget receipts, and changes in export prices thus directly influenced public expenditure and/or the budget deficit. Further, the deterioration in the terms of trade reduced the growth of real income relative to output, making increases in domestic saving more difficult to achieve.

C

EVOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL SYSTEM

COPING with the intense pressures on the external accounts described above became a major focus of policy in developing countries during the 1970s and early 1980s.

As mentioned earlier, developing countries undertook important steps to adjust their external balances while maintaining growth, and many succeeded in improving export growth and savings performance. To assist this process, increased external financing was required to sustain imports while the necessary adjustment was taking place, and to help finance the additional investment required to change the structure of output along the lines required by the new situation.

The experience of the 1970s shows that those developing countries that were able to sustain the growth of their imports were able to maintain their growth rates of GDP and accelerate the pace of domestic investment. Countries that were not able to do so saw their growth of GDP decline and domestic investment decelerate, sometimes quite sharply.

In the mid-1970s external finance played an important role in cushioning downward pressures on import volumes and therefore on output and investment. By far the larger part of the increased flow of external finance to developing countries occurred through private markets Bilateral ODA expanded significantly in 1975 owing in large part to a sharp increase in flows from OPEC member countries, but also to efforts by some DAC donors to meet the increased needs of poorer countries. The following two years, however, saw declines in bilateral assistance flows from DAC member countries, after which such flows expanded again, at least in nominal terms.

As the decade advanced, the degree of flexibility provided to the developing countries by the operation of the international financial system tended to diminish. This reflected a number of factors. The first was the rapid build-up in external indebtedness that was the result of large scale external borrowings from private markets. The total public and publicly-guaranteed external debt of deficit developing countries rose from less than $ 70 billion in 1970 to about $ 400 billion at the end of 1981. Moreover, the preponderant role played by Eurocurrency credits in the debt of some developing countries increased their vulnerability to changes in international financial conditions. In 1971, for example, only a very small proportion of the outstanding debt of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean was accounted for by loans with variable interest rates, but by 1980 the proportion was almost 60 per cent. Thus the recent increases in interest rates resulting from changes in United States monetary policy have had a particularly adverse effect on the balance of payments of many developing countries.

The higher interest costs and need for caution in managing external indebtedness led many developing countries to reduce their borrowings from the Eurocurrency markets. Disbursement of bank credits grew at 27.5 per cent per annum in 1973-1978 but at only 19 per cent per annum in 1978-1981. This, together with higher interest payments has meant that the resource transfer resulting from these credits, which grew at an annual rate of 12.5 per cent from 1973-1978, declined in 1979-1980. As mentioned earlier, in 1981 the net transfer was actually negative.

The reduced flexibility was also reflected in the fact that ODA failed to advance at a rate commensurate with the worsening economic situation of the poorer developing countries, so that the economies of a number of them came under intense pressure.

Development over the past several months have intensified concern regarding the capacity of the international financial system to cushion the effects of the unfavourable economic environment and underpin adjustment. A large number of uncertainties have emerged with respect to financing via international capital markets. These include the greater sense of vulnerability felt by financial institutions owing to the growth of assets, both domestic and foreign, whose liquidity and future earnings are in doubt, and the impact on their earnings of recent bankruptcies of borrowers. A further cause of hesitance on the part of lenders is the magnitude of their exposure to individual borrowing countries relative to their own capital. Difficulties as regards claims on a major non-developing country borrower have increased apprehension regarding exposure. Finally, the blocking of assets in connection with hostilities in the South Atlantic has also created uncertainties about the way in which financial markets may function.

These factors, together with the likely continuance of relatively high interest rates, point to only a modest future expansion in net borrowing from international capital markets. The outlook for ODA is no brighter. As regards DAC member countries other than the United States, a further expansion of flows appears assured. In the case of the United States, however, the outlook appears to be for a reduced volume of flows distributed with increased emphasis on geo-political considerations.

There are also considerable uncertainties regarding the future role of multilateral financial and monetary institutions. Pressures are being exerted in all of these institutions to constrain the size of their operations and alter their policies. In IMF, for example, there are pressures to limit increases in quotas and to impose stricter conditionality, As regards the World Bank, a matter of special concern is that IDA commitments are expected to fall considerably short of the amounts previously expected, primarily because of the United States decision to stretch its contribution to the Sixth Replenishment over a four-year period. Thus stringency in the provision of official payments finance would be superimposed on lower growth of multilateral development finance.

D

DEVELOPMENT CRISIS AND FUNCTIONING OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE, FINANCE AND MONETARY SYSTEMS

THE current situation of developing countries is one of considerable difficulty with little room for manoeuvre. The economic problems of developed countries are being transmitted to developing countries through a variety of channels. Slower growth in the developed market-economy countries is curtailing directly their import demand and is also associated with structural changes in those countries which have a further negative impact on demand. Policies to deal with inflation have increased borrowing costs, and trade policies are evolving in a way that calls into doubt the future dynamism of international trade, particularly for products of special importance to developing countries. Inflation in the world economy and the deterioration in the terms of trade of non-oil-exporting developing countries have enlarged current-account deficits and reduced for many developing countries the benefits derived from participating in the international trading system. The international financial system appears to have lost a good deal of the flexibility which it had formerly provided to developing countries to offset the negative influences of the external environment and to mobilise resources required for the transformation of their economies. The spirit of international co-operation is on the wane.

The development crisis is thus not simply a set of poor growth figures for one or two years, however disquieting these may be. It is also the progressive alteration of the international environment in ways that narrow the range of feasible policies open to developing countries to promote their own development, and that reduce the effectiveness of those that are available.

Several characteristics of the international trade, finance and payments systems have had an important bearing on the intensity of the present crisis. The first of these is the incompatibility of the broad direction of change in the trading system, on the one hand, and in the financial and monetary systems, on the other. The trading system is increasingly being used to allow the pace of structural adjustment in developed market-economy countries to be slowed, or limits to that adjustment to be enforced. The monetary and financial systems, on the other hand, are evolving in ways that imply more rapid adjustment of developing countries. The tensions created by this incompatibility are at the heart of the external payments difficulties and poor growth performance of many developing countries.

Secondly, the trade, finance and payments systems are not yet sufficiently endowed with a South-South dimension. The experience of the past several years has demonstrated that wherever South-South transactions took on importance, external constraints were eased and growth enhanced. Institutional mechanisms for South-South co-operation exist in the financial field, and are present in the payments area. Arrangements to accelerate South-South commercial transactions could play an important role in supporting growth.

The most telling defect of the present international economic system, however, is the failure to endow it with an adequate support system designed to ensure that the interests of developing countries are adequately met. Recent developments have vividly illustrated the costs to developing countries of instability in commodity prices — costs that would have been substantially attenuated by a fully operational Integrated Programme for Commodities. Adequate measures in such fields as debt and access to markets would also have helped protect developing countries from the adverse consequences of the current economic environment. Further efforts to enhance or restore mechanisms of support for developing countries — whether they be in the field of trade, commodities or financial flows — must be among the major items on the international agenda in the months to come. There is an overall need to strengthen confidence in the system of multilateral co-operation and to use the modalities of that system in a concerted effort to enhance development. ☐

Patriotic Front (*from page 6*)

The Communists, on the other hand, have turned sectarian, having practically ceased extending their influence in segments beyond their own base: they have an economic programme which, while diagnosing the maladies, gets lost in generalities. But no political party can grow by repeating eternal verities. The Communist movement in this country is fragmented because of historical reasons which largely brought about sharp political-ideological differences. The malady however lies in the fact that through five decades of its existence as a political entity, it has not yet been able to get at the totality of the Indian reality: in its macro aspect it goes by general principles, while its endeavour at the micro level has so far been largely confined to economism — without any sign of an integrated political understanding of the reality.

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THE battle against poverty and disparities, against social taboos and caste and communal violence, against corruption and black-money operation, has to bring about maximum national mobilisation. The battle for freedom could mobilise all sections of the Indian people because the adversary was a foreigner. This time the battle for a better socio-economic order is to come up against powerful vested interests inside the nation itself: it can only mobilise those who are hit by the present state of things and expect to gain out of the proposed changes: this time the adversary is inside the country itself. The national mobilisation therefore holds out no easy prospects, for these vested interests would not only put up stiff frontal resistance but would also try to deflect the movement by means of extraneous issues.

On paper, this perspective would be regarded as acceptable in varying degrees, to all existing political parties. And yet in practice they are hamstrung by such considerations as their concept of electoral tactics. While everybody would claim to be standing for the elimination of poverty and disparities, few would be in a position to enforce measures for the attainment of such goals. Few, again, would be in a position to totally eschew casteism and communalism since these may turn out to be convenient instruments for getting votes at the hustings. In fact, there is an extraordinary reticence to combat any of the social evils even by the Left parties lest their valuable vote banks are ruined. The new programme for a struggle for national regeneration will therefore come up against the compulsions of the parliamentary game. It is not going to be easy for the existing political establishments — even those of the Left — to turn their face away from their present-day practice and all that it implies or enjoins upon them.

What one has to concentrate on is how to galvanise the nation with this new perspective: fight for the elimination of poverty and disparities, against social inequities and against the new value system based upon the power of black money. Since this new perspective holds out a fair deal for the overwhelming majority of the nation, it injects a new content in our understanding of what patriotism means in the context of today. And those who uphold that new patriotism are in a position to build a Patriotic Front cutting across the existing party barriers.

The concept of Patriotic Front therefore does not fit into the strait-jacket of existing political parties. As disillusion grows in the masses about the efficacy of the present parliamentary system, as disenchantment sets in among more and more sections of the existing parties, the possibility grows of their making a break with the unwholesome syndrome that characterises the present power structure in this country. As frustration and restlessness will grow with the existing order of things, the number of those who will be prepared to make such a break will grow. The fast growing devaluation of political parties will only help to accelerate the process of disillusion and with that a larger and larger number will be ready to move. Instead of their being confused about a perspective, or different sections going in diverse directions, it is necessary that they should have before them the concept of a Patriotic Front bringing together all those who, disillusioned with the present order of things, would be ready to throw in their lot in a common endeavour for a new national crusade against poverty and injustice.

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IF the concept of Patriotic Front does not go with the present structure of the party system, how could it be valid in India today? This is a fair question, but it betrays both complacence and ignorance about the fragility of the present set-up.

First, the present lot of our political leaders does not seem to have any idea of the extent of devaluation most of the political parties have suffered in the eyes of the masses. So, they cling on to a naive arithmetical calculation about the strength of the respective parties, a calculation almost wholly based on the strength of each in legislatures and Parliament.

Second, the assumption on which the leaders of different political parties seem to be working is that once Indira Gandhi is toppled or disappears from the scene, some sort of a coalition — a second Janata? — would succeed, and to get a berth in such a coalition they have to work from now on. If Indira Gandhi is thinking that after her let the deluge come, the parties opposed to her seem to be conjuring up some sort of a Noah's Ark in which everyone of them will find a place.

Any careful observer of the Indian scene, however, finds it difficult to see how a major convulsion could be averted once the colossus of the Indira Congress Raj is removed. Indira Gandhi has no Syndicate to arrange for a smooth succession; in fact she has no party worth the name to hold on to power after her. The present lot of Congress-I Chief Ministers can hardly last twenty-four hours after her. The Congress itself will be broken up into bits and pieces with no High Command to keep it together. Most of the Opposition parties with impressive signboards of yesterday are already in a pathetic state of disintegration. If the Jana Sangh and the Communists survive such a deluge, they are admittedly confined to some regions or pockets: there is in reality left no nationwide political force that can hold the country together.

The solution does not lie in worshipping Indira Gandhi as a deity as the Congressmen have got into the habit of doing. Understandably their debt of gratitude to her is immense since she alone brings them the vote to win at the poll and then to enjoy power. But the Congress Raj as it is constituted today can no longer last beyond Indira Gandhi. With most of the other parties in shambles, that crucial moment will demand the emergence of a powerful force if the nation is to be kept together.

No doubt in such a critical situation, the forces of the Right would try to rally as much as they can to defend the vested interests and to establish a frankly conservative raj with all sorts of phoney *swadeshi* slogans: the entire brood of godmen would be at the beck and call of such a Right combine. Despite a narrow social base, the Right will make a bid for power claiming to be a national force.

To prepare for such an eventuality — rather to pre-empt it — is the supreme task of the Left, to build along with all forward-looking forces a Patriotic Front which alone can bar the Right's bid for power. A Patriotic Front, emblazoned on its banner the goal of eliminating poverty and reducing disparities, assuring two square meals a day, medicare and free schooling for all, guaranteeing the defence of our sovereignty and security of the country's frontiers, and with it all, the scope for participation in decision-making process for true representatives of the people—only such a perspective can hold the majority of our country together and galvanise it for the realisation of a new India.

The concept of Patriotic Front is therefore not just a move to build support for Indira Gandhi or any other individual or party. Nor is it meant to be a far-away dream to be realised in distant tomorrow. In the highly unstable situation of today with the prospect of rapid collapse of the present set-up — witness the police revolt in Bombay — it is only the concept of a Patriotic Front that can ensure the integration of the country on a durable basis.

(To be Continued)

Book Review (*Continued from page 26*)

unmanageable tensions; it would also result in the accentuation of conflict of interests and of perceptions between the United States, on the one hand, and Western Europe and Japan, on the other. If these prognostications are correct which, I believe, will be found to be correct, the countries in the nonaligned world would have an opportunity of intervening with vigour, gaining allies beyond the confines of the so-called Third World. In bringing about such a broad political coalition for arms reduction, disarmament, peaceful coexistence and detente, India can play a historic role. However, we cannot do this unless we have clearer understanding of our potentialities and of our weaknesses".

It is the examination of these potentialities and weaknesses that forms the final theme of the book. It is here that there is a certain disappiontment. Not that the analysis is not penetrating nor the prescriptions not very worthwhile. But something more concrete could have been stated in the programmatic sphere. And there is the old difference with Haksar about the social forces that would spearhead the mobilisation required to achieve the shift to a socialist orientation of our country.

"Our very achievements mock at us. And now we have reached the stage of universal dissatisfaction. Why? Because we have not paid any serious attention to working out the relationships between technology, ideology and institutions ...It is, indeed, fashionable to appear 'pragmatic'. What precisely this word means nobody really knows. No one has cared to define. And I rather suspect that pragmatism is a substitute for thought and knowledge....

"I have always been assailed by doubts about the adequacy of the conceptual framework within which we sought to consummate India's economic transformation. Mixed economy which has always been a euphemism for welfare capitalism seemed to me to be based on an assumption that the ruling elite in India would possess themselves with certain virtues over a long period of time. Despite the reassuring presence of men like Jawaharlal Nehru and some of the stalwarts of our national movement, these virtues were the first casualty.... The first essential virtue was the need for constant awareness that political power must remain subordinate to the purpose of rendering service.... Another virtue ... was the maintenance of the integrity of decision-making processes ... we needed to uphold the virtue of frugality and unostentation in public and private life ...."

"It has also never been clear to me if independent self-reliant capitalism could grow in India in the specific context of contemporary world economy increasingly dominated by transnational corporations ...."

"One cannot escape the conclusion that during the last 35 years we have grown a grotesque kind of capitalism within the womb of an ancient pre-industrial society. I do not bemoan the growth of capitalism in India. What I bemoan is that the individuals and groups who have benefited by it do not seem to understand the logic of its further growth consistent with the vast internal market, our resource endowment and the formation of our skills."

In Haksar's view the key problems to be attended to if an industrial society is to be created "even within the capitalist framework" are: agrarian reforms, working out the implications of the idea of equality involving an assault on antiquated social structures; advancing the process of the secularisation of the Indian mind; creation of institutions through which the urban and rural masses could be mobilised for change "even when change is conceived within the framework of capitalism". In later passages he emphasises the need for a growth pattern based upon ever-increasing enlargement of the domestic market and maximum mobilisation of internal resources.

In the solving of these problems the key role, in his view, is to be that of the intelligentsia. "India can and must be a great country in the comity of nations only if we understand that the intelligentsia must be the creator of social transformation, a cultural renaissance and an economic transformation based upon agrarian reforms and institution building".

There are some questions which seem to require raising here. Is not the central problem today in our country that of going beyond, transcending and sublating the capitalist framework? Is it not the modern working class allied with other sections of the working people in town and country that can and must play the vanguard role? Should not more thought be given to the qualitatively new possibilities of cooperation with the Soviet Union and countries of the socialist community? Can we leave out the big business houses when it comes to understanding the main obstacles to India's advance? What are the experiences gained from the working of broad coalitions like that of the United Front in Kerala from 1969 to 1979? What are the basic elements of a programme of feasible and inescapable transition? What is our immediate heritage and its value? Finally, given the the stage of modern class development in India, can the intelligentsia play a completely independent role, much less a hegemonic one?

From one who gives much alor [illegible] one ask for more. Thus with Haksar, his reflect [illegible] mind and skill in stimulating presentation. ●

I do believe that the vast majority of the people in every country want us to labour for peace and to succeed. Whether we are big or small, we have to face big issues vital to the future of humanity. Everything else is of lesser importance than this major question. I am absolutely convinced that we shall never settle this question by war or by a mental approach which envisages war and prepares for it.

I am equally convinced that if we aim at right ends, right means must be employed. Good will not emerge out of evil methods. That was the lesson which our great leader Gandhi taught us, and though we in India have failed in many ways in following his advice, something of his message still clings to our minds and hearts. In ages long past a great son of India, the Buddha, said that the only real victory was one in which all were equally victorious and there was defeat for no one. In the world today that is the only practical victory. Any other way will lead to disaster.

—Jawaharlal Nehru in UN General Assembly, 1960

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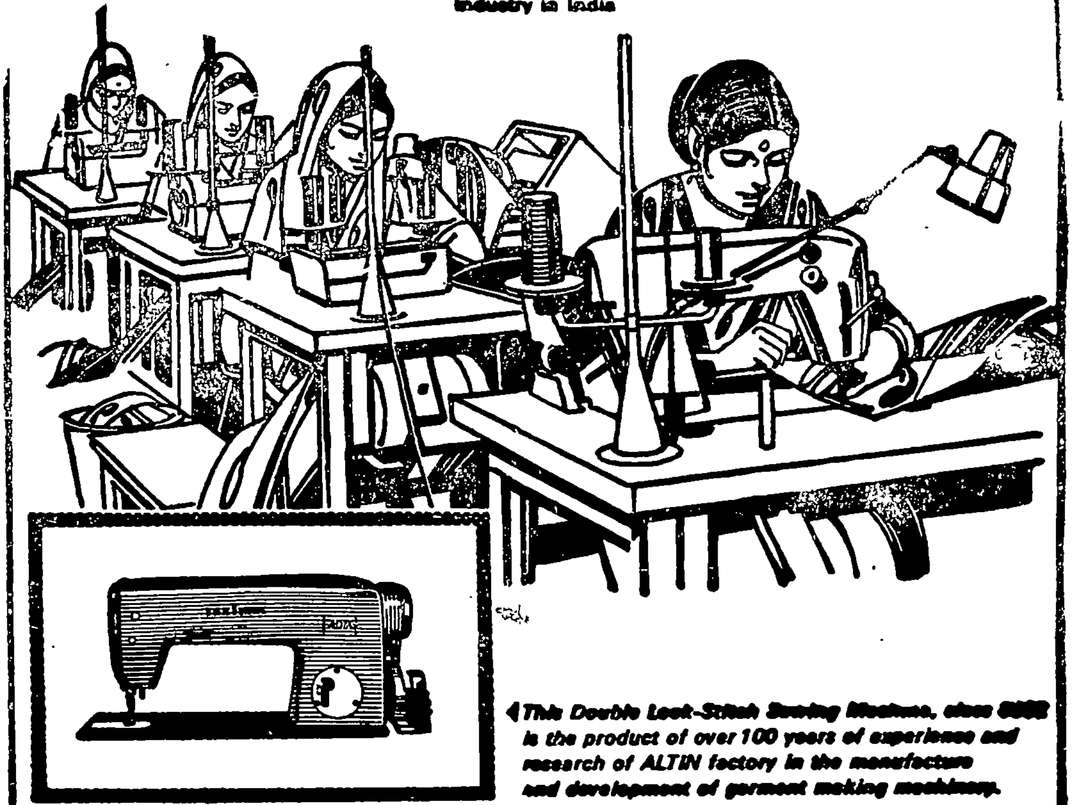

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POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

Must Mishra Last?

BIHAR no doubt has a sad history of inefficient and corrupt administration. But no Government even in that benighted State has done so much so brazenly to blacken its image as the Jagannath Mishra regime has done. To compare Jagannath Mishra to Nero would perhaps be unfair to the notorious Roman emperor who was only fiddling while Rome was burning; the Bihar Chief Minister is actively helping the blaze to spread.

At least from the days of the Bhagalpur blindings and the misery inflicted on undertrials, of both of which the Supreme Court took note, the Jagannath Mishra Government has been frequently in the news, leaving aside pre-1977 happenings. The press played its role in publicising these and other unsavoury goings-on in that State. If the Chief Minister is angry with the press and decided to teach journalists a lesson, that is not difficult to understand. Too many skeletons keep falling out of too many cupboards all the time. And Mishra and his advisers naturally feel that the press is to blame. And his answer: Muzzle it.

Thus came to be rushed through the Legislature the amendments to the IPC and the Cr. PC popularly (or unpopularly) known as the Press Bill, the Black Bill, etc. The draconian provisions of the measures have been widely discussed and condemned by virtually all sections of public opinion (*Mainstream*, August 14). The attempt to take refuge behind the plea that the amendments had been copied from Tamilnadu did not cut much ice, for the Mishra Government has established a very much blacker record of attacks on the press than any other State Government in India. Not that anyone can justify the Tamilnadu law or the highhanded actions taken under it in the last few months. But Bihar is Bihar, and the threat to the press and to individual journalists there has

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been much greater than elsewhere in the country.

If the journalists of Bihar, backed by teachers, students, political parties and others, have decided not to take it lying down but to fight back, it is because they know Mishra and his henchmen mean business — quite bloody business. We have already been offered a sample — the brutal, totally unwarranted and well-planned lathi-charge on journalists going in a peaceful silent procession to Patna's Raj Bhavan on August 21 to submit a memorandum to the Governor against the Black Bill. The Chief Minister has only made himself more ridiculous — if that were possible — by his defence of the police and by his asinine claim that the editors leading the procession threw brickbats at the policemen. There is a limit even to official lying. And not all the efforts of Mishra and his minions, including quite a few arrests, could prevent the protest bandh in Patna on August 23; the State Government had to lie again and say the bandh "was a complete flop."

It is now clear, not only from press reports but from interviews given by Jagannath Mishra himself, that the Bihar Government has not the ghost of a case for bringing in a law against such vague, undefined categories as "grossly indecent" or "scurrilous" material or matter "intended for blackmail". The Mishra Government merely seeks to arm itself with sweeping powers to get anyone — not merely journalists — arrested by minor officials and refused bail and kept in custody sufficiently long to humiliate and demoralise them. It is heartening that the journalists, who rarely unite to defend their professional rights and responsibilities, have at last joined hands, nationwide, to actively demonstrate against the new threat to press freedom. Already there are enough signs that the protest movement is snowballing, and one ardently hopes that it will produce results.

The attack on the press — past, present and future — only brings out sharply the reality that Jagannath Mishra, for all his pompous declamations and advertisements, is a scared man at the helm in Bihar with an even more scared crew behind him. There is for instance the scandal over the Patna Urban Cooperative Bank in which Jagannath Mishra prominently figures. This ten-year-old case, concerning that cooperative bank, had been instituted following a Reserve Bank audit in which many irregularities and illegal practices had been detected. The Bihar Secretariat at that time buzzed with activity aimed at hushing up the whole affair; all this did not succeed. During Janata rule criminal proceedings were initiated, but when Mishra came back to power he got the Cabinet to press for the withdrawal of the case against himself. The petition before the Supreme Court, posted for final hearing on October 5, is aimed at getting the case reopened. If the Supreme Court directs the State Government to reopen the case, Jagannath Mishra will be in the soup, though no one can say if his goose will be cooked, as was Antulay's in the Maharashtra cement scandal case.

Again, the Bihar Chief Minister is alleged to have been protecting an official against whom corruption cases are pending. No doubt corrupt officials have been and will continue to be protected by their political patrons who need their services. Nexus between politicians and officials is of course not peculiar to Bihar: only, in Bihar, every malpractice seems more blatant than elsewhere.

Like Agriculture Minister Ramesh Jha's costly three-week jaunt to Paris, Honolulu and Miami as part of a study, along with chosen officials, of "agricultural marketing". This at a time when the State has been reeling under the impact of drought and no relief is available to the affected people in Hazaribagh, Giridih and Santhal Parganas districts particularly.

The old-age pension scheme stands foursquare on outstretched palms. Indeed, it is a long list, and the sufferers are mainly poor villagers and the urban poor.

The Bihar teachers' strike was prolonged as a result of the Chief Minister's callous attitude, according to many in the ruling party itself. The police were let loose against both striking teachers and sympathising students at several places.

In the rural areas landlords' hirelings have been increasingly on the rampage, Harijans and landless peasants being the victims. The prescribed minimum wage is yet to be enforced, and any demand for it is met by burning down of huts and killing of people. The way a "mahant" in Sitamarhi district got the huts of landless workers demolished and grabbed 350 acres of land is known; it was widely reported. We have to remind ourselves also of Biharsharif and Phulwarisharif where communal elements had a hectic time. And of the Dhanbad mafia which could hardly have been playing havoc without friends in high places.

As a Leftist leader put it succinctly, Jagannath Mishra's regime has its own Twenty Point Programme which includes freedom to indulge in blackmarketing, smuggling, corruption, rape, tax evasion, dacoity, political murders, and so on.

Jagannath Mishra and his friends would not like all this to be publicised and discussed. All this and much more. Hence the war on the press. Time was when the Bihar press was friendly to the rulers, despite occasional friction. The equation has gone wrong. Presumably the State bosses have gone too far, and the press could not acquiesce without losing all credibility.

Withholding of Presidential assent to the Press Bill is essential if the Centre, that is, Indira Gandhi, by whom Mishra constantly swears, is to retain credibility. It has to be made clear to the Bihar Government (and to other State Governments) that attempts to suppress the press will not be allowed. Of course there has been concern over unfair or sweeping criticism of the press by some persons in authority at the Centre too, but it is one thing to criticise and quite another to enact a law empowering even minor officials to move against journalists and others on flimsy pretexts. Mishra's blackmailing of journalists should stop here and now. Till it stops the movement against the Bihar Bill must go on. That is the only way also to prevent repetition of the attack on the press in other States or on the all-India plane.

But even more urgent is the case of Jagannath Mishra himself. He is clearly a power-drunk megalomaniac who can bring only disaster to the State and to the party which put him in office. It will not do to say things were not ideal under Janata rule; at least in Bihar they are worse now, and the promise was to provide good government — a broken promise. The ruling party legislators and MPs who are opposing Mishra's obnoxious Bill are in reality objecting to his stewardship of the State. The two cannot be separated. Shadow and substance, as it were.

The answer? Sack Jagannath Mishra, who is as dispensable as the Antulays or Pahadias. Bihar, long-suffering Bihar, deserves a better fate than to be saddled with this ugly specimen of a Chief Minister. Will the people of Bihar get a fair deal?

C.N. Chitta Ranjan

August 24

Readers, please note!

With this issue, **Mainstream** *completes twenty years of its humble but eventful career. Twenty years ago in 1962, it was on the first Saturday of September that* **Mainstream** *was born.*

Unlike other years, our Annual Number will appear this time not in the first but in the third week of September. **Mainstream** *will therefore appear regularly in the coming two weeks. It is only after the publication of the Annual Number, which has always been a bumper issue, that there comes a gap in the periodicity of the journal for three weeks.*

Meanwhile, we crave the indulgence of our understanding readers for being compelled to reduce the number of pages from 36 to 28 from next week. This has become necessary because of the increased cost of production and postage, and we do not intend for the present to raise the price of the journal or its subscription rates.

With the support and good wishes of every one of you, we shall venture on in our journey through the difficult times ahead. —Editor

COMMENTARY

Punjab: Fighting the Fire

THE events of August 20, in which two separate groups of Akali extremists were involved — on one side the abortive hijacking of yet another Indian Airlines plane and on the other an attempt on the life of Chief Minister Darbara Singh with hand-grenades and explosives in Rahon in Jullundur district — are a fresh warning that the extremists continue to pose a threat to communal peace and harmony in Punjab as well as to the unity and integrity of the country as a whole.

There is little doubt that the two simultaneous actions were well planned, one to attract world attention and the other to liquidate Darbara Singh. It cannot be accidental that the extremists struck at two separate points on the same day, if not exactly at the same time, when a batch of Akalis was moving out of the Golden Temple as part of the "Dharam Yudh" (holy war) launched by the Akali Dal (Longowal) from August 4 under the leadership of Prakash Singh Badal. It is to be noted that one of the demands of hijacker Manjit Singh was that Prakash Singh Badal should replace Darbara Singh as Chief Minister of Punjab.

Akali leaders like Badal may feel embarrassed at such a turn of events but neither in the past nor at present have they cared to denounce the extremists; instead, the Akali Dal (L) wilfully allowed the extremist Akhand Kirtan Jatha (AKJ) and its leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale to take refuge behind the so-called "Dharam Yudh". Bhindranwale wound up his own morcha and joined the "Dharam Yudh" after the Akali Dal (L) agreed to strike a compromise with the AKJ. The leaders of the Akali Dal (L) leading the "Dharam Yudh" now in alliance with Bhindranwale's forces cannot be ignorant of the fact that the bloody trail of all the previous murderous actions of the extremists led to Bhindranwale's door — whether it was the killing of Nirankaris, or of innocent citizens in Jullundur, Taran Tarn and Kapurthala, or of veteran journalist Jagat Narain earlier; or the hijacking of Indian Airlines planes each time to Pakistan; or the recent attempt on the life of the State's Chief Minister. The Akali Dal (L) leaders cannot absolve themselves of the charge of aiding and abetting the extremists who have formally joined their "Dharam Yudh". Akali Dal (Tohra) leader Cheema has gone a step further by refusing to condemn either the hijacking or the attempt on Darbara Singh's life.

These developments have understandably caused embarrassment and concern among those, like the CPI-M leaders, who had shown a lot of faith in a good section of Akali Dal leaders and had been "advising" them to "demarcate" themselves from the extremists and condemn their "anti-national activities". The CPI-M Politbureau is now constrained to note that instead of demarcating itself from the extremists, the Akali Dal (L) has been "projecting the common demands of the Punjab people as religious discrimination against Sikhs, thus inciting communal passion" and playing into the hands of "anti-national elements" led by Bhindranwale. The CPI-M has also charged the Akali leaders with placating the extremists by maintaining discreet silence about the latter's actions which, the CPI-M now says, "actually becomes condonation of reprehensible crimes like hijacking, exhortation to killing and actual killings, making Gurdwaras refuges for criminals, etc."

There is no doubt that the Akali extremists have been out to create a "very dangerous situation in the border State of Punjab" for many months, as the CPI-M has noted, but having made this welcome assertion, the CPI-M has sought to advise the Akali leaders once again that their placating the extremists will only be to the advantage of the Congress-I rulers and the extremists. More seriously, the Akali extremists' actions would bring grist to the mill of Hindu communalists, the RSS and Arya Samajists, who are bound to cash in on the sense of insecurity among Hindus.

But it is not realised, or perhaps it is wilfully ignored, that such well-meaning statements have achieved nothing in the past and are not likely to have a different fate in the future.

Such an approach on the part of those who talk of secularism and democracy, unity and integrity of the country, cannot but keep the large mass of secular forces in the State immobilised. If the "anti-national" extremists are creating a "very dangerous situation" in the border State, why cannot a call be given to all patriotic forces in Punjab, Hindus and Sikhs, Congressmen, Communists, even Akalis and others, to come together in a joint endeavour to fight the anti-national forces? They have to be jointly moved into action, not only to fight the extremists but even to compel the Government, State or Central, to concede reasonable demands of the Punjabis as a whole or of the minority, if any. A partisan outlook will be catastrophic for Punjab and its people.

Narendra Sharma

August 24

New Possibilities in Kashmir

THE induction of Dr Farooq Abdullah into the State Cabinet of Jammu and Kashmir and the consequent resignation from it of G.M. Shah has been cavalierly dismissed by most of the press comments as a family tussle between the ailing Sheikh Abdullah's son and son-in-law. But this latest development in the strategically sensitive frontier State has a political dimension far beyond the squabbles between two brothers-in-law.

Last year, when Sheikh Abdullah vacated the presidentship of the ruling National Conference, he placed Dr Farooq Abdullah in that position despite G. M. Shah's widely publicised claim to be controlling the party machine. This time too, Shah's protest resignation from the Cabinet has not been followed by his supporters leaving it in sympathy with him. Whether G.M. Shah's influence has so long been over-rated or not, it is clear that despite his age and the burden of office, Sheikh Abdullah's standing remains unchallenged. At the same time, it would be incorrect to rush to the conclusion that G.M. Shah or other dissidents within the National Conference are too weak even to become the cause of constant headache for Dr Farooq Abdullah when he takes over the reins of office from his father as is widely expected. With all the goodwill that he enjoys as a decent, well-mannered person brought into the hurly-burly of poltitics, Farooq will himself repudiate the suggestion that his father's shoes are just now not too big for his feet. Even if they do not join hands with the Sheikh's adversary the Jamiat-Islami followers, the dissidents within the National Conference are not likely to reconcile easily with their ouster from the ruling establishment, and it would be wise for Dr Farooq Abdullah to expect that they would, overtly and covertly, carry on political guerrila actions whenever they will get an opening.

Under such circumstances, the emerging leadership of the National Conference should look around and seek out allies. In the political-ideological confrontation that it has to face from across the frontier, it can consolidate its position by mobilising all secular forces both in the Valley and in Jammu. And there is no other secular force of significant strength and influence than the Congress-I unit in the State. A process of understanding therefore needs to be started between the National Conference and the Congress-I. Dr Farooq Abdullah is eminently suited to bring about such a rapprochement as he has already earned the reputation of being a dove — instead of a hawk — in his dealings with the Congress-I during his three-year stint as a Lok Sabha member.

For the Congress-I, it would be a grievous mistake to forget or underplay the tremendous contribution made by the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah towards building the edifice of secularism in this country. The correct course for it therefore is to establish fraternal rapport with the National Conference instead of going in for a line of confrontation as it appeared to be indulging in until sometime ago. With Dr Farooq Abdullah leading the ruling party and also assuming more and more responsibilities in the Government, it would be possible for it to strive for such a rapport. And the sooner that is done, the better would it be for all concerned.

N.C.

August 24

DISCUSSION

This contribution is meant to initiate a discussion on the present political perspective before India. The first two instalments of this article appeared in Mainstream *(August 14 and 21, 1982). Readers are invited to participate in this discussion.*

Editor

Concept of a Patriotic Front—III

N.C.

FROM the moment the concept of a Patriotic Front has been suggested in this journal, many a friend has candidly raised the question, if this would not mean outright support for the present Indira Government; while critics have jumped to the conclusion that this must be a siren song to inveigle the Left into Indira Gandhi's parlour.

As has been made amply clear in the previous instalment of this article (*Mainstream*, August 21, 1982), the idea behind a Patriotic Front is not to build support for Indira Gandhi, or for the matter of that, for any other individual or party. In anxious times like these, with political parties sentenced, rightly, to rapid devaluation to the point of irrelevance — even extinction in the case of a number of them — the prospect of the collapse of the present fragile set-up of power enjoins upon all serious-minded Indians to think hard, and it is in this background the concept of a Patriotic Front is placed before the Left for its serious consideration.

The question naturally arises as to what is to be done today. If the Patriotic Front is meant to bring about the largest mobilisation of forces against the danger of a Rightist take-over *after* the fall or disappearance of Indira Gandhi, should it not be made clear that the concept of such a Front is valid for tomorrow and not for today?

Such a question may sound legitimate, and the answer to it is that if the *strategy* for such a patriotic mobilisation is valid for tomorrow, the necessary *tactics* for today must flow from it, and with the tactics, the tasks as well for all forces opposed to the Right. One is entitled to ask, if we are to build a Patriotic Front against the danger of a Rightist take-over tomorrow, is it good politics at all to go along with the Right today, investing it with a degree of respectability in the eyes of the masses that it does not enjoy today? If we are to build a Patriotic Front tomorrow, should we not try to isolate the Right today and expose its record of reaction in every sphere — political, social, economic and cultural? Obviously such tactics run counter to that of those who are overburdened with the obsession of election politics, enshackled to the constraints of the parliamentary game.

Apart from tactics, the Left particularly has a task, a formidable task to undertake, here and now, if it has to actively participate in the building of a Patriotic Front. It has to concentrate on politically educating as well as organising the toiling masses. Political education does not mean a string of diatribes, hot and sizzling, against the party in power, whichever party that may be. More important is to educate the masses about the anatomy of our present socio-economic structure, the fragility of the present political set-up, about the venality of those who subserve the vested interests and thereby help to perpetuate the burden of misery that the toiling people have to bear. It is only by such education that one can instill into the masses the urgency of imbibing a new culture which bars the way for every form of corruption percolating among the toiling people themselves — to make them realise that the vested interests are anxious to corrode the ethics of the mass of humanity, and it is for them to fight it out.

No education of the masses can however be sustained unless and until the urgent need to *organise* them in realised. For, good intentions can hardly survive without the weapon to defend and promote them. And the only weapon that the toiling humanity possesses is the power of organisation. In fact, this is their most effective arsenal of artillery and missiles.

This point may sound trite and obvious, but needs to be stressed over and over again, when one looks around at the state of the mass organisations of working people. The total membership that the trade union centres in this country claim comes to less than 150 lakhs, while the strength of the working class in India today is about 250 lakhs. And in this, the share of the Left-led trade unions comes to less than 50 lakhs. In other words, the Left has not organised even twenty per cent of the workers in this country. The working peasant force in India has a strength of about eight crores and what is the strength of Kisan Sabhas under the Left parties? A measly 60 lakhs, by their own claims. Agricultural labourers in India today constitute a powerful force of over five crores, but the Left parties, by their own claims, have recruited only fifteen lakhs in the agricultural labourers' organisations that they claim to run.

The Left as a whole claims to uphold the public sector. But in the recent times any observer of the Indian scene will detect that the BJP is edging out the Left in the unions in most of the public-sector undertakings.

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THE building of a Patriotic Front therefore enjoins upon the Left something more than oratorical flourish or obsession with alliances, understandings and adjustments within the four corners of the Opposition.

First, it must start demarcating itself from the Right so that the Right does not run away with its influence and respectability, leaving it in a state of ineffectiveness or forcing it to withdraw into some well-marked pockets.

Secondly, the Left has to politically educate the toiling masses making them aware of the forces behind the existing realities — political, economic and social.

Thirdly, the supreme need to organise the toiling masses, so that when the crucial moment comes, a solid phalanx of working humanity can intervene and enforce its own brand of patriotism over all the philistines that are today dominating the national scene.

Far too long, the Communists in this country have fought shy of raising the banner of patriotism. It is time that they take it up, embroider within it a richer content, and not leave it to Indira Gandhi alone to carry it. (*Concluded*)

India and US: A Pakistani View

The Pakistan Foreign Office must be studying the implications of renewed cordiality between India and the United States. One sincerely hopes that the situation will be studied coolly and dispassionately, and from a purely national viewpoint. Any attempt to rely excessively on the negative aspects of Mrs Gandhi's visit (to USA) would be as unhelpful as a tendency to panic....Washington started taking note of Pakistan early in the fifties only after failing to overcome India's reluctance to subscribe to the Dullesian theory of pacts. Even then Mr Eisenhower did not offer Pakistan military aid until he had sent an explanatory letter to Mr Nehru. As soon as India showed a change of mood after the 1962 hostilities with China, Washington started cooling off towards Pakistan, despite F.M. Ayub Khan's pathetic professions of loyalty, and had no qualms about abandoning its 'most trusted ally' during the 1965 conflict. Again, at the start of the seventies, when Pakistan was losing its bigger wing, Mr Nixon was polishing up his speech wherein India was acknowledged as the dominant power in South Asia....This, however, does not necessarily mean that Pakistan would not be able to work out an honourable and mutually beneficial association with the United States. What it does mean is that Pakistan should resist the temptation to adopt postures, on the basis of an unrealistic assessment of US perceptions and commitments, which are irreconcilable with its own interests....

A correct attitude for Pakistan would be to assert its own right to review the basic foreign policy assumptions rather than worry about the United States or any other country's moves in this direction. In a wider context, the removal of misunderstandings between India and the United States may well turn out to be in the interest of peace in the sub-continent provided India and Pakistan can work together to strengthen the Non-aligned Movement and revive the Bandung principles. That this would require a complete break from the single-track foreign policy Pakistan has been pursuing and a positive effort to normalise relations with all close neighbours is obvious.

—From Viewpoint,*Lahore* (*August 5, 1982*).

What Next after PLO Withdrawl?

BAREN RAY

THE news of the *success* of US special envoy Philip Habib in what he claims to be "delicate and difficult" negotiations with the invading Israeli Government about the modalities of the evacuation of the besieged PLO forces from Beirut came together with the confirmation by no less a person than former US President Jimmy Carter of what had been more than evident to all the world, that Israel had been given the green signal from Washington to commit its June 6 aggression and take all the subsequent steps in its ten-week programme of massacre and destruction in Lebanon. What the USA and Israel had jointly planned was neither a reprisal attack against the attempted shooting of Israel's Ambassador in London nor merely a short and swift operation to silence the PLO guns and rockets in southern Lebanon able to hit Israeli settlements just across the border, but a big and major move to change the very Arab character of Lebanon as a step towards imposing fundamental geo-political changes over the whole region.

The Reagan Administration got the Begin-Sharon team to carry out what US had failed to achieve in 1958 when it had landed its marines in a near-revolutionary situation in Lebanon to defeat the progressive nationalist forces and instal a puppet regime in which all power would be concentrated in Maronite Christian hands against the majority Muslim population more responsive to the ideas of Arab unity and solidarity. The attempt had been aborted then thanks to Arab solidarity and action by the masses fired by the ideas of Nasserism that had at that time swept across the whole area.

Changing the political character of the regime in Lebanon and putting in its place a client state is not merely an Israeli objective, it is a major US objective too, to get which it has offered its Israeli cat's-paw a *quid pro quo* in letting it usurp and annex the occupied Golan Heights belonging to Syria and then the whole of the West Bank and the Gaza strip (occupied in 1967, a legitimate Palestinian territory according to all United Nations records and decisions, apart from the fact of the history of many centuries). Israel had embarked on large-scale construction of Jewish settlements all over the occupied Palestinian lands several years ago, so that the overwhelmingly-Arab demographic character of the areas may be changed substantially and the "reality" of the settlements may then be used to counter all demands for returning those territories.

There is much comment in India about the very conspicuous Arab inaction against the most recent Israeli crimes against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples. But the policies of the majority of the Arab regimes of subservience to USA and of actual accommodation with Israel have already been nearly a decade in the making.

The other point almost entirely missed by the media is the offensive against he Lebanese progressive-nationalist and Leftist forces. It is often forgotten that in the 1975-76 civil war in Lebanon between the Leftists-cum-nationalists on one side, and the extreme Right-wing Phalangists (the armed constabulary of the Maronites) on the other, the former were defrauded of their legitimate victory by the Arab League intervention in which unfortunately it was Syria whose forces had in fact carried out the mission. The argument then was that any victory of the Lebanese Left supported by the Palestinian military presence at that time would have provoked Israel to intervene and carry out aggression against Lebanon. So in the name of the Arab League, Syria had sent in a "peace-keeping" force in order to pre-empt any possible Israeli military move but which in fact contained the Left-cum-PLO combine and provided much needed sustenance to the Phalangists. Now the chickens seem to have come home to roost!

Nevertheless, the PLO-cum-Leftist forces had managed to hold their own. In the military confrontation during the summer of 1981 Israel had asked its Phalangist allies, fully equipped by the former, to start a flare-up in which it had itself intervened in a big way with massive attacks against the Syrian missile locations in the Bekaa Valley and frequent air raids over the thickly populated centres in Beirut and other cities. The aim of these military operation last year were to test the military strength of the PLO-Leftist combine and also international reaction. After that the diplomatic skills of Philip Habib were brought in to stage a cease-fire which held almost a year.

Before the operation was begun this year, Israel had made the necessary military preparations as required after last summer's trial of strength. The aim this time was to win, that is to carry through the military offensive the total expulsion of the PLO from Lebanon, isolate the Lebanese Left and reward the Phalangists by entrusting the Lebanese state to them. In the Lebanese Presidential election on August 23 the results as could not be anticipated, brought the Rightwing Bashir Gamael to victory.

In the midst of all this gloom both the valour and the political sagacity of the PLO fighters and their leadership shine bright. Thanks to the very good coverage in the world media, the sharp reaction by international public opinion, the universal revulsion against Israel's Nazi-like massacres of civilian population and other atrocities, the protests even in Jewish circles normally supportive of Israel including the very sizable mass demonstrations inside Israel itself — all this created the prospect of new political possibilities. But even more significantly, the world began to appreciate more than ever before the justice and reasonableness of the PLO's demands and proposals despite the assiduously built smoke-screen which never failed to present the PLO as nothing but a terrorist organisation. The revulsion against Israel's inhuman blitzkrieg has made the demand for a comprehensive political solution of the Palestine problem more urgent than ever, and in that measure, the position of the PLO leadership has been indicated. For years and decades the Zionists had been able to rebuff the Palestinian demand for self-determination and statehood on the plea that the PLO stood for the total destruction of Israel and did not recognise the latter.

In the beginning when the state of Israel had been created by means of international conspiracy through fraud and massive terrorism and violence, it was understandable that all Arabs and particularly the Palestinians should have considered Israel the embodiment of total evil and resolved to undo a theocratic state of settlers from outside established by force on their homeland from which they, the residents, had been expelled. But as decades passed and the state of Israel with colossal and continuing foreign aid became a settled reality, this rigid attitude of the Palestinian movement provided some alibi and excuse for the Zionists to press on a policy of continuing expansion in the name of "secure frontiers" far beyond the 1947 UN resolution which had legalised its existence. This immensely helped Israel to misguide a large part of world democratic opinion specially in the West which consequently did not act sufficiently to condemn Israel's various aggressive acts which then in its turn enabled the governments of their respective countries to continue with their open support of the US-Israel axis.

There were several signs that the core of the PLO leadership was veering towards a new understanding several years ago. Yasser Arafat's historic declaration at the 1975 UN General Assembly itself was a giant step forward. Later the Palestine National Council (like its Parliament) endorsed the Brezhnev formula of ensuring the security of all the states in the region for finding a just and peaceful solution of the problems of the Middle East. But in spite of this the vicious circle was not broken. There is reason to believe that much more than international difference it is the pressure from the other member states of the Arab League which had been restraining the top leadership of the PLO from taking this important step. The fact is the Palestine Liberation Movement is the largest, broadest, most secular, most radical, and most democratic with a vast grassroots network in the entire Arab World and for different reasons most Arab regimes feel unsafe and threatened by its vigorous being.

Arab regimes — the most conservative as well as some pseudo-radical ones — were united on this and did everything during the mid-seventies to slow down PLO's thinking on the formulation for demanding a Palestinian national state to be set up on that part of original Palestinian homeland that is either vacated by Israel or is liberated from Israeli occupation. Even this was resisted on pseudo-radical rhetorical grounds but in the end the PLO leadership won and the demand for a national Palestinian State (obviously coexisting with Israel) was adopted and was later endorsed by the Arab League and the Non-aligned Movement. The position of the Arab states was in sharp contrast to the position of President Gamal Abdel Nasser, for instance, who quite early realised the wisdom of accepting UN Resolution No 242 which could be used to build up international opposition against Israel. But now in the midst of crisis and military threats that seemed to be engulfing them, the PLO leadership has to a significant extent been able to turn the tables against USA and Israel. Thanks to this, PLO's armed forces have been saved and their strength preserved for more decisive battles in the future including the political battle which must begin now.

But it will be folly to imagine that following the arrangement of peaceful and honourable evacuation of the PLO fighting forces from Beirut and their being stationed in half a dozen Arab countries (Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia and Sudan) there will be an end to fighting and restoration of peace in Lebanon. Israel has already demanded the total withdrawal of Syrian forces from the Bekaa Valley as well as from the North. The advance Israeli tank forces proceeding towards the Bekaa Valley not only confront the Syrian forces there who too are reported to have built up a considerable tank force, but Sharon is also boasting that Damascus itself is now within shelling range of his artillery. In the North near the city of Tripoli too there are both PLO fighters and Syrian forces. With the arrival of French, US and other so-called mediatory forces, will Israel be persuaded to withdraw from Lebanon or will its forces first occupy the whole country? All previous experience about Israel rules out any easy optimism.

Time and again during this latest crisis caused by the Israeli aggression both the media and individual observers have remarked that the Soviet Union did not act in any effective way to deter the aggression. Some even went so far as to suggest that just as the Arab states have been exposed over these critical weeks, the Soviet Union too has been found undependable and unable to stand by the liberation movements it purports to support. Without repeating what the PLO leadership says to refute this charge, let us remind ourselves of the existing realities. Not long after Carter became President and there was a Carter-Brezhnev joint statement envisaging a Geneva-type international conference to solve the Middle East problem, it was the Arab rulers beginning with Sadat who opposed that statement, and led by other forces operating in US high circles, American policy later hardened to make the exclusion of the Soviet Union from the region its first-priority objective. But this was an objective which was held in common by a large number of Arab states. This is the result of the present equation of forces in the region where the USA has succeeded in involving a large number of Arab

(*Continued on page 28*)

EYEWITNESS IN BOMBAY

The Days of Agony

G.N. ACHARYA

The author, a veteran journalist who knows his Bombay like the palm of his hand, gives here a graphic account of the unprecedented agony India's premier city went through following the police revolt on August 18, 1982, exposes the official lies, and warns the Centre against allowing the perpetrators of folly to continue to hold office in Maharashtra.

FROM Wednesday August 18, more lives were lost, more havoc wrought, more lies uttered over Bombay in a short period of two days, than I have known in a comparable period during the last half a century. The liars are betraying one another.

According to Home Secretary T.N. Chaturvedi (who must be speaking the Vedic truth, as his name implies he is master of all the four Vedas), what happened in the teeming city of seven million people could not be described as a "mutiny" by the police. "At best it can be described as a rampage or the police going 'berserk'," he told reporters at Delhi (PTI, New Delhi, August 19). It is tragic and ridiculous for an official of his standing and responsibility to indulge in such verbal hair-splitting in the face of a colossal tragedy, the extent of which is yet to be ascertained. Perhaps it will never be established; and whatever is established will not be made public, because we have a government that has no scruples in lying.

Take a single instance. According to Chief Minister Bhosale who was enjoying the comforts of a five-star hotel in New Delhi, awaiting the grace of his Deity while Bombay burned, only five people have been killed. I happen to be living now in a colony where there are a number of doctors from a number of Municipal hospitals. In one of these alone, in two days 49 people were admitted — 32 with bullet wounds. Four of them died. There are dozens of hospitals in Bombay. Even the figure I have given does not include the tragic death of Burzes Khurshedji — an expert medical technologist — in front of the colony. The family had no news of the children who went to school in the morning. The Khurshedji couple started out in their car to look for them. An acid bulb was flung at the car. It hit him squarely in the face. He lost control, rammed into a wall, the steering wheel hit him in the chest. That was the end. His wife was pulled out, alive but badly burned.

There must have been other tragedies. *Mid-ddy* (August 19) told the story of Gerald D'Mello, a 55-year-old man who had walked from Churchgate, reached M.A. Podar Hospital, collapsed and died. There was no alternative to walking.

One lady doctor told me she had walked from the Lokamanya Tilak hospital at Sion, to her residence at Worli — about five miles. A professor of medicine walked from Parel to Currow Bang in Colaba — about seven miles. *The Times of India* (August 20; it could not be published on August 19) reported that the Century Bazaar, a well-known Department Store at Worli, and a cooperative store at Adarsh Nagar were ransacked. "Not a pin was left," said one report. One of my friends phoned me to say he had seen a row of jewellery shops looted at Parel.

Mid-Day (August 19) reported that Aradhana Emporium near Plaza Cinema, Dadar, was looted and goods worth Rs 20 lakhs were taken away. The same paper said: "Dadar station which bore the brunt of yesterday's violence, seemed completely destroyed." The Central Railway appeared to be comparatively honest on the first day. It announced that no train would arrive at or depart from Victoria Terminus, till the situation returned to normal. But by Friday it had been caught by the general infection of lying. Its estimate of damages was only Rs 16 lakhs. The BEST announced that 25 buses had been burnt and 450 damaged. Losses may exceed Rs one crore.

The first day, AIR announced that traffic had been brought to a halt by stoning. It is amazing that buses can be burnt by stoning! Traffic was halted by a well-planned strategy which could have been thought of only by the police. The drivers were directed to park their buses one beside another across the roads; the passengers and crew were driven out, and then the tyres were cut. A convoy of hospital staff sent in two ambulances escorted by a Reserve Police van had to take devious routes to reach some people home. Others could not be reached at all.

How much of all this did Chaturvedi see? And how? He must have got whatever information he had from the Mantralaya. If he ventured out at all, it must have been by helicopter. Our officers are used to sitting in their carpeted and air-conditioned rooms and dealing with files. They don't deal with human beings. That Wednesday five million people were separated from their families and both from their children at school. What it meant in terms of anxiety — as Khurshedji's tragic death shows — is not written in Government files.

Bombay is not new to troubles and disturbances. Nor am I. As an active reporter I have seen the outbreak of August 9, 1942, and the following days. British troops occupied the city and humiliated its citizens. They would get hold of anyone passing by and ask him to sweep up the debris of whatever was destroyed by the rioters. I reported this to S.A. Brelvi, then editor of *The Bombay Chronicle.* Despite war-time restrictions, he had the courage to write and publish a protest. The sweeping punishment stopped.

Next in ferocity were the riots after the Naval Mutiny of 1946. Public barricades included a continuous bonfire stretched across the Lady Jamshedji Road in front of Kohinoor Mills. Troops came marching in everywhere.

Then were there the linguistic riots in which Morarji Desai ordered reckless firing and more than a hundred people were killed around Flora Fountain. There were the Shiv Sena riots of 1969 connived at and encouraged by the Congress Government under Vasantrao Naik. But when they went out of control the Government suppressed them with quick ferocity.

The point of recalling all this is not to brag about my ancient memories, but to point out the differences between all those tragic events and the present episode. In almost every one of those instances the reaction was spontaneous and unplanned. The present riots were thoroughly organised. For instance, every telephone line in the K.E.M. Hospital, the biggest in the heart of the trouble-affected area, was cut. The hospital could not be reached from outside, nor could it reach anyone.

The second difference was that at no time were the authorities found so thoroughly unprepared. The crackdown on the leaders of the Police Karmachari Sangh was planned for and carried out in the early hours of Wednesday morning. Any village idiot would have known there would be reaction. Except in physics reaction is never equal, although always opposite, but wayward. The Government was not ready with a contingency plan. The extent of unpreparedness is clear from the fact that both the Chief Minister and the Governor were away at Delhi. There is no certainty about who ordered the arrests and when.

It is obvious that the Government did not take into account the too numerous anti-social and criminal population of Bombay. Several hours elapsed after the police went on strike, before the Government could organise any kind of counter-action. That was a Heaven-sent opportunity for the criminals. Bhosale, and following him some obedient newspapers have tried to involve the textile workers on strike. This is a calumny. Bombay's workers are not criminals. In a fit of rage they may smash up a thing or two. I have known them for 40 years. They won't steal or loot.

The Leftist unions indulged in a customary and foolish reaction when they called for a protest "Bandh" next day. There was a "Bandh" anyhow caused by other reasons. Datta Samant has also been guilty of seeking the release of "legitimate" trade union workers, meaning the arrested policemen. This can be attributed to the error of saying "nay" to anything the Government does built into opposition politics. But give the devil his due. Datta Samant has performed the extraordinary feat of keeping 250,000 people on strike for seven months without once letting them lapse into violence. I have watched strikes also from 1940, but the present strike has established an enviable record of workers' discipline under stress.

Bhosale has also tried to shift the blame on to others. Antulay had encouraged the union. He had given them two gifts of Rs 50,000 and Rs 16,000. The Police Karmachari Sangh had been collecting Rs 39,000 every month and had not accounted for the amounts. He has given a long list of acts of indiscipline, including one in which a constable came to duty not in his uniform, but in clothes worn by the followers of Rajneesh. What was done with him? Was he sacked, and sent to the Rajneesh Ashram? When so many acts of indiscipline for so long are recounted, the question naturally arises: what was the Government doing? Sucking its dirty and collective thumb?

Julius Ribeiro, the Police Commissioner, has been more honest than Chaturvedi. In an interview he has used the word "revolted" to describe the action of the police. A rumour widely current in Bombay is that because of some recent raids carried out on illicit liquor and "matka" dens under his direction the affected parties have helped to organise and finance the revolt. It does not matter whether it was a "revolt" or a "mutiny". What is important is what Chaturvedi has reported confidentially to Government. His unnecessary public performance is part of the long chain of fooling the public with lies.

What has Indira Gandhi been told? Did the informants know the truth, and did they dare to speak the truth? In her case:

Unnumbered supplicants crowd
preferment's door,
Athirst for wealth and burning
to be great.

She does not even deign to meet many of them. I can understand her. It must be no pleasure for an intelligent person to meet these grovelling favour-seekers. I earnestly suggest the name of one person whom she need not see any more: Bhosale. He is the most incompetent, the most worthless Chief Minister ever wished on this benighted State of Maharashtra. He is expendable. His Government is expendable. The entire Congress-I legislature party is expendable, but for one fear.

If this had been a non-Congress-I Government, it would have been on the streets long ago. But the haunting fear is: if this legislature is dissolved, will the party win a majority at the next election? I suggest that if the Centre dares to act with fearless justice now, and puts things in order in about a year under President's rule, its chances may improve.

On the other hand, if it wobbles now, influenced by fearful, favour-seeking liars, it stands to lose. What has happened now is not a blunder, but a folly. What is the guarantee that if the same blunderers are allowed to continue, there may not be more acts of folly? In that event the election prospects of the Congress-I in Maharashtra, one of its long-standing bastions, will surely be lost. ☐

(August 21)

Demystifying 'Growth'

KAMAL NAYAN KABRA

AMONG many attacks mounted on the long and short-run socio-economic interests of the ordinary citizens of India, an important place is occupied by the false consciousness propagated about the "virtues" of growth. Here growth means increased production. According to this view, it does not matter what are the items produced, who controls production, who and how many are employed, and who obtains the surplus generated in the process of producing increased output. This is because in capitalist production 'growth' is, for the masses, anti-development. The 'trickle-down' effect is a mirage, and the extent to which a nation approaches it is only to the extent that even capitalist production cannot be totally separated from its social base. For the marginal, small and distorted growth of social productive forces, a huge cost is paid in terms of worsened social relations. The fact that these capitalist social relations replace pre-capitalist relations is no guarantee of the progressive nature of capitalist relations. This is because capitalism, particularly under-developed, monopolistic capitalism, forming an integral part of imperialism (at least in the economic sphere) is not an inevitable step or stage for every society.

A huge social cost is paid by the masses for making the end-20th Century capitalism do for the ex-colonies what was done to the leaders of capitalist development in the preceding two centuries. This amounts to treating history as a mechanical process of selectively forcing some 'positive' results and discarding some other 'negative' results! Owing to the unworkability of such wishful processes, even those who are never tired of singing the praise of the undisclosed 'virtues' of the growth of GNP as the panacea are often rudely shocked. They are rudely shocked because their make-believe theories predicting growth of production, short-named GNP, are falsified by real life experience. Not only that. Many contradictions and distortions carefully papered over by the mystique of growth are also pierced through by the facts as they come out in practice.

Thus, despite tall claims made by a short-sighted

their past is going to be or is sought to be made our future.

As against this, countries like Burma and Ethiopia have set out on a different path. The progress along that path cannot be measured by the World Bank figures of per capita growth. They are reshaping their socio-economic relations. In that scheme, the needs and aspirations of the man in the street hold the centre of the stage. There, production is not divorced from the needs of the masses, except for the expenditure on armament forced by a hostile international environment. More important, growth is not only for the masses, but they are the *agents, means* and *harbingers* of growth. In one word, in these countries which have given up the imitative capitalist path and are having *nationalistic, people-centred, people-oriented, people-powered growth*, per capita incomes measured in terms of the categories of market economies only signify this fact that market-based, imitative 'growth', with all its adevelopmental and anti-development effects, is not doing too well. Even economists like Dudley Seers have admitted the irrelevance and even misdirection represented by per capita income growth. As Mahbub-ul-Haq said, "We were taught to take care of our GNP as this will take care of poverty. Let us reverse this and take care of poverty, as this will take care of GNP".

In such societies, there is progressive reduction in the dichotomy between 'growth' and 'development'. When agencies like the World Bank use the market categories and theories in order to compute the per capita income of such non-capitalist path countries, a doubly wrong and misleading yardstick is applied. When such a per capita income yardstick is applied to Burma and Ethiopia, all it means is that these countries are not 'growing' as the World Bank and world capitalism would like them to grow. These countries are growing, nay developing, according to their own national aspirations. They are not facing such contradictions as, for instance, massive growth of food production being accompanied by a widening and deepening of the arena of hunger. They are not setting up in the research laboratories of the multinational corporations' Foundations. Not that they would not be better off if they could combine their socio-political, economic, cultural and ecological perspectives and their basic commitment to assign the central place to the man in the street (as agents and as beneficiaries simultaneously in an organic manner) with these 'growth' inducing processes. But if such higher, speedier growth necessitates throwing the interests of the masses to the winds, they would have nothing to do with them. To them development would result in higher output (not necessarily proportionally) and not the other way round.

They do not want to seek the trade-offs between 'growth' and 'equity'. One means not only Burma and Ethiopia (in all their socio-economic and geo-political complexities with a liberal dose of the imprints of their past), but the reference is to all the attempts at endogenous, nationally-rooted, non-imitative, people-centred, people-powered, people-directed processes of, integrated socio-economic change, which break away from such glorification of 'exchange ratios' between inseparable elements of social pursuits. When the World Bank paints all the countries following different paths of development, adopting different meaning, content and mechanism of development, with the same brush, the attempt signifies some basic issues and designs.

In these exercises, the World Bank, as the central organ not only of that misnomer 'development finance', but the ideological high priest of that 'development' which ties the newly-liberated countries to the coat-tails of the developed market economies, is indulging in that much-mocked exercise of Eurocentrism. It is attempting to project a universal, global path and model of 'development' and wants to show that those who do not stand up on the crutches of its lending, do not heed its advice and attempt so-far untried, 'nationalistic' models of development, have so little per capita income. Hence they belong to the category of least developed nations. Thus Burma, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Cuba, Vietnam, etc., are sought to be presented in an unfavourable light based on some ethnocentric theories and perceptions. These attempts indicate that the perpetuation of under-development of the ex-colonies is not only their economic and social ruin, their political and intellectual subjugation, but it is virtual ethnocide.

The fact that India was, and continues to be (at least for some time more, until China overtakes her) the most important and largest recipient of World Bank funds, and has eagerly sought and applied the policy perspectives emanating from it, but is the most depressed nation in terms of per capita income (according to the Bank's Atlas), excluding the two cases where the Bank's figures are an imposition, shows that the Bank's resources and prescriptions are a dangerous trap. Not only that the Bank's financial and intellectual resources have not improved our standing in terms of the criterion of per capita income which is so widely accepted in India. Things appear to have worsened. A recent report in the London *Economist* showed that despite the drying up of IDA funds, India continued to draw about two billion dollars from the World Bank. These funds carried stiffer conditions in matters of interest payment. As a result, additional interest payment liabilities of the order of two billion dollars up to 1999 were imposed on India. Since we intend to continue with this trend, on present reckoning, the total scenario in the coming decades appears to be quite dismal.

The staple food which sustains the pursuit of such a dangerous course is the fetishism of aggregate figures of production and their comparison with either what happened during the colonial era, or the one-point-of-time performance level to which the socially and culturally much more backward-looking Janata regime led the country during, fortunately for the nation, their short stint at the helm of affairs. Thus accolades are showered on the performance in terms of food output, jolt to pre-capitalist agrarian relations through the abolition of intermediaries and the flash-in-the-pan in many other isolated fields which have always alternated in a cyclical pattern. What really shows the accountant type, isolated, balance-sheet type of approach — a kind of ledger-book economic analysis — is the listing of what new goods and services are now being produced in the country. Surely, an objective application of the same criteria to the first half of the present century would show only quantitatively a somewhat poorer picture, except for the great blessing of political independence and parliamentary democracy.

If the case was that political independence and parliamentary democracy mean so much to us, to our socio-economic advancement, for all our efforts at social transformation, the point would have been well taken. One may even suggest that even without these growth indices or with a little less impressive performance in these respects, the gains of wresting our sovereignty from the imperialists and establishing our republican parliamentary democracy could not be over-emphasised. They remain our precious treasures.

However, the question of the path, strategy and direction of development cannot be settled with reference to what the colonial era achieved or the comparative situation which obtained at the end of the Janata fiasco. The question is one of the potential which is partly lost, partly misdirected and partly misappropriated through the acceptance of the cultural, economic and financial leadership of those very forces which 'cause' and continue to strengthen our underdevelopment.

True, we showed the sagacity of the 'clever calf' who sucks two 'cows', but the 'cow' which produced the undernourished and famished 'calf' is no less clever. For example, through the debt-trap, partial import-substitution, technological dependence and inexorable necessity of pushing up exports, the imperialist powers have ensured that for quite some time we cannot break away from their iniquitous ties. If economic independence is made a function of the number of commodities in which we have replaced imports by home production, the process pre-dates 1947. But as the economic, particularly industrial, structure becomes more complicated, the total number of manufactured products enlarges and the number of externally procurable products, their value, number, as well as criticality, increases, particularly in view of the rapid scientific and technological revolution (STR) and continued relative hegemony of STR by the ex-colonial powers. As for technical manpower, it is far too easy to confuse numbers and the potential they represent with the *actual* results achieved. In any case, these figures argue no more than this, that our self-rule and internal locus of political sovereignty did mean some positive achievements. Only the blind would deny that. The question again is one of true consciousness regarding the path and forces of progress and the great opportunity cost we have incurred. This cost is reflected not only in the distance which separates us from the cherished path of social transformation[6] through and in the form of self-reliant development; it also concerns the deflection from the perspective and path in which we would not ask non-questions but pose the real issues and mobilise the masses for those processes and goals. It is a question of the internalisation of the forces and factors of development.

The World Bank Report on World Development is not a report on 'development'. It is a document which, in various sophisticated and dubious ways, defines dependence.[7] In some material senses, one can treat dependence as synonymous with underdevelopment. The World Bank is an institution fostering dependence; hence, it is a vehicle of underdevelopment. Its mystique of GNP growth is an instrument of false consciousness, which is full of internal contradictions as well. At least our well-meaning, committed friends should see through this game. They must view the increasing reliance on the World Bank, IMF and similar forces as a turning away from the path of development which can inspire the masses. Stage-managed and black-money financed charisma and clever foreign policy stances must not divert us from the primacy of the mass movements, mass mobilisation and people-centred development.

The politics of keeping masses out of the political processes, centring political processes on a sub-stratum of political entrepreneurs, professionals and hirelings, is the polar opposite of the politics of mass mobilisation which made good headway during the freedom movement in most of its streams. The paths which are arduous and slow, which are not based on short-cuts and may show temporary, slow, halting and even backward-sliding results, which may be inadequately understood even in progressive circles and consequently may be inadequately backed up with patient, sincere and confident efforts, do not, on these counts, become any the less worthwhile. The struggle must continue, the sights must be set on the basis of our own critical assessment in integrated social science terms, and the search for short-cuts must be abandoned. Just as attempting things for which objective conditions do not exist is self-defeating adventurism, the haste to come to terms with the undoubtedly knotty and sticky prevailing power balance is a blow in the direction of strengthening the status quo. □

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WOMEN'S WORLD

One More Step Ahead

GATI

A bride in Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi's family, Vandana, was shot dead in Kanpur. The family has close ties with the ruling party. No action was initiated against her husband.

Responding to the situation, the Mahila Manch (UP) organised a token hunger-strike at the Kachhari (Court) gate on August 2, 1982. All political parties excepting the Congress (I) joined the protest. Neelam Chaturvedi (Convener, Mahila Manch), Sheela Dron (President, Sakhi Kendra), Vinay Bhai, a Sarvodaya worker held in high esteem in the city, Shiv Kumar Beria, and other eminent citizens of Kanpur addressed the gathering, condemning police inaction and the dowry system. On the same day a CID investigation was ordered into the case.

That a thirtyfive-year-old democracy stands by while innocent women are done to death every day is in itself a telling comment on civilisation, if we can at all lay claim to that word. That it takes condemnation by a hundred and ten speakers, literally, to stir the administration, is not just a sad story, it is despicable, it is symptomatic of a malady eating at the roots of our values. If the Congress-I President Indira Gandhi herself admits and condemns atrocities on women in Delhi, and the Congress (I), far from taking any positive action, does not even pay lip-service to a crusade organised by others against the same evil in Kanpur, what credibility is left in the declaration of even the Prime Minister? Is a party with such double standards worth a grain of belief and trust?

The Vidyarthi family is very close to the ruling party, and this is no secret in Kanpur. Do we then seal our tongues because the culprit is one of the family? Hollering about people's drawbacks and capitalising on their mistakes, wearing the mantle of reformer while dipping hands in other people's blood — is there no limit to hypocrisy? What was done to Babasaheb Bhosale's daughter-in-law Savita is too well known to need repetition here.

The situation in the country is progressively moving from bad to worse. The Delhi Administration reports that 65 per cent of the total number of deaths of women in 1980 were due to burns. In the whole of India the figures of bride-burning are indeed staggering. In 1977, 857, in 1978, 2,917 and in 1979, 1,064 brides died of burns. But the prosecution of culprits is dishearteningly low. *Patriot* reported two years back that replies from ten States in this regard showed only one case of prosecution. In Delhi in 1979, out of 209 cases registered, only one was prosecuted. The Union Minister of Home Affairs told Parliament that in 1980, out of 394 registered cases in Delhi 77 were being investigated. Eighty per cent of the registered cases have not been filed in courts. Usually lack of evidence prevents a case from being investigated. The picture is dismal.

Be it due to callousness, inbuilt prejudices, monetary considerations, or political strings, when the custodians of law refuse to implement it and bring culprits to book, the state of affairs in the land is bound to deteriorate. Driven to the brink of despair, people are bound to challenge inaction and ultimately take matters into their own hands. Stray cases of social boycott and other action are occasionally reported, although this has not yet taken the shape of a trend.

In Delhi itself 28-year-old Geeta Malik, a teacher in Bal Bharti School, died of burns on June 7. On June 8 her husband was arrested and he was released on June 9. In her dying declaration she had stated that due to harassment by her in-laws she had committed suicide. The police relaxed. The case was brought to the notice of Jan Sanskriti (JS), a cultural group. With the help of the Revolutionary Students' Organisation (RSO) they paid a number of visits to Mayur Vihar, the locality where the Maliks reside. Sensing the fury raging in the neighbourhood against those who had made her commit suicide, JS and RSO decided to hold a demonstration in front of the Maliks' residence and try to hold a sort of people's court so that they could have the culprits indicted socially and effect a social boycott.

On reaching the area the small number of demonstrators were joined by local residents. Soon 300 people were shouting slogans outside the house. Before the assembly could quieten down and send representatives into the house to ask the husband and in-laws to come out, they rushed out with lathis to face the assembled 300 demonstrators! A scuffle ensued, and the lathis were taken away from them. Geeta Malik's husband sustained superficial injuries. One of the family phoned the police who arrived promptly to take them into protective custody. The demonstrators returned. This was one more step ahead in the anti-dowry movement. (*August 23*)

REPORTAGE

Among the Warlis

ANJALI DESHPANDE

WHEN I alighted from the Saurashtra Express at the rather musty setting at Dahanu Road and caught a private bus to Choti Amboli, I was in a state of sweet exhiliration anticipating a few days away from the hubbub of a cosmopolitan city, in the dense forest country. I knew there would be insects and snakes. I was not afraid of them. As the bus sped in a road wending through a sparsely populated and equally sparsely planted forest, I did not allow myself to be disappointed. Having just left the concrete jungle called Bombay, I consoled myself with the thought that the forest would gradually get deeper. On the contrary it grew thinner. At Choti Amboli, all my hopes of a seclusion in a dense forest dashed to splinters. Not a shrub was to be seen near the rut track, pointed out to me as the road to Shisne, the headquarters of Kashtakari Sanghatana, the group I was going to meet. The sun was being too liberal in blazing down and it was a tiring walk to the village.

Yet the Warlis, the inhabitants of the area, gave me such a genuinely warm welcome that soon the dismay was forgotten. Their green 'gauti chayah' (grass tea) I found very refreshing, and the simple meal of boiled rice, boiled dal with drumsticks in it and sliced kairies (unripe mango) to accompany was a treat, the flavour of which I shall long remember, though this is what I ate day in and day out all the four days.

The leaf plates of the Warlis have been replaced by brass utensils. Men wear trousers instead of *langotis*. In some villages, as I learnt later, there is electricity and some families have transistor radios. But the life of Warlis remains essentially the same. The same mud huts with women sitting under the shade of a tree outside them, making bundles of leaves collected the day before and dried in the sun even as children put out leaves collected that morning to dry them with sticks placed upon them to prevent their flying away. Two days labour will bring in Rs 5 to keep them living at semi starvation level in times when the harvest is far away and grass cutting has not begun. That is why they need the forest so that 'karukand' (bitter onion) is available to keep them alive, leaves are available to sell and wild fruits and berries can sustain them for a while.

The growth of Kashtakari Sanghatana has to be viewed in the context of the complexities prevailing in Thane district today. It is no longer the conflict between the landlords and the Warlis reduced to serfdom, as the legendary Godavari Parulekar found it in the early forties. The CPI-M has had its period of influence and struggle, and is locked in a battle with the Congress-I to wrest the seats in Lok Sabha and the State Assembly of that area.

The missionaries form another influential group although recently the conversions have gone down substantially. The Forest Department and the police are forces to reckon with. And they all collude indirectly to stall the advancement of the Kashtakari Sanghatana (KS). The missionaries are incensed to hear about KS popularity. The police, shopkeepers, landlords all of them hate the guts of KS. The CPM's attitude has caused anguish to the Warlis in general and KS members in particular. KS leader, Peter Prabhu repeatedly said that he had not expected CPM to turn hostile to it.

The CPM, MLA Kom told me he thought Peter Prabhu was an agent of the missionaries, a part of their well-planned strategy to boost conversions. With this kind of propaganda doing the rounds of the Warli villages and the numerous police cases lodged against KS members, with the knowledge that KS is still too small a power in terms of contacts with influential people, the Warlis deliberate a long while before they join it. When they join KS, they have to face threats, beatings, loot, insults at the hands of local thugs; so the decision is all the more difficult to make. But once it is made it is equally difficult to reverse. Anyone can see that in the fire that gleams in the dark eyes of KS members.

Experience has taught some of the more independent Warlis that city folks only work with them till they either get frustrated or take some job in the city. As soon as this happens they leave the tough life to live in the city. Many a Warli told me with cold contempt that such and such city girl or boy had come, stayed and gone, adding, we have to fight for ourselves, we will do so. And yet the realisation is part of *Janashikshana* (people's education) of KS; for before KS they did not organise themselves however much they knew they should do so. During my visit I had the opportunity to go around a number of villages and see for myself how deeply the Kashtakari Sanghatana has changed the social outlook of people. I met the largest number of people in Jamshet village.

The men and women from Jamshet leave their *padas* early in the morning to work in the orchards of mangoes, pears and jackfruits. From seven in the morning to dusk at around seven in the evening, they are virtual prisoners inside the fenced in orchard, watering plants plucking fruits. A day's wage come to Rs. 4.50. Men are paid 50 paisa more for the same work. The forming of the Kashtakari Sanghatana seems to have been a great confidence booster for them. As soon as news spread that a member of KS from another village was on a visit, within minutes men and women came pouring into Baburam Ghatal's house. A fire was got going and rice and dal were set to cook as old men and women told their tales of woe.

Goswala was cheated out of his six acres of land, his only source of livelihood when his illiterate sister renounced it to the landlord. He was then living with his in-laws, leaving her behind as caretaker. The landlord asked her to sign some papers regarding her land. In fact, the papers said that since she was too old to till she was giving over the land. His five landless sons were so angry that they forcibly occupied the land.

Rama Vajaya Khinvra had no different tale to tell. His nephew Lakhya Khinvra had six acres of land. When the new tenancy act came into force in 1957, the local landlord gave him some papers to sign, telling him they were papers required under law. So the guileless unlettered old man put his thumb impression on papers, which said that since he was too old to till his land any more he was renouncing his tenancy in favour of Jamal Chand, the landlord. He discovered his error only when he was expelled from the land by force. After his death his uncle, who is younger than him forcibly took hold of the land in 1978 sending Jamal Chand scurrying to court. The case is on, while cultivation under force continues.

Radhi Pangal Khinvra, a widow with two sons and two daughters, is a very independent woman who told me in rapid Warli that a 16-acre plot that had belonged to her family for three generations was now in her name. She was obviously proud of the fact that she owned the land. This year when she went to fill in her tenancy the *talhati* told her it had already been filled in by the sahukar. "I know all their tactics. Sahukar fills my dues. Then he says that I do not need my land that is why I did not pay. And he takes the land. In fact, the sahukar does not even pay. He just bribes the talhati to say so and to prevent me from paying taxes." She went to John a member of KS who told her that the land was as much hers as her stomach. She must fight for it. KS could only support her fight and advise her on ways and means. That was a week before. She said she was going to fight. Women are a great force in KS and everywhere they can be seen in the forefront.

Kashtakari Sanghatana gaining in popularity, is yet to become a power to be dreaded. But the united initiative of the people under its influence has to be seen to be believed. At Baburam Ghatal's house the gathering told me with pride and joy that a threat of strike alone had hiked their wages in the orchard by one rupee. Encouraged, they plan to launch a struggle to make it Rs 12.

A canal was being built in this area. When the officials came to measure the land, women gheraoed them. Next day a senior official came down. More women gheraoed him and told him they would not let him go until he had given written assurance that the canal was not to built. He pleaded that he did not have paper nor did any of the villagers have it. But the women struck on a brilliant idea. "We asked him why are you an officer if you do not have paper? Then he was ashamed. He produced paper from his pocket. Wrote something on it and gave it to us". The officers vanished never to appear again.

The Forest Department and the talhati seem to be the only authorities the forest dwellers come into contact with. Even the fruits and twigs the bountiful nature bestowed upon them are gradually slipping away from them as the forest shrinks under commercial influence and the Forest Department grows more and more possessive in the name of environmental preservation. Fruit trees are being replaced by teak and the rights of forest dwellers on the forest is being taken away.

Women had to apply for permission to the District Forest Officer, to collect and sell twigs for their livelihood. He refused, saying they would destroy the forest. The women from Jamshet insisted that they would otherwise starve but he would not budge. Then they threatened a dharna in front of his office. He relented, permitting them to collect and sell twigs not longer than six inches! It takes one day for an average family of five to collect a moli (roughly 25 kg) of twigs, another day to trudge to the market where it sells for Rs 5.

There have been collective struggles for collective gains also. At Karanjvira the entire village refused to work for the landlord who had taken away their land using a number of tricks to do so. Poeple resisted the cajoling by village elders, local political leaders, and also efforts to bring labour from other villages (by convincing the outsiders to withdraw), threats and intimidation, and finally arrests under false cases. The landlord suffered huge losses. Consequently the next year he let the villagers occupy the disputed land.

Spontaneous actions like this are innumerable considering the short period of KS's existence. It was formed in 1978 when Peter Prabhu, Jairam Bhonar, Carlos and others got so involved with the problems that beset the area that they could do nothing else but concentrate on organising a people's force. Food in this area is no problem for the activists. Transport is managed by walking most of the times. Long distances are covered by hiking on trucks at fares lower than in state Transport buses, which are terribly expensive in Maharashtra, almost double the rail fare.

The initiative shown by people in such spontaneous action accounts for the programme of KS. Instead of building up a formal organisational structure it lays stress on five concepts that it considers basic. These are Janashikshan, (People's Education) Janajagruti (People's awakening) Janakarya (People's action) Janasanghatana (People's organisation) Janashakti (People's power).

Janashikshana is carried out in weekly meetings of men and women. Questions like why we are poor are discussed in the meeting. Superstitions, resignation to faith, the myth of an indestructible power over them are sought to be weeded out. In Shisne people are proud of the hut they have built as the Sanghatana's office. They are also thrilled that they have done away with the Brahmin priest and his *dakshina* in marriage. One of the villagers has learnt the mantras and weddings have been simplified so as to reduce expenses in the week long festivities. Now a wedding takes only one day, at most two. Janashikshana is yet to take the form of adult literacy. When women or youth or any such group asks for some educational camp and takes upon it the responsibility to organise it, camps are conducted.

The awakening is slowly creeping upon this innocent tribe. This is a stage of emotional outbursts against people who have deprived them of their dignity. The anger is not suppressed or bound down with whalebone girdles of organisational hierarchies. The real purpose of a group without a formal head is in fact most clearly reflected in the actions people themselves take to without waiting for the city folks to come and guide them about it.

It is not only a few more economic benefits that form the immediate concern of KS, but the right of the oppressed to dignity as human beings. Indignity in the lives of oppressed is a daily occurance. The very names they have been made to acquire, Jeevya, Miskatya, Radkya, normally do not arouse respect in polite society. They are deemed fit to receive insults only and shouting is the only tone adopted to address them. It is only when the human being is lifted out of this crushed heap of mutilated humanity that the realisation of the self comes to them and gives them the urge to fight for their freedom from other people's power over them — and to end once and for all, the life of indignities forced upon them. It is very difficult indeed to treat a fellow human being as one, when he is used to being treated as a beast of burden, and yet arouse in him not the feeling of gratitude but the sense of being equal to you. It needs careful and sensitive handling that does not come easy to anyone. The Warlis that join KS know very well that city folks know much more about certain matters but do not feel overawed by or any sense of abject dependence on, them. This is a distinct achievement of the Janashikshana of KS.

One of their very first battles for dignity is so fresh in the memory of Shisne villagers and has affected them so deeply that they related it to me several times. It occurred early in 1979. A women had sent her son-in-law to get something from the shop at Amboli. When he did not return long after the required time taken to make the journey to the shop and back, the mother-in-law set forth to the shop. There she found the shopkeeper abusing her son-in-law. It turned out that the man after making his purchase was waiting for the change. The shopekeeper annoyed by his persistent demands for his change accused him of being a thief. He pushed the woman about when she tried to intervene. Soon the news reached Shisne. Spontaneously people got together and forced the shopekeeper to apologise publicly and to return the change. They would end the recounting of this incident with "He apologised. How could he not?" and hold their heads high with a sense of new found confidence.

Radki Bai, a wiry woman with the strength to walk miles up and down the rough landscape without panting, has a passion for the rights of women. "Women are like trash for people with power." She understand why a Warli takes two wives to manage his home and supplement his income but fails to understand why the shopkeepers have to touch women while returning change or the Foresters have to misbehave with them.

On May 9, when we set out to village Savroli, (the previous day news had reached us of an attack there by a mob) Radki Bai was so immersed in these thoughts that the truck we were hiking in drove beyond the spot on the road where we had to get down. Alighting at another point we had to walk over three miles back to Savroli and half a mile to the Patilpada. The landscape was rough with scarcely any trees to provide any shade. With a stick in hand beating the thorny bushes out of the way, she began telling me another of her experiences with a Forest Officer as I trailed along. Though Warli is close to Marathi, I could not understand her rapid flow of words. Upon being told so she slowed down, simplifying her sentences, making me understand with the affection of an elder teaching a child.

In Ambessari village, a Forester went to a house and asked for a meal. After he had had it he said he was too tired to go away and went to sleep. The man of the house went to work in the fields. The Forester after his nap found the women alone, in the house. He tried to molest her. In the scuffle her saree was loosened. Hearing her cries for help women gathered overpowered the Forester, thrashed him, escorted him to the end of the village, made him pay Rs 50 as fine for having tried to dishonour a woman. This is no uncommon occurence in these villages. Women at bath at ponds or streams are not free of prying eyes; women in the fields are easy prey to Foresters. The only option left to them is to go about collectively and be prepared for sudden fights. Referring to the assault at Savroli she asked, 'how can you organise when such beatings continue?' She was in tears.

Past midnight of May 7-8 1982, village Savroli in Talasari taluka was attacked by a mob of 30. When I reached there next day, on May 9 at about 3 in the afternoon, the village wore a deserted look. The village is a known KS island in the Talasari taluka — the stronghold of CPM, the taluka that inspired Godavari Parulekar, the taluka where she first set her foot among the Warlis.

Four houses, that of Jeevya Bahanya, Nasaratna Olvi, Shirad Nathyasuwar and Vasant Khatale, in the Patilpada had been the target of the attack. In this 30-family village, 10 families are Christians. The roofs of the houses had been smashed up. People said the mob pelted stones for over ten minutes. Jeevya was dragged out and given a ferocious beating. With two stitches covered under a clean bandage bent with sorrow Jeevya said: 'The Lal Bauta (popular name of CPM) people attacked us. Our first reaction was to run away but they caught hold of me and beat me.' The back wall of his house showed a gaping hole. Not a cloth or utensil was to be seen in his house.

In Shirada's house a brand new Singer sewing machine had been wrenched off the table and flung on the floor. It was obvious the marauders' motive was not so much loot as harassment. Everybody testified that the mob, was shouting two slogans: *Kashtakari la nashta kara* (Destroy Kashtakari), *Lal bauti ki Jaya!* (Victory to the red flag.)

Despite such setbacks and terror activities, people have learnt to depend on themselves. Savroli is comparatively a prosperous village with several matriculate youths. The village is electrified. Some villagers have more than five acres of land. The villagers on their own, have decided to share their land with their proper brethrens so that nobody starved. It is important to note that this collectivism in land is an old tribal practice being revived by the Warlis.

These impoverished people have slowly started realising that those who vaunt about their power are not as strong, that if they can only stick together and carry on a sustained struggle. This is reflected in the numerous case of land reclamations that the villagers have effected. In Jamshet Aswa and other villages people have found courage to forcibly take back the land swindled out of their possession by the local landlords. Approximately 400 acres of land has been reclaimed in Ambessari, Karanjvira, Jamshet, Aswa and Kainar. Ambessari and Karanjvira account for the largest tracts of 150 acres each. Cases are filed in court. Meanwhile land is occupied by force. Police intervenes. Arrests are made. They are out on bail. Those not arrested and those out on bail go on forcibly cultivating and reaping harvests. Again arrests are made. Bails are granted. So the incessant struggle goes on.

Grass is an important commodity in the area. After the monsoon showers the land turns emerald with lush new grass swaying in the breeze, bringing a message of fruitful labour for the Warlis. Fifteen days of employment to cut and bale that grass. Five hundred bales of grass constitute a ganji which sells at Rs 30 to Rs 100 to the sahukar in season. The same ganji sells at thrice the price 60 kilometres away in Bombay. After the rains when the season is over, grass stored by them is bought off at Rs 10 a ganji, thus robbing them of their money, and then loaning them the same. The vicious circle goes on. The wage everywhere is Rs 7 per day for cutting grass, transplanting paddy, levelling land, harvesting paddy. Nothing comes their way without a little scuffle, insults and delay. Even then part of the money has to be paid off immediately to the sahukar as interest on the loan taken. People with land of their own take loans against the grass or paddy thus pledging the harvest to that particular sahukar-landlord and being forced to sell at minimal rates.

A new semi-bonded wage labour is emerging in the area. During rains loan is given to the needy family and after the grass has grown they are made to repay by working at minimal wages. If inspite of the loan, workers go out to work elsewhere for more wages, next season no loan is given. And for the starving Warlis the loan is as necessary as breath is for life.

At some places land is given for the duration of one year. The tenant shares fifty per cent of the produce. He has to use his own implements, fertilisers and seed. One acre of irrigated land yields 20 gunis (equivalent to 1300 kg) of paddy. Where there is no water the produce may be as less as 10 gunis only. Half of it goes to the landlord. Some portion is paid off to the money lender who may be the landlord himself or the shopekeeper.

Not to ensure that wages are at least given in time, that the yoke of loans is lifted off their shoulders and yet to deprive them of their wild fruits and vegetables is not what a just society should do its members.

The missionaries used to distribute medicines in the beginning but for the last ten years or so they have slowed down on this. Father Miranda from Ashagadh says it is so because the PHCs have come up and it is the Government's job to look after the health of the citizens. Kom the local MLA (CPM) says the missionaries are not distributing medicines because conversions have gone down. Whatever be the reason of the missionaries slowing down their activity in the region of social health the Government cannot forego its responsibility. It is not fair to destroy Hirda (a fruit used as cough linctus) and Ragatrohda (the bark of which is used as an ointment for cuts and scratches, to stop bleeding) and many once herbs and provide the forest-dwellers with a decrepit PHC that cannot even cater to small needs also. When cholera epidemic was spreading in and around Shisne, people demanded inoculation as a preventive measure. The PHC pleaded non-availability of vaccines. The people persisted until the village had been inoculated. The Tribal Development Corporation is supposed to provide 'consumption loans' in lean seasons. I could not meet a single person who had got such a loan. In 1978, the villagers from Shisne made as many as 14 trips to Mohamandal, but no loan came. In August 1979 a big morcha went, but nothing has been alone.

After years of loud claims of universal electrification the villagers from Shisne and other places had to make several trips to the board office at Talasari. Now Amboli has got electric connections and Halapada and Shisne have been promised electricity after the monsoons.

The Government officials, policemen, Foresters all take it for granted that the villagers will treat them to special meals of tender chicken any time any day. Chicken, traditionally are the streedhan (women's property) among the tribal people. Chicken means money and women save this money for emergencies like accident and illness. Now the awakened people have decided that even officials be provided the simple meals they themselves eat and never to kill a chicken for them.

The local CPM has not even heard of the Forest Bill. The present MLA, S. Kom looked genuinely surprised when I mentioned about the Bill. He volunteered the information that the CPM dominated the gram panchayats in Talasari and Dahanu Talukas. Previously the panchayats used to give a loan of Rs 2000 per year to every family to buy Kavle (roof tiles). But soon it was discovered that people would spend the lumpsum amount on festive occasions or gamble it away instead of buying kavles. Now the panchayats purchase and distribute kavles. Every family is given 850 kavles per year before the monsoons with 25 per cent subsidy and no interest on the rest. Loans for seeds and fertilizers with 50 per cent subsidies are also provided.

I asked him: This is what the panchayat does. I want to know about the activities of your party.

He replied: Our party is in the panchayat. We also give them loans for fertilisers and seeds.

I gave up. When I asked him about the alleged attack on Savroli by CPM activists, he denied knowledge of the attack. Would he enquire from the activists about this and try find out the truth? He said 'we'll see'.

Upon broaching the subject of the differences between the CPM and KS he gave a detailed reply. Any organisation according to Kom has an organisational structure, with a president, general secretaries, executive board. It should have conferences, have its aims and objectives written down. None of these essential requirements are fulfilled by KS. 'They do not speak about their views on USSR, USA, or Indira Gandhi either. They only say people have to fight against sahukar. Even the self-proclaimed Marxists, Lal Nishan (allegedly an ML group) have their Ohyeya Dhoran (aims and objectives). These people (KS) have none'.

He went on to say that KS was a part of the new strategy adopted by the missionaries. 'In the last ten years or so, Christian religion's growth has gone down. I think they have changed their tactics of religious propaganda. Like other organisations they planned to fight for wage raise'.

He told me that camps were held in Ashagadh Church where Carlos, Godhalya, Jairam Bhonar were trained in the new tactics. Now after the clash with authorities the Church has dissociated itself 'just to show that it is not with KS.'

Referring to the support KS lent him during Assembly Elections in 1980, he said, 'They supported out of fear of isolation, their votes total 2027 and it makes no difference'.

However in 1980 Lok Sabha elections when KS left the options open to people asking them only not to vote for Congress-I, CPM secured the third position with the newly formed Janata Party coming second to Congress-I.

As per Kom's objection to KS's lack of programme, Peter Prabhu clarified that they *were trying to* work in a different manner and the aims would evolve later.

At Ashagadh Father Miranda refused to talk to me: "The press people are very irresponsible. There was a fellow who came here the other day. He wrote things that I had not even said'. However he offered me a seat in the spick and span parlour of *Vishvodaya* the children's institute, handed me a cup of coffee and talked about the conditions of the Warlis. He admitted that the conversions now were not as numerous as they were before. At the mention of camps and "new tactics" of the church he said 'people may say what they want'. The CPM he said had become ineffective among the people.

Friends at Tata School of Social Work told me that it was true. Peter Prabhu was at first incharge of the Adult Education School of the missionaries but he got involved with the people, and was later expelled from church. Peter said he did not leave the missionaries on his own fearing that he might have been misunderstood, and waited for the missionaries to expel him.

The Warlis want their forests back they want the right to plant and rear forests and it has been proved in Himachal Pradesh and Garhwal that when forest-dwellers are accorded the responsibility of nursing the saplings, the success rate is 90 per cent whereas the Forest Department's is less than 50 per cent.

KS and other such groups have been criticised for looking backwards, giving expression to the vanavasis wish to remain what they are. But the very fact that they shun civil society is an eloquent comment on the state of our modern society, which for all its sophistry has shown only its evil aspects to them. That they should coexist with an advanced form of civilisation and yet look backwards is surely not a favourable comment on society. Such people may be dismissed as freaks but what civilisation is that which breeds freak communities? Those who are for the advancement of civilisation must answer.

However KS has asked for such basic amenities made possible by science like irrigation facilities and electricity and modern medicines. Until they are given an alternate mode of employment and living it will not do to take away from them what they once had in abundance.

Whatever the objections regarding the activities of KS, it is the hard truth that a new man is emerging gradually in those parts of Thane district where KS is working and there is no gainsaying the fact that its circle of influence is widening. The review of 22 months of KS says, 'The act of affirmation lies in action.' The Warlis are acting though right now it is more of an emotional outburst. Anger is a precious sentiment and it needs to be channelised. ☐

LOOKING AFTER THE AGED

About 70 per cent of employees in Czechoslovakia, where the aged form nearly 25 per cent of the population in some cities, stay on in their enterprises even after they have reached pensionable age. They draw no pension but when they decide to retire their pension is increased by 7 per cent of their average net earnings every year. Those drawing a pension can work 180 days a year while receiving the full pension. Pensioners receive free medical care. Those who are lonely and helpless receive special assistance from the home-nursing service manned by voluntary as well as professional nurses. There are over 700 pensioners' clubs where elderly people themselves prepare their programmes. The Czechoslovak Red Cross organisation has recently initiated a campaign with the slogan — "Respect for old age". Its programme includes the starting of new pensioners' clubs, winning over more voluntary nurses, help for lonely persons with their shopping and other forms of assistance.

— *From A Ditcher's Diary,* Capital, *August 16, 1982.*

Tribals and Social Forestry

SACHINDRA NARAYAN

THE Government, acting on the recommendation of the National Commission on Agriculture, has finalised a scheme to raise social forestry through mixed plantation on common lands. Accordingly, the scope of the social forestry programme was defined to include farm forestry, extension forestry, reforestation of degraded forests and recreation forestry. The State Governments are being encouraged to implement the special social forestry programme with foreign assistance also. During the Sixth Plan (1980-85), a sum of Rs. 100 crores has been earmarked for these schemes. Of this, Rs. 50 crores will be provided by the Union Government towards Centrally-sponsored schemes to be implemented by State Governments.

The projected demand of fuelwood in the country by 2000 AD is 225 million cu.m. according to the National Commission on Agriculture. By the end of the Fifth Plan, plantations under farm forestry/fuelwood/social forestry schemes had been raised on an area of 1.5 million hectares. From these plantations 15 million cu.m. of fuelwood will be available per year on a 10 to 15 year rotation at the rate of 10 cu.m. per hectare per annum. Total availability of fuelwood by 1979-80 was about 18.5 million cu.m. including firewood from natural forests. This would still leave a gap of over 192 million cu.m. by the end of 2000 AD.

Bihar has a total forest area of 29,232 sq. km., constituting 16.8 per cent of the State's land area against the all-India average of 23 per cent. The per capita forest area in Bihar is 0.05 hectare against the all-India average of 0.14 hectare. About 80 per cent of these forests are ex-zamindari forests constituted as protected forests with rights for the local people to take forest produce for their domestic use, and free grazing of their cattle. People living in the vicinity of these forests are poor, and a large number of them depend on pilfering wood from the forests for making a living by selling it in semi-urban centres. This has resulted in depletion of forests.

Bihar has also not been able to secure its due share of funds from institutional agencies. The increase in advances by commercial banks has not been commensurate with the increase in deposits. The incremental credit-deposit ratio during June 1969 to June 1976 worked out to only 47.5 per cent for Bihar as against the all-India figure of 76.5 per cent. The position of total credit-deposit ratio was more or less similar. The ratio in June 1976 was only 43 5 per cent for Bihar as against 76.5 per cent for the country.

Forest conservancy began in Chotanagpur in 1964 when an area of 461 sq. km. of forests was demarcated for the first time in the history of Bihar forestry. The Commissioner of Chotanagpur agreed to preserve the sal forest of Palamau and indicated the need for opening up new roads for the exploitation of Palamau forests.

Till 1955 the bulk of the forests in Bihar were under private ownership and were not under scientific management, except for a very small area. These forests were in the catchment areas of important rivers and they needed to be protected and conserved; therefore the State Government took over their management under Section 38 of the Indian Forest Act of 1927. This, however, did not meet with much success although vigorous attempts were made between 1931 and 1939, when the outbreak of the Second World War brought the work to a standstill. With great difficulty only 2170 sq. km. of private forests could be brought under the management of the Forest Department.

The Second World War and the need for large quantities of timber brought about large-scale exploitation of privately-owned forests in Bihar which, during the war years, was supplying on an average 50,000 tons for war requirements, of which only 10,000 tons came from Government-owned forests. This fact was noted by the Conservator of Forests, and the Bihar Private Forests Act 1946 was enacted, which empowered the Government to take over for management any private forest requiring proper management. The Act of 1946 was replaced by the Act of 1947, and as a result, all privately-owned forests started coming under Government control and management. About 25,600 sq. km. of forests under private ownership thus came under Government management. In 1955, when the zamindaris vested with Government as a result of the Land Reforms Act, the erstwhile private forests were converted into protected forests.

Thus about 80 per cent of the total forest area of the State is made up of ex-zamindari forests. Even when these forests vested in the Government, the rights and concessions were allowed to continue under forest settlement proceedings. The villagers take their requirement of small timber, poles, firewood, mahua flowers, etc., free of cost. They also graze their cattle free. The value of forest produce given free (including grazing) is estimated at Rs. 20 million. Subsequent to the takeover, concession to remove firewood in head-loads was granted to all by the State Government. But then, young coppice shoots from exploited sal forests are easy victims of pilferers, the bulk of whom are womenfolk. They cut saplings and carry them on their heads as dry and semi-dry fuelwood. This unregulated removal is the main cause of degradation of forests near villages. Young regeneration copses provide a good grazing ground for the large number of cattle that the villagers possess more for

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manuring their fields with cowdung than for milk supply. They also set fire to forests for easy collection of mahua flowers and for allowing grass to grow. Villagers also try to encroach on forests for extending cultivation; this results in a constant clamour for land for cultivation at the expense of the forests.

The tribes of Bihar mostly inhabit Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas. According to the 1971 census, there were about five million tribals. The tribals have not yet reached a level of economic and industrial development adequate to assure them even a minimum measure of freedom from want. They depend mainly on forest resources for their livelihood. From ancient times they have been collecting stems, leaves, herbs, flowers, fruits, gum, honey, fuelwood, etc., as also meat — all for mere survival. The forest provides their food, medicine, building material, weapons, utensils, decorative objects — in short, the forest is interwoven with their socio-religio-economic life. The nature of land, lack of irrigation and mode of cultivation hardly yield one square meal for three months in a year. During the lean period they have to live on roots and tubers, leaves and flowers, and other forest products. Herbs and roots are also used to cure diseases. During lean months mango, jamoon, kathal, mahua, sal seed, genthi, kauda, bamboo-shoots, mushroom, kheksa, baghnihi, kendu fruits, hara, bachera, amla, char and other fruits and herbs constitute their food. Sal seed boiled with mahua flowers is an example of tasty food. They dry leaves, flowers and fruits and store them for use as food when needed. *Jaributy* is prepared from herbs to make haria (rice beer), a popular liquor.

Forest products are also used for other purposes. Ballis (log poles), bamboo, palm leaves are used for construction of huts. Agricultural and hunting equipment are made from forest produce. The forest is closely linked with their festivals. The sal tree is associated with Sarhul, and Karma tree with Karma festival. Earlier, collection of wood was primarily for their own use, but now it has become important for earning some money during the lean period. Women collect not only fuelwood, but many other minor forest products, like mahua flower and seed, sal leaves and branches, and fodder, which they sell in the nearby market to supplement their income. In the absence of alternative occupation they have to take whatever is available in the forests.

Wood-cutting, over-grazing, and continuous destruction of forest resources lead to denudation. Non-tribals in the tribal belt are equally responsible for this situation. The contracters working in these regions are responsible for destruction of forests. Road construction, river valley projects and rapid industrialisation are also contributing a lot towards the destruction of forests. If deforestation continues in this manner a point will be reached when we cannot get firewood even to cook one meal. Not only is the ecological balance affected, but the tribals whose economy largely depends on forests will face difficulties. To uplift the tribals we have to improve their economic condition and at the same time save and enlarge the forests. This means preserving, maintaining and improving the forests with all their resources, with the cooperation of the local tribals. Without the local people's participation and involvement in the forestry programme, little can be achieved. The tribals' income should be protected and their economic condition should be improved.

The Government has started a Social Forestry Scheme under which tribals are getting free saplings for plantation in their land; they are also getting help to meet the cost of manure and pesticides — as also technical know-how. But the tribals' participation in the programme is negligible. Involvement of the local tribals is a pre-requisite for successful implementation of social forestry in tribal Bihar. Their participation can be secured with the help of voluntary agencies working in the area. Their participation should be from the policy formulation level to the level of execution.□

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Education and Rural Development

A.R. KAMAT

THIS article reviews the role education has played in rural development in India, mainly in economic and political development, in the post-Independence period. Although the reference period is post-1947, it also briefly refers to the pre-Independence period in order to maintain historical continuity. This discussion and analysis is in the nature of a general survey and interpretation and is neither a quantitative profile nor conclusions based on field surveys.

It is well known that modern education, English education which started with a more or less regular framework from the fifties of the last century, laid greater emphasis on the learning of and through English and showed very little concern for primary education and therefore for rural education in the media of Indian languges. And yet this extremely sparse beginning had significance for basic changes in the rural situation. For instance, one of the official objectives of elementary education in the early British period was to train people who would help the rulers in land measurement and in preparing and maintaining land records.[1]

Although the new education mostly benefited upper social strata of Indian society (for example, Brahmans, Kayasthas and trading castes), the new educated also included a small section from among the middle and lower castes and social strata. Even this very limited spread of education and the principle of equality before law (at least in the formal sense) for all citizens was responsible for the emergence of a new socio-economic consciousness among sections of middle rural strata. This new awakening culminated in the social movements of protest (for example, Phule's *Satyashodhak Samaj* in Maharashtra). These movements ran almost parallel and unconnected with the dominant socio-economic and political movements of the period, the latter half of the nineteenth century, the social basis of which was the urban educated class belonging mostly to the upper castes and upper social strata. They were protest movements against the social domination of the Brahmans and corresponding upper-caste interests as well as against exploitation and harassment by money-lenders and the corrupt bureaucracy manned by the educated upper-caste Indians at the middle and lower levels.

In course of time, and particularly after the spread of education in the twenties and thirties, one finds a strengthening of the rural educated elite belonging to the land-based middle strata (for example, non-Brahman movements and their leadership in Maharashtra, Tamilnadu and elsewhere both within and without the main current of the national movement). By this time there had also emerged an incipient class of relatively better-off peasants around irrigated areas and the cash-crop economy. With the limited transfer and decentralisation of political power in the form of District Local Boards and School Boards, this new class was trying to assert itself in the rural areas and small towns. The Montford Reforms of 1921 and the coming to power of popular Ministries in the provinces in 1937 helped to crystallise and strengthen this rural elite. Thus on the eve of Independence there was already not only widespread socio-political awakening in the rural areas but also the formation of a significant nucleus of the rural elite in the form of an incipient rich peasant class and their political leadership. Alongside these had also arisen a numerically still smaller elite among the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The spread of education in small towns and rural areas no doubt helped these social, economic and political changes to a considerable extent. They were different but concomitant manifestations of the total process of national and social awakening which accompanied the militant mass character of the freedom movement during its last, decisive phase.

DURING the post-Independence period considerable further changes occurred in the rural areas. Most of them can be traced to politico-economic factors including the Government-sponsored developmental programmes but the spread and growth of education have also made a positive contribution to the process of change.

Let us begin with agricultural growth and modernisation. Contrary to erstwhile beliefs, still repeated in certain quarters, Indian peasants do display a 'rational' attitude towards innovative methods of efficient production and to incentives provided by official or semi-official agencies. Some social scientists also tried to show that this growth is also due to the spread of general education.[2] Some others however feel that there is no conclusive evidence of a crucial role of education in the acceptance of modernisation of agricultural practices.[3] But it is certainly true that the growth of higher agricultural education and research have considerably helped agricultural growth, particularly the growth of irrigated (cash-crop) agriculture.

Capitalisation of agriculture and development of modernised capitalist farming has inevitably brought in its train new occupations in rural areas: tractor drivers and repairmen, working and looking after power-driven pumpsets, power-tillers, etc.; agricultural experts advising on seeds, fertilisers, pesticides and in general on farm practices, etc. It has also brought other spillovers such as small irrigation schemes and their maintenance on the one hand and the processing and other agro-industries like rice mills, flour mills, sugar factories, oil mills and distilleries on the other. Additionally, there are other activities on business lines like dairy farming, poultry-farming and piggeries. All these and other ancillary rural developments have given rise to many new jobs and occupations and brought about substantial changes in the old ones.

The tertiary (or service) sector was relatively of not much importance in the pre-1947 period in the rural areas, the main service sector being that of Government services. Due to the growth of modern sector in agriculture, massive rural development programmes and other rural welfare programmes in general, the post-Independence years have seen extensive expansion of trade and business and small-scale service enterprises in the rural areas and small towns. Transport, banking, insurance, credit and other cooperatives now also have a fair-size network in the rural areas. The most important sector as of old is the Government and semi-Government services which have proliferated and assumed a diverse character.

It is clear that all these jobs and occupations including the wide expansion of service sector could not have taken place without a corresponding spread and growth of education. What needs special mention is education itself which has now become a large service sector, or a kind of 'industry'. The educational sector has become an important source of employment, what with the opening of a large number of not only primary and elementary schools but also of high schools and even colleges. The latter, it is well known, are mostly under private management, with the result that starting and 'managing' high schools and colleges has become an important avocation in rural areas involving the educated complement of teachers and the not-so-educated complement of managers. (The indiscriminate proliferation of secondary and higher educational institutions has also produced its crop of unemployed and unemployable product.)

The spread of education in rural areas has one important feature which needs to be mentioned. It seems to have reduced participation rates in the labour force of children of the corresponding age-groups. This is observed in the rural areas from the census data for the age-group 0 to 19, particularly in the case of males.[4] (Talking about census data, it is felt that comparison of census statistics for the four decennial censuses after Independence setting different categories of jobs and occupations against the educational qualifications of the holders could give us much useful information. Such an analysis with other broad classifications such as age, sex, rural-urban location should give us valuable clues to the problems of mismatch, over-match and about the general levelling up or upgrading of jobs.)

Thus so far as the rural sector is concerned the active involvement of the state in both developmental and welfare activities has created a modernised agricultural sector with the consequent creation of a whole new set of occupations and job opportunities. Moveover, the educational system has grown and spread to meet the corresponding requirements. But this has not happened in a systematically planned, smooth and efficient manner. Education has fulfilled its role of inducing, aiding and promoting occupational diversification and occupational and general mobility. In a sense this illustrates how economic change and growth (along with rising political forces and political change) effectively influence educational development, and also the broad lines along which it takes place.

But since this educational advance, both rural and non-rural, has taken place in a manner in which manpower planning and the expansion of education are mostly unrelated, it has led to serious imbalances and large-scale educated unemployment. The system has thus developed contradictions and conflicts affecting the system itself, and has led itself into a crisis situation. The large outturn of unemployed and unemployable rural youth from institutions of secondary and higher education is an important index of this crisis.

IN this section we shall try to indicate the connection between the educational spread and political developments in the rural areas. Our conceptual framework in this respect is mainly on the following lines:[5] The educational system in a modern nation-state depends largely on its polity and political power-structure. The state exercises overwhelming influence on how the educational system is organised, run, expanded and developed, on the resources made available to different sectors and stages, and even the contents of education and methods of teaching and examination are ultimately policy decisions which are essentially political. On the other hand the educational system is expected to contribute to the maintenance of the prevailing politico-economic system of the country not only in respect of providing trained personnel of various kinds to discharge the various roles required by the system but also by conditioning the on-coming generations with ideas and values in consonance with the system. Moreover, in the modern era a developing nation-state has to proclaim for its very legitimacy a programme with a populist content, often under the banner of some kind of socialism. Hence in many developing countries education, at least mass elementary education, together with the formal acceptance of the equity principle, becomes a basic political need along with the premises to fulfil other human basic needs of food, clothing and shelter at the minimum level.

The connection between education and rural politico-economic development in India in the post-1947 period has to be viewed in this framework. Moreover, it has to be understood in the context of the manner in which the transfer of power was achieved and relative strengths of different sections of society at the time and how the latter evolved because of the politico-economic developments during the subsequent (post-1947) period.

Some aspects of this political evolution need to be mentioned. The Constitution adopted a participative form of government modelled on parliamentary-type institutions and accepted universal adult franchise. This meant that by the sheer force of numbers the rural leadership could and did make a successful attempt of tilting the political power in the States (and also at the Centre to a certain extent) in their favour. To strengthen its political basis in the rural areas the ruling political party went in for political decentralisation, that is, establishing political structures in the form of Panchayati Raj at the district and lower levels. Thus by the middle of the sixties rural politics had assumed unprecedented importance. Moreover, along with this political decentralisation there came into existence, as observed above, many strong centres of economic power in the rural areas.

These developments in the politico-economic milieu in the rural areas had a two-fold interaction with education in general and the functioning of the educational system in particular. While the rural political leadership carried forward educational expansion and growth in the rural areas, the resulting educational advance met the personnel needs of these rural politico-economic developmental programmes for their reasonable functioning. Thus educational advance met the needs of rural political development which in its turn influenced the extent and manner of the educational advance, particularly in the rural areas.

It is perhaps desirable at this stage to mention two sociological aspects of the political change in the rural situation during the post-1947 period. First, adult franchise gradually transferred in some respects political power from the urban to rural or rururban leadership, from the advanced caste groups, to the middle caste groups of the rich peasantry, at the State and lower levels. The new rural leadership has now extended its sway to the Centre as will be seen by the rise of politicians like Chavan in the sixties and of Charan Singh in the late seventies. The corresponding State-level changes began to occur from the fifties or even earlier and have now become an established fact for the last two decades. In fact the rise of Kamaraj as Chief Minister in 1953 and his later promotion to the presidentship of the Indian National Congress also illustrates the same process. The change at the district and lower levels can be best illustrated by what has happened in Maharashtra. Here most positions of politico-economic power and vantage (for example, in panchayats, cooperative banks, marketing societies, development boards, even private educational enterprise, etc.) are now dominated by the land-owning middle social strata or their nominees with a modest sprinkling (for statutory as well as political purposes) of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes.

Second, the recognition of equal rights and provision of special privileges and facilities in respect of education for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes and reservations of seats for them in the State Assemblies and in Parliament has facilitated the formation of their own educational and political elites in rural and rururban areas. Consequently the participation of these elites on a modest scale in rural political power therefore becomes inevitable. Finally, it has also produced a new awakening among them, resulting in new tensions, sometimes ending in atrocious barbarities.

THE linkage between education and political change in rural and rururban areas perhaps merits separate consideration. We have mentioned above the rise of the land-based, middle-caste, rural leadership at the State level from the fifties. One of the important policies they urgently pursued was their systematic drive for the spread of education in rural areas, for the establishment of high schools and colleges under their own local influence and patronage. Thus 'democratisation' of politics led to 'democratisation' of education in a certain measure. This not only met the keenly felt social demand for secondary and higher education in the rural areas but it also fulfilled the politico-economic need of raising a whole new generation of better qualified rural elite for manning positions at various levels in different spheres including politics.

But these high schools and colleges, like other political (Panchayati Raj for example) and economic (for example, cooperatives including sugar cooperatives) institutions, soon came to be counted among 'places', that is, positions of political prestige and also instruments of distributing favours. They also became sources of political resources, human and other. Consequently, these educational institutions too are often in a position to wield political influence. In this dual game, educational objectives and processes often get blurred, modified, weakened and even sacrificed and perverted because of dependence on and interference from extra-educational influences of various political interests and personalities. The appallingly low and uneven standards of teaching, poor maintenance and management, and serious malpractices in examinations and in financial matters, etc., have in the result infected many of these schools, colleges and even the regional universities.

How rural politics operates in education is illustrated by the following facts: that the Education portfolio which was considered relatively unimportant in State Cabinets in the early years of Independence has now assumed considerable importance; that a Congress Government was thrown into a serious crisis over the founding of new universities (Gujarat in 1967); that widespread violent attacks on the Scheduled Castes were organised by dominant caste Hindus in Maharashtra in 1978 on the question of renaming of a university; that some seventeen of the fortyseven new universities established by State Governments during the first twenty years of Independence were started without the sanction of the UGC; that most of the Universities in Bihar at the moment have only a semblance of academic functioning and administration; and so on.

Thus the growth of education in the rural and urban areas in the post-1947 period helped the emergence of the new political leadership which on its part played a key role in furthering rural educational advance, and this process continues. It has strengthened and consolidated this new leadership and has also brought to it a measure of sophistication and refinement of political culture. The new political elite is also in a large measure differentiated from the intellectual and professional elites and clearly represents the middle stratum, land-based, neo-capitalist rural and regional interests.

Any discussion of the changing rural situation will remain incomplete without considering the educational advance and the politico-economic and social change among the Scheduled Castes and tribal people in the rural areas, and their political leadership or elites in general. Briefly speaking, thanks to the spread of education, a small but sizeable new elite, including political elite, has formed amongst them and has become quite articulate. The major section of this political elite is in a dependency relationship with the dominant-caste rural leadership. And since there is not much of a land-base or any other property base for them, it is well-nigh impossible for them to become independent of the ruling elite. Any benefits they can secure are therefore through statutory reservations or through the political favours of the dominant elite. These benefits are bound to be indeed very modest. Consequently in course of time many of the younger generation are more likely to look for political progress in the opposite direction, in the politics of confrontation; when and how are issues for the present and the future.

Finally, let us consider the kind of political consciousness produced by the educational advance in the rural areas. In the pre-1947 period the spread of education did contribute substantially towards mass awakening, both social and political. This awakening was reflected in the movements of social reform, the struggle for national liberation, and the movements of the various backward segments of population for economic and social justice (for example, the non-Brahman movement of the earlier period and the SC and ST movements of the later period). What about the post-1947 period? It must be emphasised in this connection that the present period is a period of the struggle for a total socio-economic and socio-political structural transformation, for the emancipation of the majority of common people from poverty and social degradation. Has education contributed to the creation of an appropriate mass consciousness, consciousness among the socially and economically exploited common people in the rural areas?

The answer to this question is not yet unequivocal. As observed above, the political consciousness of the rural educated has increased but has decisively reached only the middle strata who, until very recently, were not at all disturbed about the coming predicament because more education invariably led them to more income and privilege. Their political consciousness till now was at best a belief in some kind of gradualism where all will be well for "all" people in the end! But the situation is now changing because of the increasing unemployment and the devaluation of secondary and higher education in the employment market. The belief of a generally bright future for "everyone" is therefore now not as certain as it was before. Moreover, the real rural prime-movers of a total social transformation, the rural proletariat and poor peasants, are, except in some pockets where the sheer struggle for existence is leading them into clashes with the rural vested interests, yet far from conscientisation and organisation. One cannot however hope for much in this respect from further rural educational advance because the prevalent educational system in its working and ideology usually tries to strengthen the status quo in society. Education is an enabling process and the liberating force of education will have to come to the rural areas from those who are already educated and who are already demystified about the present social structure or are in that process. In short, barring a few exceptions, education has yet to become a catalytic force to move the rural masses in a significant manner.☐

NOTES

1. D.N. Dhanagre, "Literacy and Structural Change in Rural Society in Colonial India," *The Journal of Social Studies* (Dacca). No. 7 (1980). A similar policy was followed for the same purpose by the Dutch in Java; this is mentioned in SC Shukla, "Education, Economy and Social Structure in British India", *National Journal of Education*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1978.

2. See S.C. Goel, *Education and Economic Growth in India*, 1975, p. 10; D.P. Chaudhri's earlier writings and to a certain extent his latest publication, *Education, Innovations and Agricultural Development*, 1979.

3. T.N. Madan, "Indian Society: The Rural Context", in S.C. Dube (ed.), *India Since Independence* (Social Report on 1947-72), 1978, pp. 67-68.

4. See Jaipal P. Ambannavar, "Comparability of 1971 and 1961 Census Economic Data," in Ashish Bose (ed.), *Population Statistics of India: Data Base of Indian Economy*, Vol. III, 1977, pp. 154-178; also Asok Mitra, *India's Population: Aspects of Quality and Control*, 1978, pp. 461-463.

5. For a more detailed treatment see "Education, Politics and Political Content of Education," in *Political Content of Education*, Socio-Research Publications Centre, Calcutta, 1977, pp 45-61; also J.P. Naik's paper in the same book on "Political Content of Education."

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Garbham Firing: Part of a Pattern

K. ILAIAH

RECENTLY the Andhra Government carved out a new district called Vijayanagaram out of Visakhapatnam and Srikakulam. The newly formed district administration is being effectively used against the common people.

Garbham, a fairly big village, is in Chipurupalli taluka of Vijayanagaram district. The landlords in this area are so powerful that they simply grab other people's lands, order women peasants to spend the night with them, and generally terrorise the poor. The little technology that has spread to the villages is in the grip of the landlords. Rice mills, spray-pumps, buses and lorries are all their property. No peasant can own any of these. The district and taluka officials are the landlords' close relatives. The few exceptions share their class interests.

Under such conditions the youth of Chipurupalli areas have had no alternative but to organise themselves. This took the form of youth clubs. In about 150 villages youth clubs sprang up. At taluka level a federation of these clubs was formed. The federation leadership co-ordinates the activities of the clubs. Actions against land-grab, wage-exploitation, raping of women, eating away of sugar quotas, etc, are taken by the clubs. In several cases the youth clubs have done impressive work.

In order to crush the club leaders the landlords and the police started a campaign that 'Naxalites' were organising the clubs. They were waiting for a chance and July 1, 1982, was made the 'hunting day' at Garbham. Four persons were shot dead, five were severely injured and scores of Garbham villagers were beaten up mercilessly and false cases were filed against them. According to the report of the fact-finding committee sent by the State unit of the Organisation for People's Democratic Rights, the tahsildar of Chipurupalli ordered the firing, the Circle Inspector executed it — and all this was done at the behest of a local landlord, Badam Sree Rammurthy.

Rammurthy owns 200 acres of land, rice mills, oilmills, buses and lorries. He is a terror in the area. The Garbham youth club exposed him on several occasions — and Rammurthy worked out a plan to crush them.

The sequence of recent events was like this: On June 9 night one of the bus drivers of Rammurthy left a woman with a child in arms, in spite of her crying out to him to stop the bus at the stage, near a graveyard four furlongs from the village. It was night and it was raining heavily (8.30 p.m.); the woman was frightened. The next morning she informed the youth club members about the behaviour of the driver. The club members asked the driver (on June 10) about the incident and warned him not to repeat such behaviour. According to the villagers who gave evidence before the OPDR Committee, they neither manhandled the driver nor blocked the road. Yet, on getting information that his driver had been warned, Rammurthy went to Garbham (he lives in a nearby village) along with the CI and two constables. Two persons, Barnala Appalaswami and Marada Uppalaiah, were taken into custody and were beaten up severely. After collecting Rs 150 from them they were produced in court with a cooked-up case against them. A separate case was filed against eight persons.

The club members moved swiftly and met the Vijayanagaram S.P. and the Collector. A memorandum was submitted requesting them to take action against the CI who had harassed, arrested and filed cases against the villagers for no fault of theirs. As no action was initiated till June 24, the club members decided that a bandh should be organised in Garbham village on July 1 to expose the officials. To this effect pamphlets were printed on June 28 and copies were sent to all district officials. Rammurthy, the landlord, was specifically advised not to ply his buses that day.

As the evidence before the Committee shows, the landlord attempted to break the unity of the villagers but failed. The club members, fully supported by the villagers, worked for a peaceful bandh. The fact that the leadership of the club divided into three teams to court arrest one after the other, in case of police intervention, is clear indication of their peaceful intentions. Not only that, the club members prepared hundreds of villagers to court arrest.

As they wanted the bandh to be peaceful, on July 1 the club members along with hundreds of villagers came to the main road by 6.30 a.m. to see that every shop was closed and every vehicle was stopped. Rammurthy did not ply his buses till 7 a.m. And at 7 a.m. one of his lorries was deliberately brought to pass through the village. The driver moved the lorry back and stationed it 100 yards away from the crowd. Even by 6.15 a.m. the tahsildar, the CI and two sub-inspectors reached the village with a truckload of armed constabulary. The people of the village informed the OPDR Committee that the tahsildar and police officials were treated to a feast by the landlord that night.

The CI asked the lorry driver to go ahead and asked the villagers to clear the way. The villagers refused. The tahsildar

(*Continued on page 34*)

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Sixth Plan: Operation Salvage

GIRISH MISHRA

EXERCISES are on to prepare a mid-term review of the Sixth Five-year Plan to be placed before the National Development Council which is to meet in a few weeks. Stock is being taken of the progress and achievements and shortfalls in different sectors as well as at macro level, and the implications thereof are being looked into. The position of resources is being reviewed so that 'operation salvage' can be launched to rescue the Plan from the deep waters into which it has fallen.

The Sixth Plan was to achieve an overall rate of economic growth of 5.2 per cent per annum, but available figures indicate that even if conditions become as favourable as expected by the planners, the average annual rate of growth of the economy cannot exceed 4.5 per cent, though officially it is being put at 4.85 per cent. Even to achieve this rate of growth is not easy. According to calculations, the rate of growth was 7.54 per cent in 1980-81 and 4.63 per cent in 1981-82, and in the final year of the Plan it can at best be 4.97 per cent. On this basis, during the first half of the Plan the rate of growth on an average cannot exceed 6 per cent while during the second half it is not likely to cross 4.25 per cent.

The gap between the target and the likely achievement has been causing worry to planners who had declared that "meaningful solutions to the problems of poverty, under-employment and unemployment can only be found within the framework of a rapidly expanding economy." Another assumption of the planners has also gone awry upsetting one of the objectives, namely, "a progressive reduction in the incidence of poverty and unemployment." This relates to projections regarding population, labour force and the people below the so-called poverty line.

The planners had put the population of the country at 672 million in 1981 but the latest figures released by the census authorities indicate that it was actually 684 million. The rate of growth of population during 1971-1981 has turned out to be 25 per cent, while it was 24.6 per cent during the previous decade. This finding of the 1981 census has far-reaching implications. The important fact that emerges is this: There has not been any slowing down of the rate of growth of population despite massive propaganda and huge expenditures in connection with family planning programmes. On the basis of census figures, population projections for not only the remaining period of the Sixth Plan but also for the rest of the present century have to be revised. Till now census authorities have not published data as regards birth and death rates during 1971-1981 and this puts the planners in further difficulties. While their own assumptions and projections have gone wrong, they do not have any firm basis for further exercises.

Yet the Planning Commission must proceed with its work. Thus the planners have devised some basis from previous census reports on birth and death rates and the information provided by executors of family planning programmes and have made projections and estimates. Now on the basis of the revised projections the country's population is likely to be 736 million in 1985 as against 717 million originally estimated by the planners and the revised estimate of labour force will be 303 million as against the original estimate of 302 million. Similarly, the revised estimate of school-going children will be 7.7 million more and the dependency ratio will be increase from 0.744 to 0.796. It is likely that the dependency ratio will be much higher, specially among the families below the 'poverty line'. As a result, even under the most optimistic assumptions, the rate of growth of per capita consumption cannot be maintained above 2.94 per cent per annum during the Plan period. The original target was fixed at 3.17 per cent per annum. It means that the standard of living of the people cannot be maintained at the level stipulated in the Plan. The total number of people below the 'poverty line' will increase from the projected 215 million to 237 million in the last year of the Plan.

Projections of various kinds made by the Planning Commission on the basis of population and the estimated rate of growth of population will now be much lower on per capita basis unless additional resources are mobilised. To give some examples, per capita total investment in the economy will decline from Rs 463.05 to Rs 453.40, public investment on education per school-going child will go down from Rs 31.44 from Rs 32.54, on health and family planning from Rs 8.26 to Rs 8.09 and on water supply and sanitation per capita from Rs 11.44 to Rs 11.21.

Now it has been calculated that an additional sum of at least Rs 33,775 million is required to maintain the per capita total investment at the level originally projected by the planners. Similarly in the fields of education, health, and water supply and sanitation, additional sums of Rs 786 million, Rs 595 million and Rs 805 million respectively will be required.

On the supply side, the resource base will come under severe pressures. Since the Government is not in favour of tapping direct taxation potential and there is no strong pressure to force the Government to do so, and public sector enterprises are not going to be able to generate sufficient resources, the only recourse left will be to increase the incidence of indirect taxation, reduce the provisions for various kinds of subsidies, increase rates and resort to deficit financing. Besides, more and more generous terms will be offered to MNCs and non-resident Indians. To lure the private sector to invest more, various kinds of concessions may be offered.

As the dependency ratio is going to increase, savings rate of individuals will be adversely affected. It is feared that the rate of marginal savings will fall short by 34 per cent of the original estimate made by the planners. If the assumptions regarding the behaviour of aggregate income, savings and investment remain as outlined in the Sixth Plan, the 1981 census data make it imperative to increase total investment (at 1979 80 prices) by at least Rs 3,400 crores if important targets are to be realised on per-capita basis.

It seems the Planning Commission has reached the conclusion that given the tight position with regard to domestic resources and uncertainty about increased flow of external assistance, it is difficult to make provision for additional resources, and Plan targets will have to be slashed. The salvage operation is likely to be based on four pillars — namely, promotion of private savings by giving concessions and bringing about policy changes, luring non-residents to remit more, cut in non-developmental expenditure and curbing tax evasion, and revising the pricing policies of public enterprises.

Already the Government has reduced the food subsidy by Rs 35 crores by increasing the issue price of wheat. It is reported that prices of petroleum products, train fares and Central duty on electricity may be increased to mop up additional resources to the extent of Rs 10,000 crores.

Not only the census data but increasing prices and growing deficit in the balance of trade also have been deepening the Plan crisis. Since May prices have been continually increasing, and this has eroded the real worth of Plan outlay.

The Planning Commission has come to the conclusion that the Sixth Plan cannot be saved in its entirety, hence the efforts should be directed to save its core and even for that an additional sum of Rs 10,000 crores is required, which also seems difficult to mobilise. It is prepared to make provision for an additional sum of only Rs 6,200 crores. Thus public sector outlay will remain unchanged. It has been admitted that since additional resources are not in sight and the resource base assumed by the Sixth Plan is eroded, the only way to rescue whatever one can is to emphasise more efficient management of existing enterprises and timely completion of ongoing projects avoiding cost over-runs. No new projects are to be taken in hand during the rest of the period.

So far as the Central Government public sector programmes in industries and minerals are concerned, the Plan outlay is proposed to be increased only by Rs 2,440 crores. This increase will be to save only the core sector, especially steel, nonferrous metals, engineering, fertilisers and petrochemicals. It is now admitted that significant shortfalls cannot be avoided in drugs and pharmaceuticals, textiles, railway rolling stock and electrical machinery.

Urgent steps are required to reduce the trade deficit which has crossed Rs 6,200 crores.

The Plan crisis is one of the most important issues which must be taken urgently by all those interested in the protection of the independence of this country. Left and democratic forces have a special responsibility which cannot be discharged only by publishing an angry editorial or two or an article or two in their journals. Let us remember what Ajoy Ghosh once said: "The immediate struggle before our Party and before the whole country is the struggle to ensure that the aims and targets, of the Plan are all realised. There are people who say that our Party wants the Plan to fail so that the Government gets discredited. This mischievous propaganda is on a par with the stupid canard that Communists want war to promote revolution.

"We know and we have stated many a time that the Plan is inadequate. We do not at all harbour the illusion that the Plan will lead to Socialism. Nevertheless, we also know that the attainment of the aims and objectives of the Plan will strengthen national economy and national independence and that if the Plan were to fail, it would mean intensification of mass misery....We do not subscribe to the view that because it is a bourgeois Government that has formulated the Plan, therefore, it is a matter of no concern to us, to workers and peasants, whether the Plan succeeds or not."

Incidentally, it may be stated that he said this at the Amritsar Congress of the undivided CPI.

(*August 23*)

What Next after PLO Withdrawl?

(*Continued from page 8*)

states in its system and not due to any lack of will on the part of the Soviet Union.

As Israeli aggression and atrocities mounted in Lebanon there was striking isolation of the USA and Israel, compelling the USA to use the veto several times in the Security Council; and in the UN General Assembly once they stood just two against the rest. But this too need not be exaggerated too far. It was good that so many countries recorded their condemnation of Israel and by implication of its backer. But let us also remember the Reagan warning a few months ago. When Israel formalised its annexation of the Golan Heights, Arab countries called for sanctions against Israel in the Security Council which was vetoed by the USA. Then they sought to take the matter to the General Assembly and move for the expulsion of Israel which is not subject to veto. Reagan warned that all countries voting for Israel's expulsion would forfeit all hopes of receiving any US aid. The move was soon aborted. Nevertheless, with all the hazards and new dangers, the question of political solution of the Palestinian problem has come to the centre of the stage and that in itself opens up new possibilities. (*August 23*)

COMMUNICATION

Communists and BJP: Bihar Experience

FOR the article on "Communist Approach to BJP" in *Mainstream* (July 17, 1982) Analyst deserves congratulations and the gratitude of many in this country, who have been expecting great things from Communists, particularly those who have been in CPI. They have been dismayed and shocked by some of the actions by CPI since 1967, yet they think, this is the only Left party in the country committed to anti-imperialism, socialism, and secularism, as also proletarian internationalism, notwithstanding periodic aberrations in its policy decisions and tactical lines. However, its latest actions leading to its joining hands with communal and pro-imperialist forces have caused serious apprehensions in the minds of patriotic Indians. What looks like mere aberrations may well develop into a pattern and may be sought to be rationalised as "applied Marxism."

Analyst has correctly stated that "The alibi of cooperation on 'specific issues' is wearing thin." There is ample evidence to support this. It was stated earlier that cooperation or contact with BJP was limited only to parliamentary groups and on the issues which were to come up in the two houses of Parliament. Then the scope of this cooperation or contact was extended to cover the trade union wings of CPI and RSS on the plea that without a broad platform of all the central trade union organisations, it would be difficult to organise actions to defend the onslaughts on the rights of the working class. Soon after we have found the two parties joining hands for so-called defence of democracy in Haryana and for putting up a joint candidate for Presidentship, so that the growing 'authoritarianism' of Indira Gandhi could be halted. If history is any guide, very soon the scope of this cooperation or contact may be further extended to cover other issues.

The General Secretary of CPI in a lengthy article published in *New Age* (August 8, 1982) has quoted one of the latest documents of his party to say, "While we have been correctly avoiding joint action with the BJP, experience shows that refusing to have joint action with various parties including the BJP on certain issues would not have been correct. The BJP, together with other opposition parties, expressed its willingness to have joint action with others against the misuse of power by Haryana Governor and (on) the issue of presidential election. Earlier, it had come out jointly with others in support of the January 19 general strike. *Refusal to have joint action on those occasions on the plea that the BJP is a reactionary party would have been counter-productive.* The BJP and other reactionaries cannot be exposed that way." (Emphasis added).

Rao adds that "it must be mentioned that the BJP adopted clever tactics on the issue of presidential election" and then elaborates his dictum: "When the BJP adopts such a clever stance it cannot be exposed. It can be exposed only when it adopts wrong positions." So, CPI on its own can do nothing to isolate or expose BJP.

Secondly, the phrase "certain issues" on which the CPI proposes not to refuse "to have joint action with various parties including the BJP" has nowhere been spelt out. Perhaps this is purposely left ambiguous so that in future the scope of joint action can be further widened.

If our Communists drift with their hand-to-mouth politics without bothering to study deeply the class forces, then Antulays and Manekas can also be considered partners in joint actions. It is not surprising that some of the progressive are quietly building bridges with Maneka's circle.

On CPI's own admission, BJP is reactionary, communal, pro-imperialist, anti-democratic anti-communist and anti-Soviet. If this is so, how does CPI find similarity of attitudes or stand with it on any specific issue? The only similarity can be the Opposition to Indira Gandhi and her Government. But on this, the CIA would also like to join hands! CPI Central Secretariat member Indradeep Sinha in one of his pamphlets, written in moments of introspection, said only a few months ago: "It is the responsibility of the Left and democratic forces, especially of the Communists and forward-looking intellectuals, to give serious thought to the assessment of the political developments of the last fifteen to twenty years and not become victims of such short-cut, apparently attractive, but inherently futile, and even harmful slogans as 'non-Congressism' 'all-in opposition unity' and 'broad front of all anti-authoritarian forces.'" One was dismayed when one found the same Indradeep Sinha participating in the conclave for pulling off precisely such an all-in opposition front.

Another CPI leader, M. Farooqi, in an article in *Party Life* (October 22, 1981) wrote last year: "Now the question is, has the RSS-BJP changed its ideological-political outlook during this period of more than two years? The answer is a plain No. In fact, the RSS-BJP has become communally more vicious, and more vociferous in pronouncing its ultra-reactionary internal and foreign policy positions. ... Such being the case any alliance of opposition parties which includes the BJP, cannot claim to defend secular and democratic values. It can only help the BJP to grow at the expense of other Opposition parties and in course of time the BJP will swallow the greater part of such parties. ... For these reasons our party has declared in unmistakable terms that we will have no truck with any front or coordination committee of which the BJP is a part."

But, lo and behold, the same Farooqi comes out with another formulation within nine months of the above: "We want to emphasis that there was nothing wrong in our attending and speaking in that meeting (in the defence of democracy in Haryana, Supreme Court, Election Commission, etc.—GV), even though the BJP was also a participant...In future also occasions will arise, both inside and outside Parliament (and state legislatures), when we cannot avoid joining the opposition parties on *specific* issues (left undefined — GV) in which the BJP might be included." (*Party Life*, July 7, 1982).

Is this a case of forgetfulness of one's own words? Or, is it opportunism?

Ajoy Ghosh in his memorable speech at the National Integration Conference on September 29, 1961 had ruled out joining hands with the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), the ancestor of the BJP, even on specific issues and on limited questions: "In our view all democratic forces in general and the organised democratic movement, in particular have an important role to play in defeating the forces of communal reaction. Any opportunist association or alliance with these forces on the part of any secular party would be a positive disservice to the cause of national integration. When I say communal parties, I have, in mind all communal parties whether Hindu, Muslim or Sikh.

"Let it not be forgotten that the association of secular parties with these communal organisations brings them some political respectability and enables them to overcome popular revulsion and step up their disruptive activities."

The veracity of this statement by the great Communist leader can be easily seen by looking at the situation in Bihar, regarded as the strongest base of CPI. One after another the strongholds of CPI are falling to BJP. Jamshedpur where Kedar Das and his followers could build a strong Communist base through tremendous sufferings has been captured by BJP. The CPI has been relegated to the third position and its influence is fast shrinking because it has no moral guts to fight the RSS-BJP.

In its publication on Jamshedpur Riot Inquiry Commission Findings, the CPI said last year: "The findings of the commission invariably lead to one conclusion and that is — rid the nation's body politic of the RSS: The demand must therefore be voiced powerfully: BAN THE RSS: BAN SAKHAS IN PUBLIC PLACES and ENFORCE POLITICAL OSTRACISM OF THE RSS, BJP AND BMS." It further said: "Arrest RSS Chief Balasaheb Deoras, Dina Nath Pandey and N.L. Nadda." (*RSS The Guilty*, pp. 23-24).

But in practice, how was "political ostracism of RSS, BJP and BMS", enforced? In Jamshedpur and elsewhere in Bihar one looked in vain for a powerful campaign against them in the wake of the findings of the Commission. In Jamshedpur, one found AITUC participating in a meeting under the leadership of Dina Nath Pandey for making the January 19 strike a success. When one accepts him and sits with him, can one have moral force to fight him?

After Jamshedpur came the riots in Biharsharif. Here the CPI MLA has gone over to BJP and the Muslim masses, mostly poor biri workers, have drifted to Congress-I. Except for Dr A.K. Sen and his friends who organised relief work, what political campaign or offensive has been launched by CPI is not known. With the Yadavas joining BJP and the Muslims the Congress-I, what will be left for CPI?

Now the communal forces have shifted to Phulwari sharif. Yadavas there are being sought to be enticed away by BJP and the Muslims have no alternative but to go to the ruling party. If this tactics succeeds, it will be difficult for CPI to return its sitting MP. Patna city and Bankipore are already under the influence of BJP. Once upon a time CPI used to win Patna West (Bankipore) seat. Now if there is a contest, Shailendra Shrivatsava of BJP is sure to secure more votes than CPI.

Purnea is another place where BJP-RSS is trying to emerge as a force and already the issue of 'foreigners' who are said to have crossed over from Bangladesh is being sought to be raised by reactionaries in a big way. What has CPI been doing there? Can it have the moral force to fight BJP when it allies with it on specific issues and gives it respectability?

Kesariya, another stronghold of CPI, was captured by BJP in the last election. Why?

In Giridih, trade union leader Chaturanan Mishra was badly defeated and this indicates the beginning of the decline of CPI in the mining belt. It is a matter of concern that BJP has two Lok Sabha members from Bihar mainly from the industrial belt, one from Jamshedpur and the other from Koderama, a mining area, not far from Giridih.

In Naubatpur-Pali-Bikram area, the BJP-Naxalite combine has made serious inroads into CPI influence. The attack on the house of Bhubneshwar Sharma is not to be dismissed lightly.

Will CPI leaders care to explain why CPI has been wiped out from Sonepur, Hajipur, Barhariya, Pipra, Dhaka, Madhuban, Muzaffarpur, Begusarai, Maner, Lakhisarai, Naubatpur, etc., where it could win seats earlier? It is not the sign of decline?

If a serious analysis is made of developments in Bihar, this erosion of CPI strength can to a large measure be traced to its opportunist alliance with communal forces. In 1967, CPI sat with BJS in the coalition Ministries in Bihar, UP and Punjab and joined hands with it to sponsor K. Subba Rao against Dr Zakir Husain in the Presidential election: and all this was done in the name of so-called pressure from the people. If somebody has a look at the files of *Organiser*, one will find communal poison belched out against Muslims and Dr Zakir Husain in particular as part of the campaign to enlist support for Subba Rao, the so-called democratic candidate, whom CPI also supported. Did CPI try to counter this communal propaganda? Not at all one may look at *Organiser* once again to see how this has been repeated in the recent Presidential election.

Thus, joint action even on certain specific issues with BJP is proving to be nothing but counter-productive. Is it not time for CPI leadership to wake up and do a bit of self-introspection?

Patna *G. Vatsayan*

South Atlantic Reflections

ARTHUR GAVSHON

The waters of the South Atlantic are silent now. Argentina's invaders are home again, their mission to take over the Falkland Islands in ruins. The battered British task force, minus six sunken ships, has dispersed in transient triumph. Another war has ended, as all wars do, with both sides mourning their dead, tending their wounded and vowing to redeem the sacrifices of their fallen. It follows, therefore, that redemption of mutually contradictory promises will perpetuate Argentine-British hostility and go on threatening the peace of the South Atlantic.

Any balance-sheet of the Falklands folly, drawn up in an Argentine-British context, would show (a) the combined casualty-count was at least three times greater than the entire 1,800 population of the islands; (b) costs of the invasion and counter-invasion exceeded four billion dollars for each contender at a time of grave economic difficulty; (c) differences between the two countries over sovereignty of the territories probably have never been deeper in the 149-year-long history of the dispute, and (d) for the Argentines "defeat" has predictably fuelled a wish for vengeance while 'victory' has stirred the patriotic emotionalism of British people in a fashion reminiscent of the nation's imperialist past and this is being exploited to advance Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's prospects of re-election.

There were other side effects with international implications. Politically the rift between Hispanic and Anglo-Saxon cultures and interests assumed almost a racist aspect. French Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson was moved to criticise British authorities in a leaked Quai d'Orsay memorandum for showing what he termed "an instinctive contempt for Latins during the crisis". In weaponry, the war was laden with ironies, especially for Britain. Since 1979 the British had sold warships, radar, missiles and other equipment to Argentina worth nearly 300 million dollars. These weapons inflicted severe casualties on the task force and even one-fifth of the components used in the deadly Exocet missiles were manufactured in UK.

The rest of Argentina's armoury came primarily from countries allied to Britain, like the United States, France, Italy, West Germany. Angry and indignant protests arose whenever some outside nation — whether Libya, South Africa, Israel — was suspected of clandestinely supplying Argentine needs or even the needs of its friends. In the wake of the fighting, meanwhile, European and American armament companies enthusiastically recognised intriguing new possibilities for marketing their more successful products.

Strategically the stakes were especially high. Former Secretary of State Alexander Haig on May 10 explained US intervention in the crisis with the argument that a confrontation between Spanish- and English-speaking nations could quickly "degenerate into a classic North-South dispute". He added this would provide the Soviet Union and Cuba with opportunities to "fish in troubled waters". But among some British high-ups there has been an uncomfortable feeling that deeper considerations may be preoccupying the Americans. The Falklands comprise two big islands surrounded by about 150 islets and like a huge butterfly with frayed wings, they are located less than 300 miles from the Argentine mainland and 8,000 miles from British shores. They lie, too, on perhaps the most important of all US naval routes linking the Atlantic with the Pacific Ocean through the Magellan Straits and Cape Horn. US military planners are said to perceive the need to dominate that route so as to avoid the nightmare of having to wage sea battles in two oceans separated by the land mass of the New World. Thus permanent, or even indefinite, British control of the Falklands is held in Washington to be a strategic and geopolitical anachronism. This has led some authorities in London to suspect that the Argentine-British war was only the first skirmish in a long-term tussle to arrange a transfer of responsibility for the islands to be shared by the key nations of the western hemisphere if not to the United States itself.

Few of these implications have been discussed in depth publicly by Argentine or British leaders. In Buenos Aires and London the junta led by former President Leopoldo Galtieri and Margaret Thatcher's Government sought to rationalise their actions by invoking high-sounding principles that contrasted with less high-sounding realities. But the rhetoric failed to cover up evidence of blunders, misperceptions and double standards which sent the two countries stumbling into a needless war. Indeed, even before the last shots were fired it had become clear that the fact of the conflict itself in some respects served the interests of at least certain elements in the feuding establishments.

In Argentina, for instance, it was hardly fortuitous that the April 2 invasion ordered by General Galtieri came at a moment of rising popular discontent over the ferocious repressions of the junta, a foreign debt of 35 billion dollars, an annual inflation rate ap-

The author, a distinguished journalist was until recently the Diplomatic Correspondent of the Associated Press for US and Europe. Now living in London, he is the author of a number of books on contemporary affairs, the most well-known of these being *The Last Days of Dag Hammarskjold* and *Crisis in Africa: Battleground of East and West*, published in 1981. This contribution is reproduced from *Man and Development* (Vol IV. No. 2) proaching 200 per cent. Backing for the attempted takeover was virtually nationwide not least because the Peronists and other political groups saw in the situation possibilities of achieving an end of military rule. The aftermath of the fighting brought General Reynaldo Bignone to the Presidency as the seventh head of state in six years and the largely civilian structure of his cabinet pleased not only the country's bankers but Washington also.

In Britain military success reinforced a stunning revival of Mrs Thatcher's flagging fortunes; a revival that began with her call to the nation to "rejoice! rejoice!" when the task force set sail southwards from Plymouth. The realities of more than three million unemployed, a Gross National Product only four times greater than that of little Switzerland and a string of strikes and disputes among health, transport and other public sector workers may have mocked at the facade of national unity war had temporarily imposed. But they did little to dissipate the atmosphere of neo-imperialist fervour Mrs Thatcher was assiduously promoting with evocations of Britain's old glory, remembered only dimly by generations grown old in an age of decolonisation.

It was as if the British people, weary of chronic economic crises, had grabbed gratefully at the chance to forget their workaday woes by sharing, like a multitude of Walter Mittys, in the courageous exploits of their soldiers, sailors and airmen. The mood music of "Rule Britannia" and "Land of Hope and Glory" resounded through village halls and city streets. Victory parades were planned. National Thanksgiving Services to God were arranged although one dissenting writer to the correspondence columns of *The Times* had the honesty to reflect that "a God who deserves credit for the ending of a war must, in all logic, deserve blame for allowing it to start in the first place". Throughout the campaign Britain's four mass circulation tabloid newspapers — the rightwing *Sun*, *The Star*, *The Express* and *The Mail* — plunged into the spirit of the thing, mixing hysteria, jingoism and racism in about even proportions. Readers were invited to submit "Argy — Bargy" jokes and the *Sun's* huge frontpage headline on the sinking of the General Belgrano when hundreds of lives were lost read simply: "Gotcha!" The *Star* set out to hunt those it considered traitors or pacifists and a full-page report on May 22 listed 33 Labour Party legislators campaigning for a peaceful settlement; its headline read "This Evil Enemy at Home."

Conflicting Argentine and British claims to the Falklands are buried deep in history. There is no agreement even over whether Spanish or British explorers discovered the islands. Buenos Aires rests its case on the argument that the Falklands were an incontestable heritage from the crown of Spain and that, anyway, they are a geographic extension of Patagonia. Every year since 1833, when Britain ousted Argentine settlers from the islands, Buenos Aires had been lodging formal diplomatic protests against continuing British occupation. Successive British governments, in diplomatic dialogue with Buenos Aires since 1965, have recognised the strength of the Argentine case. But various initiatives — even by Mrs Thatcher's Government — to arrange for a gradual transfer of sovereignty under a lease-back formula have foundered on the rocks of Conservative opposition in Parliament. Most Labourites supported that opposition, too, on grounds that nothing should be conceded to a regime as repressive as Argentina's.

Duplicities, distortions and double standards precede most wars and the Battle for the Falklands was no exception.

Galtieri mounted his invasion in the name of justice and sought to justify the use of force with the assertion that it was a legitimate act of defence. For a strong-arm dictatorship which for years has pursued its political opponents at home without mercy his rationale had a hollow ring. There has been little evidence to suggest that the junta's concept of justice bears any relationship to absolute or universal moral standards. A United Nations investigative group has estimated that up to 9,000 Argentines have simply "disappeared" since 1976, never to be seen again, because of their real or imagined opposition to the regime. The Security Council denounced the Argentine takeover as a violation of the United Nations Charter which binds member-states to settle their disputes peacefully.

Britain's resort to double standards was equally transparent when it cited various principles central to the decision to reconquer the Falklands. One of those principles related, as Mrs Thatcher put it, to "the right to be British". Yet under the 1981 Nationality Act not all Falklanders are truly "British"; hundreds rank as "second-class" citizens, like Asians and Africans in Commonwealth countries, who cannot automatically enter, settle or vote in Britain. Another principle related to the right of the Falklanders to self-determination. Yet a Labour Government under Sir Harold Wilson, with Conservative support, had no hesitation in setting aside that bit of democratic nonsense in the case of 1,400 Diego Garcians in the late 1960s. They were compelled to leave their ancestral island home in the Indian Ocean to make way for its development as a US naval nuclear base. The Diego Garcians were resettled in Mauritius where they still live in conditions of poverty; the island itself was detached from Mauritius where a new radical Left government lately has been elected to office on pledges to reclaim the territory. Mrs Thatcher and her ministers have spoken in contemptuous terms about the dictatorial nature of the Argentine Government. Yet their discovery of its harshness came late; until the invasion they were delivering military supplies and spares to Buenos Aires and never once complained in public that human rights were being violated even when some British nationals were jailed or tortured.

Tacitly, the hierarchies in Buenos Aires and London acknowledged misperceptions, misunderstandings and chaotic signals over a 17-year period had contributed to the fiasco of the Falklands. The ousting of Galtieri was proof and symbol of that so far as Argentina was concerned. And in Britain Mrs Thatcher yielded to parliamentary demands for a full-scale probe into the origins of a totally pointless war. Unconsciously, perhaps, she exposed herself when she taunted her Labour opponents with the sneer that a Labour Government would not have fired a single shot. Former PrimeMinister James Callaghan retorted: "Let me tell her that if we'd been in power we wouldn't have needed to."

The overwhelming national and international consensus seemed to be that Argentina was quite wrong to have taken the islands by force; but equally there was general recognition that culpability works two ways. The British had allowed Galtieri to believe that a bloodless takeover might just be acceptable if it was swift and sweet. When US and British intelligence assessments forecast an invasion nearly a week ahead of the event the British failed to warn Galtieri a task force would be sent to retake the islands. Time and again over the years the British suggested ways of trading away the sovereignty of the Falklands. They actively encouraged the development of air, sea and oil trading links between the islands and the mainland. They permitted the Argentines to appoint a ranking air force officer on the islands and referred to him benevolently as "deputy Governor". They declined to fund an extension of the islands' main airstrip or to build roads linking its main eastern and western segments. They apologised in Buenos Aires for the reluctance of the islanders to recognise their future lay in a functional connection with Argentina. And shortly before Galtieri acted they announced that the frigate *Endurance*, the lone warship guarding the islands, was to be withdrawn. Almost to the end the Thatcher Government misread the warnings that had been flowing in from their own and US intelligence men that an attack was imminent.

All these things, seen together, form a pattern of muddled thinking by Mrs Thatcher's Government which could not put itself into the position of the junta, and failed, too, to appreciate the depth of national feeling in Argentina over the dispute.

What was Galtieri to make of the signals he thought were being received from the British? There was only only one conclusion he could reach. It was that the British would not react forcibly against a takeover. That was his major miscalculation. His second mistake was to convince himself that President Reagan's administration, busily trying to win friends and influence people in Latin America, would not take Britain's side in a showdown. And finally, perhaps, he and his fellow service chiefs did not expect the British to mount a campaign so effectively from 8,000 miles away and so quickly too. These are only some of the issues which the British Committee of Privy Councillors will examine.

A once-famous British Field Marshal reflected after World War I that the inner history of any war is rarely told in official accounts. "Parts of the story are not allowed to be published," wrote Field Marshal Sir William Robertson in *Soldiers' and tatesmen: 1914-1918*. He went on: "While the erations are usually described at great length not h is said, especially where failure occurs, about ions of high policy. We are told what was but not always why or who was responsible." much as anything Robertson was referring to the "war in Whitehall" during the 1915 process of decision-making which led to Britain's catastrophic attempt to force the Dardanelles, storm the Gallipoli Peninsula and so relieve Turkish pressures on the armies of then-allied Russia. Britain's Parliament set up a special Dardanelles Commission to investigate how the disastrous campaign was conceived, who planned or opposed it, why it was first modified, then compromised and what motivated the political and military personalities torn between the conflicting demands of policy and strategy. Findings of the Commission, which took evidence while war still raged, proved controversial not least because protagonist and antagonist alike — the late Sir Winston Churchill a key figure among them — were concerned to cover their flanks.

Few doubt that there was indeed a little "war in Whitehall" in the first hours and days before and after the humiliating Argentine seizure of the Falklands. Initially it was a contest between officials of the Foreign Office and Defence Ministry, within the Intelligence community, among members of the Thatcher cabinet. Then it escalated to embrace questions of what was to be done to retrieve the situation. Finally it focussed on the central issue of whether Britian should reassert its sovereignty by a combination of diplomacy and military pressure or simply by force of arms. In the event the military option was chosen, qualified only by a rider that there could be negotiations if the junta agreed to quit the islands unconditionally. No one took that possibility seriously; therefore Britain's offer to negotiate a settlement was submitted only as a formal and forlorn qualifier adopted mainly for the record and the benefit of historians. The central British decision to reconquer the islands was taken, then, within hours of Argentina's invasion and the record shows Britain's terms for a peaceful settlement stiffened as the task force drew nearer to the islands. Mrs Thatcher's "patience" ran out when the ideal moment arrived for the counter-invasion.

The history of past British Royal Commissions and Parliamentary Committees charged with the task of investigating the workings of government in crisis situations has discouraged legislators in Britain from believing that the Franks Inquiry will shed much light on the Falklands' affair which stands out as the costliest failure of British policy since the Suez invasion of 1956. Since the 19th century it has become a tradition for British governments to resist revealing the sort of in-fighting that takes place in the Whitehall apparatus. A determined Prime Minister is in a position to cover up mistakes, misjudgments and misunderstandings within the governmental machine through a variety of expedients. Invariably the ploy that is used is to invoke the "national interest" as a means of withholding categories of information deemed to be highly sensitive. And the major political parties in Britain usually collude in this process.

And so, as Field Marshal Robertson realistically observed, the inner secrets of Britain's entry into the Falklands war, probably will never be disclosed. Judgments will conform with party postures. History only is likely to produce the final verdict.☐

Garbham Firing

(*Cont. from page 26*)

invited the club leaders for negotiations. A team of club leaders went forward. No negotiations. They were just pushed into a van. The tahsildar asked the CI to proceed. Lathi-charge and firing began simultaneously. Within seconds four fell dead and five were seriously injured. The rest ran far their lives. Even so several of them got beaten up.

The Collector, Vijayanagaram, was informed of all this. As the evidence before OPDR committee indicates, the Collector, SP and other officials visited Garbham at 12 noon. Then at 1 pm a sub-inspector, along with armed police, reached Garbham, searched almost every house and arrested 63 persons. A false case of attempt to murder was filed implicating a large number of villagers.

On April 20, 1981, more than 100 tribals were shot dead at Indravalli, and on July 1, 1982, four persons were shot dead at Garbham. One does not know how many of the injured will die. Between these two incidents 17 young men were shot dead in stage-managed encounters in Nalgonda, Warangal and Karimnagar. This is post-Emergency Andhra Pradesh. ☐

United Commercial Bank : Performance in 1981

The Government of India as well as the Reserve Bank of India have delineated certain parameters for the public sector banks and have been stressing that the banks must try to reach out for these parameters. The objective is equitable distribution of the resources of public sector banks.

United Commercial Bank has been able to reach some of the targets laid down and is working towards attaining the others. One target is to disburse at least 40 per cent of a bank's credit in India to the priority sectors and the banks have been asked to reach this objective by the end of 1985. UCOBANK was able to distribute 33.6 per cent of its total credit to the priority sectors in 1980; in 1981 it has distributed 38.75 per cent. Another stipulated target in this area was to ensure the minimum 40 per cent of additional growth every year in bank's credit to priority sector advances. In the case of UCOBANK the growth was 51 per cent in 1980 and 59.36 per cent in 1981.

Forty per cent of the total priority sector advances should be going to agriculture, according to Government stipulations. In the case of UCOBANK it was 41.7 per cent in 1980 and 41.12 per cent in 1981. Similarly the banks have been requested to channel 16 per cent of total credit to agricultural sector by the end of 1982. UCOBANK has been able to direct to agriculture 14 per cent of its total credit in 1980 and 15.94 per cent in 1981.

In agriculture again a minimum 60 per cent of total leading for direct agriculture activities should go to the weaker sector. UCOBANK has made a vast stride in this respect; in 1980 it was 31.2 per cent, in 1981 it has been 66.7 per cent.

In the area of small-scale industries banks have been directed to invest 12.5 per cent of their total SSI advances in weaker sectors. UCOBANK has been able to attain this objective in 1981. In the previous year it was 11.7 per cent.

It has been a matter of happiness for the bank to channelise 1.15 per cent of its previous year's total credit to Differential Rate of Interest advances. The Government directive was to allocate a minimum 1 per cent for DRI advances. Of these DRI advances UCOBANK distributed 47.2 per cent in 1980 and 44.8 per cent in 1981 against the Government target of 40 per cent to members of Scheduled Castes and Tribes.

The Bank has made a profit of Rs 2.41 crores in 1981 against Rs 2.28 crores in 1980, despite substantial increases in the overheads, material costs and various service charges. It opened 108 branches during 1981, taking the total number of branches in India to 1375. The percentage of rural and semi-urban branches to total branches in India is 70.84. The total of deposits and other accounts of the Bank went up by Rs. 384.07 crores or by 20.16 per cent from last year's figure. The deposits stood at Rs 2289.49 crores by 1981. The Bank has also made a substantial increase in the advances portfolio which stood at Rs 1443.38 crores by the year end. Thus the credit-deposit ratio was 61.40 per cent.

The Bank has made substantial inroads in rehabilitation of sick industrial units. It undertook performance valuation of each of the sick units financed by it and took necessary steps to protect the industries. Some of the sick units have started showing signs of recovery, some of the sick units were merged with healthy units. Some have been managed by professional people. In the medium and large-scale industries the Bank had an involvement of Rs. 46.30 crore in 45 sick units. In the small-scale industrial sector its involvement was Rs. 11.11 crores in 566 units. It has set up a small consultancy cell for extending guidance of small units.

The Twenty-Point Programme continues to occupy an important place in the Bank's advance portfolio. The district credit plans and annual action plans have been recast to implement this programme which has been monitored on a continuing basis. The beneficiaries under this programme over the country number 1,80,314 enjoying a credit of Rs. 89.55 crores. ●

I do believe that the vast majority of the people in every country want us to labour for peace and to succeed. Whether we are big or small, we have to face big issues vital to the future of humanity. Everything else is of lesser importance than this major question. I am absolutely convinced that we shall never settle this question by war or by a mental approach which envisages war and prepares for it.

I am equally convinced that if we aim at right ends, right means must be employed. Good will not emerge out of evil methods. That was the lesson which our great leader Gandhi taught us, and though we in India have failed in many ways in following his advice, something of his message still clings to our minds and hearts. In ages long past a great son of India, the Buddha, said that the only real victory was one in which all were equally victorious and there was defeat for no one. In the world today that is the only practical victory. Any other way will lead to disaster.

—Jawaharlal Nehru in UN General Assembly, 1960

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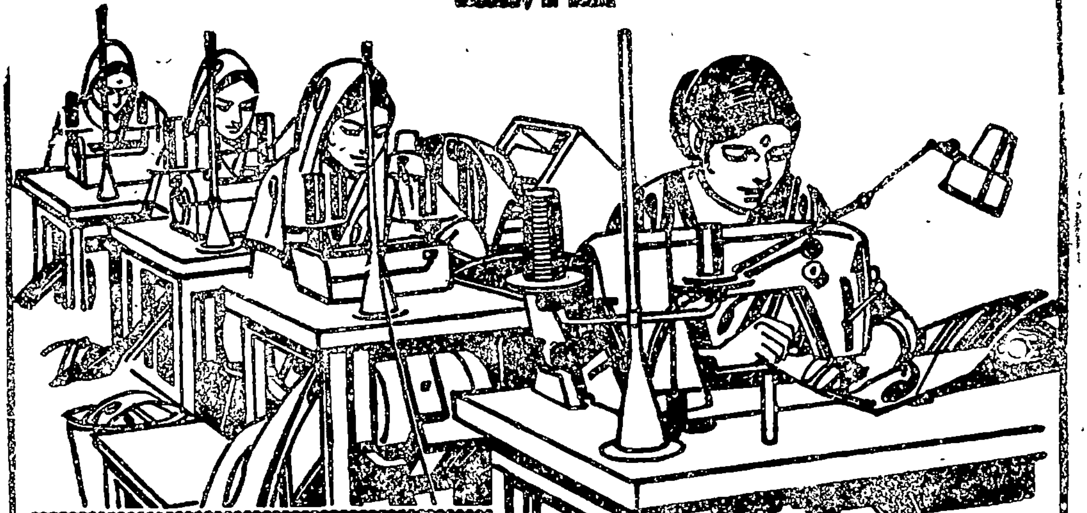
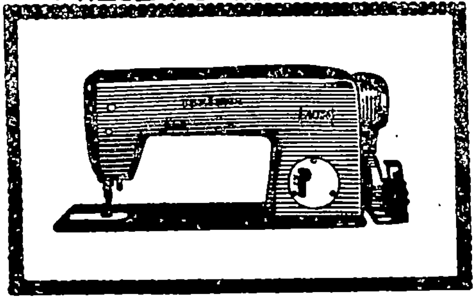
—A variety of sophisticated modern equipment for clothing and leather industry manufactured by world famous companies like ALTIN, CLAES and others are now made available to Garment industry in India





This Double Lock-Stitch Sewing Machine, class [illegible] is the product of over 100 years of experience and research of ALTIN factory in the manufacture and development of garment making machinery.

[illegible]

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